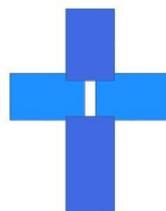


ROCHDALE EVANGELICAL CHURCH



Prayer Letter 11 – April 2022

[Jesus] told them, 'This is what is written: the Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, 47 and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. (Luke 24:46-47 NIVUK)

Well it's been an interesting time between Christmas and Easter. Like many we've had various bouts of COVID including Stephen testing positive just before Easter, which meant that plans were a little knocked off track. Thankfully, we are now organised enough that the meeting on Easter Sunday was able to happen despite this.

At the moment we are working on putting the church on a good footing. In particular, this means applying for charitable status (to be a CIO) and beginning to get our procedures and policies in place, independent of Oldham Bethel Church. This is important, if not always very inspiring, work.

Outreach

We aim to be a church that is part of God's plan that "repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in [Jesus'] name to all nations."

Our plans went a little askew around Easter for a number of reasons including COVID, but we trust God is sovereign!

We continue to have a trickle of people coming along and trying the church out, often with some Christian or church background. We've been encouraged that a number have come more than once and some are sticking with us.

We're continuing to pray, invite and deliver leaflets, as well as thinking about the best ways to reach people in our area.



Give thanks for:

- Faithful evangelism by our members;
- God bringing a few to join us over the last few months.

Please pray for:

- Ongoing passion among the church members to reach the lost in the area;
- Good conversations with our personal contacts – especially that we would have opportunities to invite unbelievers to church and perhaps look at the Bible together;
- Wisdom as we consider how we might expand our efforts to reach the community around the church;
- Unbelievers to hear the good news of Jesus through REC and believe.

Discipleship

We're finishing looking at the resurrection account in Luke's gospel in our services and then we'll be doing a series on Psalm 119. Up to summer in Growth Group we will be finishing

the rest of Luke's gospel. We hope that Monday evenings will soon go back to being hybrid Zoom and in-person meetings.

We've finished looking at *I am a church member* in our Friday morning book group and will be starting looking at *Respectable Sins* by Jerry Bridges next. We're continuing with both our prayer meetings and evangelism training meetings.

We have a ladies' fellowship group which is beginning to meet regularly (and may even encourage the men to get organised!).

Give thanks for:

- The chance to meet Jesus as we've looked through a whole gospel;
- The challenges and encouragements of thinking through being faithful church members;
- The joy of being able to pray together as a church family;
- The encouragement of growing fellowship.

Please pray for:

- Opportunities to share what we've learned about Jesus from Luke with our unbelieving friends and family;
- Growth in love for God's word as we look at Psalm 119 together;
- Growth in holiness as we think about our sin and the grace of God in our book group.

Forming the Church

We have a defined membership, which is meeting regularly. People are informally taking on roles to help with the running and development of the church. We are submitting information to the solicitors that help us set up the CIO and developing our policies and

procedures in areas like safeguarding, data protection and health and safety.

Give thanks for:

- a willing and enthusiastic membership;
- the support of the FIEC and Oldham Bethel Church in our formation;
- progress already made.

Please pray that:

- We would be able to make good progress with our CIO application;
- We would be wise and faithful as we set up the various policies and procedures that we need before being independent.

Support

We are grateful for both the prayer and financial support we have received from outside of the church family. We need to continue to seek that support from churches, individuals and grant-making bodies.

Give thanks for:

- Increased giving within the church family;
- A relatively secure financial position to the end of the year;
- An encouraging prayer supporters base.

Please pray for:

- Support from other churches. We need to continue positive links with two churches and are encouraged by a possible new partnership;
- Grant applications that need to be completed over the next couple of months.

Thank you as always for all your prayer and support. Do feel free to visit us any time or contact me for any further information.