

PRAYER BREAKFAST - NOVEMBER 2025

The timings of the Prayer Breakfast and the Christmas RME lessons means that by the time folk gather, I will have already done over half of the Christmas lessons....and it's not even the end of November! Fasten your seatbelts for a bumper prayer news.

REFLECT - The pace of things is ramping up as we head to the holiday break, but there's a lot to do before then. It's easy to go into autopilot and get through the different things in our diaries. But as I encourage young people to have a closer, deeper look at Christmas, then we should do too. This year I've got ahead of it by listening to an advent podcast each day in November. Last year the Inspire Women's Group bought me a scented candle. I've tried to get into the habit of lighting it in my office each morning for a short moment of wonder and reflection. If nothing else, my office smells better, but I am finding it is giving me a more meaningful day ahead. I hope you can find your own means to go deeper with your faith this Christmas.

Andy's Man Club - It has been a difficult few weeks as one of our young guys (22) died suddenly. He was one of the young people who had previously been in our mentoring group some 11 year ago. There are few positives in such tragic circumstances. I am grateful that the family know me and reached out for support. I am grateful for the bond and friendships at Andy's Man Club that supported each other and Ryan's family. I am grateful that I was able to speak at his funeral and hopefully, bring some hope and light into the lives of those who really feel in darkness.

- Please do pray for Kerry (his mum) and partner Taylor, and Ryan's younger sisters and brothers. 2 of them are primary age.

Lad's Group - Some of our lads have been going through some really difficult home situations and it has been great to see them support each other through these. One lad said, ***'That was a really good session. I know it was only a small group but that is sometimes better because we open up more.'***

- Give thanks for these powerful moments that remind us how effective these groups are.
- Pray for the lads who are facing a very different Christmas because of family situations that are unwanted.

Harbour Lights - It is great to follow up on some of the weekly groups at Harbour Lights. We have seen a couple of new faces join in, and some of our regulars returning after a break. Something that has traditionally been popular with the group is the Crib Service at St Anne's. Once again, we hope to involve them and build on the connection with congregation of St Anne's.

Check-in Groups at Dunbar Primary - These are going from strength to strength as the young people gain confidence and open up to each other. This month we took them to visit the grave of the Unknown Sailor at Dunbar Parish Church. It was part of their Rotary Junior Community Award and it was good to see them engaging with the time of remembrance. We got caught out by the rain so took refuge in St Anne's, where we had hot chocolate and looked at the war memorial in there.

- Some of the groups are signed up for the Christmas activities, so give thanks for this link to the churches.

Seasons for Growth - We are almost at the end of our current programme. The group have shared how beneficial it has been and they are looking forward to inviting their friends in to tell them about it. It is quite moving to hear them share their stories of loss and change, but also hugely rewarding to see them benefiting from it.

RME Innerwick - It was good to be back in Innerwick Primary again with Suzie Fletcher. The 2 x Big Questions sessions went very well and we hope to be back for a Christmas session.

RME Christmas lessons - These are all happening at Dunbar in the week of 24 November. I can tell you that in preparation for them I have been interviewing the children about their thoughts around the question 'Is it okay to have Christmas without Christ?' You might be encouraged to hear that this year's Dunbar Primary 7's largely think it is not, and that we should do something to acknowledge Christ.

- I have still to visit East Linton and hopefully Innerwick and others. The idea of the sessions is to encourage them to go deeper and to look again at the story of Jesus coming into the world, and to show them why Christians are so full of joy in this season. (Well they are supposed to be!)

COMING UP AND NEEDING PRAYER...

DUNBAR PRIMARY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS SERVICES - This is the first time that the whole school has returned to Christmas assemblies since COVID. This means there will be a whole generation who have not been to church with school . . . or anyone else for that matter! It is a really good thing to happen. The services are spread over four services in Belhaven Church and St Anne's Church. Our volunteers will be accompanying the classes to the churches and DACYP is assisting with the content, along with the Ministers.

Two of the services are extended to include an RME class. These will be a new challenge and we prayerfully look forward to what they might bring.

CHRISTMAS LIFE BITES AND CRAFTY CHRISTMAS

Two new events that DACYP are running in December are geared to giving parents and carers some respite on Saturdays leading up to Christmas.

Crafty Christmas is aimed at P1-P7's and will use crafts and storytelling to explore the story of Jesus. So far we have only seven signed up. It would be good to reach at least 20.

Life Bites Christmas special, will see the young people prepare, cook and eat a Christmas lunch. 13 have signed up so far and many are returning from the summer, or from our Check-in Groups or Harbour Lights.

- the practical arrangements and programme need your prayer. Dorothy Hilsley is leading the Crafty Christmas, and Anne Harvey the Life Bites.

We are really looking forward to these two new events, and give thanks for this new opportunity.

Multi-faith prayer space in school - At last month's prayer breakfast, I was about to invite those interested, to a meeting about setting up a prayer space in school. I was quite overwhelmed by the response. 37 children turned up, many with some brilliant ideas and the desire to create a sacred space in school.

This does present a problem. What I had expected to be a small working group, has become much larger. This week I will be gathering some of them together to look at giving the space an advent theme leading up to Christmas. The imagery of light in darkness and hope is important to the Christian faith, but it spans humanity and other faiths too.

New Bible - I will close with a very encouraging story. You might remember one of our lads came to faith in the summer on the SU camp at Scoughall. Earlier in the week his mum contacted me to ask for guidance on buying him a new Bible. His old one was trashed! In fact, it was very well thumbed and because he had taken it to school, where he prepares meals for old folk, it was covered in various types of food. What an encouragement to know that this lad has experienced a change in his life that has resulted in his Bible being central to his life.

I hope these things will help you as you continue to pray for DACYP. Have a wonderful Christmas and look out for our new Christmas card designed with Primary 6, and for some new designs that we are selling.

Every blessing,

Richard