

# McClure Mumblings



Steve & Debs serving with The Navigators in Southampton and beyond | Dec 2020 Edition



## Glory abundantly in Christ...

“Convinced of this, I know that I will remain and continue with you all, for your progress and joy in the faith, so that in me you may have ample cause to glory in Christ Jesus, because of my coming to you again”. [Philippians 1:25-26 \(ESVUK\)](#)

This week we were talking about the above verses at Formation School. Philippians is familiar territory but for whatever reason these verses really came alive in terms of a fresh way to think about our investment in disciple-making. At the time of writing this letter, Paul is in prison and in the proceeding verses he is wrestling with whether he wants to depart and be with Christ (which he says is better by far), or whether he wants to go on living (which he says will mean fruitful labour). Paul concludes that it is more necessary for their sake that he remains and in doing so, he then says that he will continue with them for their *progress and joy in the faith*. In a world where there is a huge amount of emphasis on activity and productivity this is such a helpful reminder that ministry is about people and helping them for their progress and joy in the faith. Why does Paul want to do this? So that they would then have ample cause to glory in Christ. Other versions translate this as ‘take pride in Christ’ (NLT), ‘overflow in Christ’ (AMP) or ‘rejoice abundantly’ (KJV). Paul wants them to delight in Christ and have that delight overflow in and through their lives, on account of his ministry with them.

Those of you who know us well, or have been a part of our ministry, know that we have laboured these past years for this cause. We have sought to create environments to foster people’s progress and joy in the faith. It has been a huge adventure and many of the folk we have been working with have become very dear friends. As we’ve entered this new phase of ministry, we have sought to continue to place people at the heart of our work and it has been such a joy to begin catching up with friends both here in Southampton and across the UK. Indeed, in a world where much of ministry happens online, we have also been really encouraged to chat with friends and colleagues in Norway, Latvia and the USA. We have also begun to start drawing small groups together for ongoing connection, encouragement and input. Steve recently met with his Formation School Huddle Group from last year (so exciting to see them going on with Jesus) and a small group of recent graduates from the student ministry to think about life stages, and we used the life of Joseph as bit of a case study on this.

We very much see this year as one of transition as we try out new things and seek to develop a new ministry context among those who predominantly are now labouring in new contexts. To this end, we would love to contribute towards a movement of people passionately committed to intentional, whole-life disciple-making that would help equip and sustain people as they walk and labour with Jesus. As we have chatted to people, it’s clear that for many, life has been anything but straightforward. Things like the busyness of work, struggling with health issues, loneliness/isolation and questions of future/direction all make it hard to ‘walk by faith and not by sight’ (2 Cor 5:7). The impact of COVID19 has intensified some of these things and we see the acute need to get alongside others for their progress and joy in the faith. Perhaps this is the lesson that has stood out more than any other – we all need others to walk with us through all that life brings our way.

# Family Update

At Christmas is almost upon us once more, we would also like to provide a greater focus on how our young family is getting on. In lots of ways, the kids are the people in whom we are investing with most and unsurprisingly we often get asked about them:

**Ben (nearly 12):** This term Ben started at Cantell Secondary School (year 7). He has taken this in his stride although the past two weeks while isolating at home (following a cluster of cases in his year) have been hard. Ben has been taking himself to/from school and enjoying greater freedom during his free time hanging out with friends down at the local park. Until lockdown II, Ben was also heavily involved in football and was putting in some exceptional displays for his team, St Francis FC. Ben loves our 3 cats, and they love him very much also!



**Naomi (10):** It is extraordinary how Naomi copes so well with her four brothers. Indeed, when she is in the mood, she is exceptionally good at 'mothering' them. She is now in year 5 and has a lovely group of close friends at school who she enjoys spending time with. She loves baking (cakes galore) and music where she is simultaneously trying to master the clarinet, piano and guitar. Naomi loves animals and her hamster, 'Pineapple', has just turned one. When he is not ripping up the carpets, he can be quite adorable!

**Sam (8):** Now in year 3, Sam also has a great group of friends at school. Sam is very active and really enjoys family hiking, plus activities like football when given the chance. Sam also loves his construction and is always the one most excited about Daddy's construction/maintenance projects. He always has some Lego project on the go. Sam in particular has enjoyed the kids activities which the church has been putting on lately, albeit through Zoom.



**Jacob (6.5):** Those who see our family regularly will know that Jacob is the cheeky one. He seems very popular at school and in fact, most days on the school run someone different will be shouting his name! Jacob is loving being in Year 2 and has a few close friends that he likes to spend time with. Jacob is less active than the others, perhaps because of his asthma (which occasionally means a late-night trip to the hospital) but his younger brother and roommate Aaron, certainly keeps him on his toes.

**Aaron (4.5):** There has also been big changes for Aaron as he started at St Denys Primary School in September. Because he was used to being at Preschool all day last year, he has also taken this change in his stride...most days he just walks straight in without looking back. At home Aaron is quite a character and loves beating up his siblings. Being the youngest is never easy but he is very adept at letting us know he is there! Aaron also loves the outdoors, but he is also quite content sat building train sets in the house as well!



## Items for Prayer...

- Thank God for a great term for the kids at school. In a COVID19 world there are of course things which have not been so easy for them especially in recent weeks during Lockdown II. By and large, life has however been relatively normal for them. Please pray for each of them that they would continue to see and enjoy their own progress and joy in the faith.
- Please pray for us as we continue to develop a ministry amongst young adults beyond their student years. Pray for timely connections with people and when possible to start bringing folk together in person. In particular, we would love to run another Discipleship Week in Norway again next summer if restrictions allow (provisional dates are Sat 31 Jul to Sat 7 Aug 2021).
- Please pray for Steve as he continues his role as Assistant Director at Formation School two days a week. We have had a brilliant time this term with the 10 students enrolled on the course and it has been such a privilege to see them growing in faith, hope and love.
- The International Missions Team continues to care for our mission partners around the world as well as trying to get our heads around what opportunities for short term mission could be appropriate next summer. Please pray for much wisdom for the team and for Steve especially as he seeks to encourage some of our mission partners.
- Finally, please do give thanks that our recent fund-raising has so far raised 76% of our target. This relates to our monthly needs from January onwards. Some larger one-off gifts have allowed us to place further fundraising on the back burner until after the New Year.

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