

Prayer News - August 2026

It's good to be back to the start of a new school year. Although much of what DACYP does is the same each year, there remains a real sense of it being a new day loaded with opportunities to see God at work, and looking back with thankful hearts at what He has already done.

The verse of Isaiah 43:19 came to mind, and if you come to the Prayer Breakfast I can tell you a bit more about why this is relevant to us and not just the Israelites;

***See, I am doing a new thing!
Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?
I am making a way in the wilderness
and streams in the wasteland.***

Schools Work - The big headline is that Dunbar Primary School has its new head teacher, Grant Gillies. He has been quick to engage with DACYP and speaks very highly of our work, especially the high level of volunteering.

- Do pray for Grant as he settles in and leads the way for the school community.
- At the Primary School it has been a quiet start to allow classes to get going. I am also using this time to plan with the SLT who and how to recruit children for the various pastoral groups we have. The challenge we face is that there are more children than there are places.
- As part of our long awaited...still to be completed Service level Agreement (SLA) with East Lothian Council, our volunteers will need to undertake safeguarding training. It is a necessary nuisance, as most of them will have already done it previously. However, it is all part of us retaining a professional relationship with the local authority and schools. Give thanks that we are in a position to do that.
- Multi-faith prayer space - Having piloted a prayer space last session, we found that it proved to be a very useful space for people to find peace and calm, and to reflect and pray. The space will continue and I have a team of Primary 7's who have taken on the job of running it.
- At Dunbar Grammar School, both myself and Douglas Hamilton will be taking assemblies this week to launch the Cup of Kindness Award. Give thanks for the opportunity to share our Christian faith in a natural and relevant way to the whole school.
- The lad's group officially started back last week. But before we could organise a roster, the lads were keen to meet and share some of their struggles that had accumulated over the summer. It has immediately proven to be a valuable resource to them in keeping on top of the very real struggles they encounter in life.

SUMMER PROGRAMME - We've hardly had time to catch our breath, but we are thankful for a brilliant summer programme.

Life Bites - The cookery programme proved to be a big hit and each day we had many young people working alongside our volunteers to prepare a meal. This sort of outreach is putting in foundations that can be built on. For example, young people who previously came to us through Life Bites went on the SU Holiday and are attending local churches where they will know people who had served them as volunteers.

Anne and the team did a fabulous job preparing for these 10 days. We give thanks for the way God brings together the talents in His church.

Life Walks - Our walking programme created fun and reflective ways to engage with Bible teachings. We found that walking and talking enables people to share their stories and thoughts. There were so many highlights, but for me it was visiting St John's Well at Spott, and talking about the Pool of Bethesda. "Did people really pray for the sick to get better?" asked a young person. "They still do", I replied. They were quite astounded and said, "I've never heard of that before". A reminder of how little some folk know about our faith. The story continued when we reached a bridge over a stream. Here we paused to look into the water and bring to mind those folk we know who are unwell. In a moment of quiet I prayed for them. The young person told me that they had prayed for their dad, who was struggling with his mental health. These sorts of stories ran throughout our different walks.

Scripture Union Holiday at Scoughall - I had the privilege of taking seven young people to Scoughall for the week. The connection with them was through school check-in groups, Messy Church, Harbour Lights and Life Bites. One of them had found faith in Christ last summer and has been attending a local church since, so returning was an important step in his faith journey. The others had no church background.

At the end of the week, 2 of the girls also decided to follow Jesus. It's easy to say those words in the bubble of camp, but living it out at home is the real challenge. But praise God that one of them has been attending church since, and has brought a friend along too.

The other story of encouragement at Scoughall was that of Sandy. He became a Christian last year at the holiday and has become a regular at Prestonkirk. On the first night of the camp he did an interview about how he came to faith. It was very powerful and the young people responded well to his wise words.

FUNDING - Let's get to the point. Our cash flow is not as healthy as we would like it to be. We are drawing on reserves, which hinders our long term planning. We need more money to keep DACYP going and to enable us to develop and grow.

We have a team working on grant applications. It's a tough business and I'm sure they would value your prayer. Other than that, we really would like to see either more individual regular givers, or for those already giving to increase their contribution.

RETREAT - After a busy summer and a turbulent year, I am taking a few days away to the highland escape of Kilmalieu, for a Youth Workers retreat. I don't know what awaits me there (probably a lot of midgies!), but do pray it will be a productive time for me and the other youth workers to be recharged and restored.

BELHAVEN MESSY CHURCH - This Sunday (30th) I will be supporting Messy Church. Two of the girls I mentioned earlier have said they would help me with the storytelling. I hope it will be a blessing to them and those who attend it.

Thank you for keeping DACYP in prayer. I enjoy this opportunity to update you on the work and on what God is doing through it. If you have any questions or comments or prayer points for me or DACYP, do get in touch dunbaryouthworker@btinternet.com

Every blessing,

Richard