

## Prayer Report - January 2026

I'm writing this at the very beginning of the term, before it gets busy again. I am enjoying a little bit of space to reflect and record some of the work we were doing leading up to Christmas. It was a busy period, but it was well worth the effort.

**DGS Bereavement** - We contacted you at the end of term so that you could pray for the situation that arose of a young member of staff from Dunbar Grammar School dying. There is little more I can tell you, other than that school has now returned and folk are just trying to get on with things. Experience tells us that grief is a sneaky thing and can ambush folk when they least expect it. Over the coming weeks and months lets pray for God's peace throughout the school community.

- Pray for the management of the school as they continue to identify the best ways to support their staff and pupils
- We are thankful for the opportunity for local church ministers and myself to be part of the pastoral response.
- Continue to pray for the family and friends of the teacher (Heather Shanks) as they come to terms with her loss.

**Multi-faith Prayer Space in School** - I have been working with a group of young people at Dunbar Primary School to create a space in school where they and others are able to pray, reflect and be still. It will be a changeable space, using different themes to assist the children. We started with the theme of Advent, focussing on love, joy, peace and hope. The whole concept is new for the school, as is the idea of prayer for some folk. Around 40 children have been part of the pilot, and here are some of the things they said about it.

- *Happy our school is involved in this.*
- *I think it's really good for people to calm down if they're stressed or something is going on at home.*
- *I like having time to take a breath and not get stressed out.*
- *It makes people feel more relaxed.*
- *If they want to come down, feeling worried about maybe their families in Gaza and maybe their families, and they're really really upset and wondering what is going on? They're probably gonna be stressed and then maybe it would be good to come here.*

So lots to be thankful for here, and to pray for as we develop this initiative.

**Primary School Christmas Church Services** - The whole of Dunbar Primary School and West Barns Primary, Stenton, East Linton Primary and Belhaven Hill School attended a Christmas service in one of the local churches. That is quite amazing and something to be thankful for. DACYP took the lead with the Dunbar services and worked with two of the Ministers to plan the content, ensuring a simple, yet important gospel message was shared. The feedback has been encouraging and one school has already booked in for December 2026.

**Harbour Lights** - As each year passes, we are thankful for the ongoing relationships we have with the young people. Some are at a transition stage of life as they begin to leave higher education and move into employment or further education. The volunteers at Harbour Lights play an important role in offering guidance and support to individuals.

- We were delighted to see several families and young people attending the Crib Service at St Anne's on Christmas Eve. They were very much at home there.

**Check-in Groups, Lad's Group & individual pastoral support** - Ongoing support of individuals and small groups is an important part of our work. This occurs at Dunbar and West Barns Primary and Dunbar Grammar School. It is an addition to the support offered by other services working with the schools.

- Pray for the Lad's Group. One of its members lost his mum over Christmas. We will continue to support him and his family in the coming weeks.
- The P7's in Check-in groups will now begin to focus on preparing for high school. The transition process needs more time for some. We are aiming to enable them to have a smooth, stress free move.
- Give thanks for the informal pastoral support that our volunteers give in their work in classrooms. Whilst they are in reading or helping around the classroom, their presence and listening ear is a significant help to the children.

**Easter RME event with Primary 4's** - We are planning to deliver a Bible storytelling event with the Primary 4's. It builds on the success of last year's Knitted Bible event. This will be in school, but delivered by our volunteers. It will be based on the days of the week celebrated in the Easter festival, e.g., Maundy Thursday, Good Friday.

- Pray for the preparations for this. It is a new initiative and we're thankful for the opportunity. It will involve a large team of folk delivering the story of Easter in a creative way.

**Management Group and Trustees** - Often overlooked in these prayer updates are the people behind the scenes of DACYP. Our Trustees & Management Group do lots of work keeping the organisation on track.

- We have a changeover happening with the Safeguarding Lead person. This is an essential role within any charity working with young people, so please pray for a smooth transition.
- Give thanks for the time and commitment that these folks give to DACYP.

I hope this is enough information to help keep you up to date and to assist you in your prayers. Do ask if you have any questions, and get in touch if you have anything to share.

All the best for 2026,

Richard