



Trusting God amidst all that life brings...

"For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well...all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be." Psalm 139:13-14, 16

On 27th April 2016 (13 days early) Aaron Matthew McClure was born (weighing 6lbs 12oz) only two hours after the Southampton CU committee had left our house after dinner with our team. Already Aaron has brought much joy to our family and his older siblings are all very eager to help look after him! Aaron is a very chilled and quite sleepy baby. After being quite a pickle early on with his feeding, he now seems to be doing well and is putting on weight nicely. It is quite strange having such a small baby given our last few babies were almost 9lbs!

Amidst the blessing there have also been challenges and Debbie spent just over two weeks in the Mother & Baby Unit at Winchester (with Aaron). Having suffered previously with depression 'post-natal' there was an increased risk of recurrence. A good safety net was already in place and it's clear that we were able to pick this up early and therefore minimise its severity. The safety net included a plan to increase dosages of medication if needed and the unit has proved to be a helpful place to implement this plan which has worked quickly and effectively. The unit is staffed with a team of medical professionals including child care assistants who provide 24/7 help with Baby. They have been allowing Debbie to catch up on sleep and start to feel human again! After spending increasing time out of the unit (and last weekend at home), we are pleased to say that Debbie is now home. We are very grateful for the prayers and support of close family and friends during what has been a challenging time.

As we look forward we are very grateful to God for the way He continues to lead us and enable us to deal with the blessings and challenges that each day brings. God continues to teach us to trust in Him and the lessons we are learning in this regard seem to be endless. It's been not easy revisiting this difficult place again after we had thought it was behind us. The unexpected blessing of baby #5 has indeed brought challenges but we are very grateful for Him and have no regrets. As a family of seven (the Biblical number signifying completion) we now look to how God will continue to bless us through these amazing young people. God clearly has His purposes in providing us with each one of our children and we wait expectantly to see how He will use them. For Debs and I however, we trust that our days of bearing children are well and truly behind us! Please pray that as we move on from this fabulously exciting (yet also enormously challenging) stage of life and that Debbie's health will go from strength to strength.

Working with the people God gives...

In addition to hectic family life we have also been busy working with a variety of people over these past few months. The student ministry has been talking about what it means to live the Christian Life (spring term) and Exploring Identity (summer term). The change in format to have all the groups meeting together fortnightly to eat, worship and have some input together has been well received. It has definitely been a highlight of the year for us along with being part of the leadership with Adam Collett and Lydia Clarke and working alongside a great bunch of older students and graduates to make disciples amongst students.

My guys Bible study group (top right photo) finished off our series in the life of David and are now working through Ruth. Mo headed back to India in January but Stephen, Geoff, Emi, Norbert and myself have met regularly these past few months to read the Bible, share and pray together. It is so exciting and such a privilege to see what God is doing in the lives of these inspiring young men.

Steve enjoyed two trips away (pictured alongside) last term. First he spent 3 days in Bergen visiting friends and doing some planning for our summer trip to Norway in the summer. Secondly there was the trip to Blackpool for the annual Navigators BIG Weekend; this was an excellent time which combined stimulating content and time together with a great group of people. Both trips were very encouraging and we see many windows of opportunity for the future too.

We have also had visits from a number of people who previously studied here in Southampton and who were part of the group. It is an enormous privilege to catch up with people like this who are now seeking to live and serve Jesus elsewhere. This fits well with our desire to impact people not merely for their time with us whilst here at University but for the whole of life.

Please pray over the coming months:

- Please give thanks for Debbie's swift recovery and pray for continuing progress and good health after the challenges of the last few weeks. Pray too for Aaron to settle into life at home and establish good routines.
- Give thanks for Benjamin, Naomi, Samuel and Jacob who continue to do really well in the various classes and groups they attend; we are particularly grateful for the resilience over the past few weeks.
- Please pray for Steve, Adam and Lydia as we begin review the term and plan for the Autumn Term. This plan will be presented and discussed with the other student leaders from around England at the end of June.
- Please pray for the planning and preparation that we are involved with for our summer trip to Norway (see separate letter). This is always such an encouraging time for us so please pray that would be the case once more!
- We are also giving some energy to plans to adapt our home in order to create space to house our recently extended family; please pray for wisdom and God's provision for this project.

To God be the Glory,

Steve, Debs, Benjamin, Naomi, Samuel, Jacob & Aaron



Summer Diary

Mon 30 May – SOTON NAVS

End of Year BBQ

Thurs 9 June – International Missions Team (IMT) meeting

End of June (TBC) – Norway Team Orientation (Glasgow)

Tues 28 July – Student Leaders Community (B'ham)

Thurs 21 Jul to Wed 17 Aug Summer Trip in Norway (all)

Sat 27 Aug to Sun 4 Sep Holiday & NAVS National Student Forum (Lakes)



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