



Growing Young Disciples...

³Great is the LORD and most worthy of praise; his greatness no one can fathom. ⁴One generation commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts. ⁵They speak of the glorious splendour of your majesty – and I will meditate on your wonderful works. **Psalm 154:3-5**

As you know, for many years we were primarily involved with students and then two years ago we transitioned into ministry amongst 20s to 40s. Debbie's main contributions have also been in flux and earlier this year she resigned her job as an Occupational Therapist with the NHS. She is now enjoying giving a little more time to her Nav work and serving in a number of principle areas. We hope that this letter will help to bring an understanding of some of the things that she is doing through the lens of growing disciples across the generations!

Firstly, Debs continues to serve on the **NavMums team** and is so encouraged by this ministry which provides a monthly online gathering for Nav staff women with young children. Since its beginnings during Covid, NavMums has covered a variety of topics; some helping these women to focus on their relationship with God in this busy phase of life, some sessions have explored our identity in Christ and how that can be challenged by motherhood, whilst others have looked at aspects of and the joys, pressures and struggles that come from discipling and raising our children. Alongside the monthly gatherings, Debs has also been running a monthly **zoom Bible study** for some of the women and this group has been a real blessing. We have been working through Psalm 23, one verse each month, and being able to delve deeply into and meditate on verses at this pace and discuss together has provided some excellent discussion and some challenging applications to each of our lives. We have all come away encouraged by just how much our Father, our Good Shepherd cares for us.

Secondly, at Church in the weeks after Easter, several women felt prompted to re-launch a weekly toddler group, under the banner **Families Together**. At the same time Debs had attended a course by *Parenting for Faith* on how to transform our Toddler groups to become a space that equips disciples and encourages the parents in their faith. Debs felt prompted to offer to join this team, bringing this focus to the new group, as it relaunched. We have been running with a small number of families from church whilst we find our feet and set out a vision and ethos for how we want the group to run. On top of the usual play activities set out, we now have a small thought from the Bible for the parents each week. The team have the focus to get alongside the parents coming along, to ask questions that will help us support, pray for and encourage those attending with the aim of building a culture that develops deep relationships as we invest in the individuals coming along.

Thirdly, Debs also continues to meet up **1-2-1** with a number of women to disciple them and encourage them in their daily walk with Jesus. Several of these women have children, and Debs is walking the parenting journey with

them as they seek to raise and disciple their children. Others that Debs meet with are in complex relationships where there is little support and encouragement to follow Jesus or engage with church, and so Debs has been supporting these women to develop skills and habits that will sustain them in their Bible reading times and in their times of prayer. It has been encouraging to see their faith grow, even during times of discouragement or adversity.

Disciple-making Highlights

What a joy it is has been working within our other ministry contexts. Below are a few highlights from some of the other things we are involved with:

- At the start of this month, we celebrated with 14 students graduating at **Formation School**. Steve also finished up with his small (Huddle) group. This year's cohort have been such a blessing to Steve and the team.
- Around 45 people attended our **REFUEL Day conference** in April and the day was very well received by those who came. It was so good to be together in person – not something that we have done too often lately.
- In May we joined the Navigators first **National Conference** for three years near Lichfield. What a joy it was to reconnect with Navigator friends serving all around the country.
- As part of Steve's role on the International Missions Team (IMT) we've so far seen three teams heading out for **Short Term Programmes** to Slovakia, Poland & Central Asia. These are the first trips since the pandemic began.
- The **WELT team** has been on a steep learning curve as we've sought to learn how to work together. recently we've been working on planning a Day conference for 17th September and England & Wales Reps.
- The **Building to Last** groups met monthly online throughout the year and in-person since January. What an encouragement this has been, and it has been interesting to see a growing core in each of these groups.
- There have been a lot of changes at **Church** this year including our lead minister moving on after 18 years. Our own contributions at church have been growing with Steve now taking leadership of Formation school and Debbie taking responsibility for the 4-7s group on a Sunday morning.



Items for Prayer...

- Do join us in giving thanks for a great year across all the different elements of our ministry portfolio. Please pray specifically for rest and refreshment for us all during these generally lighter summer months.
- Pray for the NavMums and church toddler ministries that Debbie is involved with. Please pray that these ministries would be a massive encouragement to these mums and a huge motivation to invest in their children.
- Give thanks for an excellent finish to Formation School this year. Ask God to bless the outgoing students as they transition into new things and draw together a new cohort of people for the coming year.
- Give thanks for the positive feedback about the REFUEL conference back in April. Please pray for the next one planned for **Saturday 8th October** on the theme of Renewing our Hope & Strength in the Lord.
- Pray through our separate letter about our summer trip to Norway where we will be running our *Discipleship Week* and hosting a number of others during our three-week stay.
- Please do pray for our England and Wales Gathering, *"Together"* planned for **Saturday 17th September** in Birmingham. Pray that this would be a really special time for the Navigator movement in England and Wales.
- Finally, please pray that all the things that we are involved with would serve to raise up disciples, and disciple-makers for Jesus, and help us see God's Kingdom advancing.

🏠 53 Harefield Road, Southampton, UK, SO17 3TG

📞 Home: 02380-677557, Steve: 07852-233960, Debs: 07767-145012

🌐 Website: www.the-mcclures.co.uk (new blogs, series outlines and bible studies available)

@ steve.mcclure@navigators.co.uk / debbie.mcclure@navigators.co.uk

@ Sign-up for our regular e-mail updates: <http://www.shorturl.at/kszE7>

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