

## **New Year's Greetings from Brechin, Scotland!**

What a joy to start the New Year as it is to start each new day with our Lord. We continue to give Him praise for the peace He leaves with us to acknowledge we are right where He wants us to be.

God has brought in several new families to our church that are truly searching for God and His Word. Please continue to pray with us that these people will keep on coming long enough to understand how God longs to be a part of their lives. There are serious situations amongst the members such as chronic illnesses and job losses. Pray for continued spiritual growth with the ones who are believers; that they will stand strong in God's Word as others watch them to see what this thing called Christianity is really supposed to be about. The enjoyment of the journey outweighs the slowness because we see real lives being changed.

Besides the church wide Bible study, each week there are several one on one Bible studies that Ruth and I do. Two men in our church have seen the need to do an outreach Bible study that will start in February. Pray with us that people will have the desire to attend this eight-week study and that this will strengthen the spiritual growth of the two families who are leading the study. It is exciting to see them step out like this.

Even with the adversary fighting, we are experiencing great blessings of God. The football/soccer chaplaincy is ongoing and interesting doors of ministry into individual lives is taking place, and we have folk coming to church due to these contacts. I would ask you to pray that souls would find their need for Christ above all.

Our real challenge is that I have been sick since the early part of December with colds and flu that seem to be the not quite enough to knock me down but never seem to get over them either. Here it is mid-January and everyone in the family has had it off and on with both Ruth and I have been on antibiotics. Another health challenge is that the leg I broke in the motorcycle accident in June has become quite painful again. I am to be admitted into the Fracture Clinic for further testing and examination to see if we can find the causes of the new pain.

The good news, on the other hand, is that though finances are very tight with the US economy still affecting the churches, the current exchange rate is such that we are maintaining our place here. I do need to schedule a trip back stateside later this spring to raise some much-needed new support but that will be determined by the situation with my leg. If they have to rebreak it then that trip is off till much later.

We have a family over from Montana that are helping us prepare to rebuild a part of our building so that I can move my office back into our church building. A big undertaking to strip all the walls and ceiling back to the bare bones to prepare to re-build. Several from our church have come in daily and helped with this project. Pray for us as we do this 'extra' and try to keep up with all the regular ministry. Also, pray for God's provision to fund this project as our budget is a bit more than tight for this extra. In the long term this will save us moneys as we will not have to pay the rent for the office. But God has His amazing 'just in time payment plan' so we will wait on His provision and see what His timing is.

We are always thankful to see January come in Scotland because it means that the days will start to lengthen. The darkness and the cloudy days can be real depressing, as it is difficult to face day after day. There is the constant reminder that the sun is always shining somewhere behind the clouds, and God is always there even when His presence is not felt.

Your Bridge to Brechin,

Jon, Ruth and family