



Steve and Gill Bryant's Prayer News October 2020

Dear friends

Warm greetings on a blustery autumn day. It is time to send you an update once again.

Thank you to those who have been praying for us and even getting in touch to ask for news.



Derek Clive Bryant

This time we are starting with **family news**. In our last letter we explained that Steve's parents had just moved into a care home. Sadly, Steve's dad, Derek Clive Bryant, passed away (with Covid 19) on 23rd April, at the age of 85. Clive was a lovely man who followed Jesus for many years and was a strong supporter of WEC. The funeral had to be very small but it gave glory to God for his life. Steve's mum Cynthia was unable to attend due to ill health and Covid restrictions. Due to the virus and the distance involved, we have not been able to visit her and this has been very difficult. Please remember Cynthia in your prayers, and pray that we will soon be able to visit.

The rest of the family are doing well. Michael and Bethany returned from Liberia in August and we were able to see them before the current lockdown in Wales took effect. Bethany has started her paediatrics training post and Michael continues with a mix of locums, teaching and telephone triage. David is as busy as ever with garden work, easier now that he has a car. Peter and Miriam moved house just before the lockdown and have been kept very busy with refurbishment as well as continuing their jobs from home.

Ministry has continued throughout the lockdown period, and we have been as busy as ever. Last time we mentioned Bourofaye Christian School and Grace International School: both of these schools closed for a while, but are now reopened (BCS on a very limited basis). In July and August we were able to run the MK Staff Training online instead of having a residential course based at our church. This involved nearly two weeks of two Zoom meetings (total four hours) each day - we are thankful that it went smoothly and that the participants engaged really well with the course. It involved a lot of preparation for us beforehand as we adapted our style to suit the online context. Most of the new staff for BCS are now in place and others are seeking to join them in January or next summer. A home schooling teacher has just arrived in the Gambia, and another teacher will go to Chiang Mai next year.

Steve also gave some separate training to a couple who are heading for Chiang Mai to fill the role of long term dorm parents for Grace International School students living at the WEC boarding hostel. It is a wonderful answer to prayer to have this couple en route – please pray for them and their children as they seek to overcome the hurdles involved. The team there would like to see them in place as soon as possible.

Back in June, Steve ran two days of online safeguarding training for WEC leaders across Europe. This was supposed to happen in the Netherlands but, like everything else, it was put online! We are grateful for the technology that enables us to continue with our work.

Last week we were very blessed to be able to join in with the WEC UK conference, which took place via Zoom. It was very encouraging to engage with others in prayer, listening, sharing and seeing what God is doing both here in the UK and overseas, through the ministry of WEC. On one evening there was a one-hour event open to the public – this is still available online on You Tube: https://youtu.be/_kltKrPJvCo and we recommend it to you.

Currently WEC UK is running a Candidates' Course for nine people who are joining as long term missionaries. This is wonderful to see in a time when it might be expected that there would be less interest in committing to world missions. Most of the people on the course have a long term connection with WEC, through attending one of our missionary training colleges, or helping at summer camps and other activities. It is so good to see the long term effects of their involvement with us over time.

Did you know that worldwide, WEC has 1920 members from 67 nationalities, working in 90 countries? At the conference we learned of some encouraging global developments such as the current fast growth of the Church in France, through the united efforts of churches and mission agencies, and the individual experiences of many who are seeking to reach their neighbours here in the UK.

Some countries that received missionaries in the past are now starting to send their own workers. WEC is very much involved in this exciting development. Also we are now part of a global inter-missions group seeking to support missionary families from all senders, including the more recent ones. New sending countries face unique challenges, although there is huge potential for reaching the unreached with the Gospel. Please pray with us for effective partnership and good mutual understanding between old and new.

Covid 19 has affected all of us, although we did not want to make it the central emphasis of this letter. We are thankful for so many things – health and strength, God's provision for our family, and the opportunity to have two short breaks in August and September in the Forest of Dean and the northern Cotswolds. Our allotment has yielded large quantities of soft fruit, potatoes, onions and beans.

As we live on the edge of a small town, we have been able to enjoy lots of country walks and Steve continues with running. Gill misses her swimming sessions but Steve has recently returned to the gym.



Wild flowers

One summer day while out walking, Gill picked one of every wild flower she could see.

In this time of loss and change, it is good to remember this Bible verse from Isaiah 40:8:

“The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the word of our God endures forever.”

Blessings and prayers

Steve and Gill Bryant