



## Celebrating God's Faithfulness...

“...You know with all your heart and soul that not one of all the good promises the Lord your God gave you has failed. Every promise has been fulfilled; not one has failed.” Joshua 23:14 (NIV)

It's Official! Our time leading the Navigator student work in Southampton has now drawn to a close. It's a ministry that we have been involved with for 22 years and that we've been leading for 15 years! To celebrate the current group sprang a wonderful surprise party with people who had been involved during our time in the ministry. More than 50 people were able to be there while others sent messages. The group represented the various generations that we

have worked with and they are now serving in a wide variety of contexts and roles. It was a particular blessing to see people logging in from Norway, Malta, Malaysia, France & USA. We love how this diverse gathering communicates something of the heart that we have had over the years to invest deeply in the lives of students and are so encouraged to see them continuing to walk with Jesus. In all that we have done in Southampton, Norway and Latvia we have longed to grow lasting fruit and help people become lifelong labourers for Jesus. Thank you so much to all who have prayed for us and supported us over the years to be involved in this ministry.



## Building for the future...

As we step away from student ministry we have been doing lots of thinking about what comes next and we are excited to share that the Navigators have asked us to pioneer a new initiative which we are calling “*Building to Last*”. For people who have been involved with us this will be a familiar title because Steve uses this a lot. It combines a building metaphor (which Paul often uses in the New Testament) with the idea of developing something that will last. Jesus also uses this same idea when he talks of bearing fruit ... “fruit that will last” (John 15:16). For a wide variety of reasons faith does not always last. Perhaps as Jesus says in Matthew 7:24-27, the foundations were insufficient and the storms of life washed it away. When we reflect back over the past 7 years, we are reminded that we ourselves have been through some challenging times. It has been a time of pruning, of learning how faith must be “proved genuine” (1 Peter 1:7) and of growing resilience in the face of all that life brings our way. In the words of Os Guinness “Living is Faith's reality test”: genuine faith however perseveres to the very end (Hebrews 3:14).

**“Living is Faith's  
reality test.”**

***Os Guinness  
Doubt (1976)***

In this next phase of ministry we would particularly love to get alongside some of those we have been involved with to strengthen, encourage and help them to keep on going. Our longstanding vision and heart to grow and sustain lifelong labourers for Jesus Christ will remain but the context will be new. In this new ministry we will seek to work alongside people in their natural spheres of influence. It will not be tied to a particular age range but broadly it will sit between the Navigators' established Student and Second Half Living ministries. This new assignment allows us to pick up where we have left off with countless people from our time in Student work and those we have been involved with through Formation School (2017-Present) and through our travelling work in Europe. We hesitate to give too much detail because this is still an early stage and it will be an evolving idea. However we do envisage it involving a process of reflection (as we try to listen and understand the needs of this stage), a phase of building a new team of people (either locally, nationally or even internationally) and then a time of fleshing out (through the development of resources) and putting into practice some of the things that we have been learning in order to help people to build to last.

## Ministry Update

**Student Ministry:** When lockdown hit we were able to quickly move online. It was a strange way to finish but at the end of June, we said our goodbyes to the current group and have been working on handing over to the new team (Tim, Naomi, Stephen, Tom & Sarah). Please do pray for them as they prepare for a new academic year under what are particularly challenging circumstances. In the diary we have a commitment to run further Emerging Leaders' training for the English student work over the coming year: please pray that this would be possible.

**Formation School:** Steve has really enjoyed working as part of the Formation School team this past year. Despite also having to shift online, this has been a really encouraging year, and we are so thankful to God for all that He has been doing. Last week Steve finished teaching his way through Track 4 (Growing disciples who make disciples), and the students graduated this week. We have also been working on changes for 2020-21, which will involve some rationalisation of the content. We are recruiting for next year, and expect Steve to continue giving around 2 days a week. Please pray that God would draw in those that would really benefit from this transformative programme.

**International Ministry:** Sadly, all our summer programmes got cancelled including our own trip to Norway. It turns out that it still takes a fair bit of work to unpick a planned summer programme and we now have vouchers for next year's air travel, assuming that travel restrictions are lifted. We see Discipleship Week continuing in future years as a natural expression and key part of this new ministry assignment. Steve will also continue to serve on the Navigators International Missions Team (IMT) as he has done over the past 6 years.

**Summary:** Taken together there are a number of things that will remain constant for us in this new phase of ministry: Formation School, Norway, Emerging Leaders & IMT. Yet we will now do that from the basis of a new assignment to raise up and sustain lifelong labourers for Jesus beyond the student years. We will be in touch again soon, but we wanted to update you on how God has been leading us.



## Family Update

Throughout lockdown the kids have continued to go to school (due to Debs' key worker status): initially part-time, but more recently full-time. Still, the summer holidays are almost upon us and without our usual trip to Norway it is going to be quite a different summer. We managed to rearrange our Lake District holiday from Easter so that we can spend two weeks there at the end of August God willing. We are really looking forward to some time away! When we return from the Lakes the kids will be facing some major transitions: in particular Aaron (4yrs) beginning Primary School and Ben (11yrs) starting at Secondary school. The other three all go up a year: Jacob (6yrs) to year 2, Sam (nearly 8yrs) to year 3 and Naomi (nearly 10yrs) to year 5. Debs continues to split her time between family, the Nav ministry and working as an Occupational Therapist (3 days/week). We are so thankful for good health for all and that God has brought us through these challenging months of lockdown. Please pray for all of us as we juggle the different things that we are doing during the next few weeks in the lead up to our time away.

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