

News from The Venings!



Children are a heritage from the Lord....a blessing from Him....blessed are those who have them....
Ps 127 v 3,5



Language

"Faint ydy o?, meddai Sue.
"Saith punt a naw deg pump ceiniog, os gwelwch" atebodd y geneth.

Yes, this was Sue asking for the bill at an afternoon tea we enjoyed as a family in Criccieth recently. (£7.95 for those interested!)

From a complete standing start in September last year, Sue is now confident enough to 'have a go' in Welsh - and in public! We are all so proud of her.

It is amazing to listen to a bit of Welsh locally and on S4C (the Welsh language TV station) and begin to actually understand some of it.

With Zaak being at a completely Welsh school and Tasha now attending nursery there, it has been a challenge for Mark and Sue to simply keep up. Now that Sue is halfway through her two courses and Mark is halfway through his, we will both be attending separate 'weeks of Welsh' in July to attempt to gain some more confidence within our ability level.

We are also speaking Welsh at home and trying to become less self conscious with each other. We are not natural language learners, but God is so good and somehow He is equipping us so that some of it is going in.

July Marks 1 Year

Amazingly, the last week of July marks our first anniversary in Wales. In some ways it has whizzed by, but when we stop to consider what has gone on (DTS, language learning, new

schools, new church etc) there has been plenty packed in!

Tasha will start going to full time morning school in September which will open up



Yes! - The sun does shine in Wales.... Our mornings considerably, and will probably want to go to at least 3 afternoons as well.

This will be a major reallocation of time for us and although it will be strange to not have any children at home in the morning, it will mean that there will be fresh opportunity to develop our heart's desire to work more together.

DTS

Talking of work, you may remember that we hosted a DTS (a training school that YWAM runs over six months) in Wrexham from January to July. This was a project that we inherited at the time of our arrival, but felt God tell us to embrace and pick up.

This was a mixed blessing for us. In many ways it was tremendous to see how the 10 students grew and developed in God - with the possibility that some may indeed stay on in Wrexham as full time YWAMers. It is very humbling to see God work in this way in people's lives.

But in other ways it was very hard. With small children we had to decide who would take

the lead in the school and who would take the lead in the home. Both of us were capable enough to do either, but in the end, Sue took the lead at home and Mark with the DTS. This was very difficult for Sue as she longed to be involved more in the DTS, but we knew that God would supply grace and that the care of our children was not something we would compromise by trying to do too much.

Children

This was an important lesson for us. Life is full of conflicting choices with often nothing other than our knowledge of God's principles and values for our guide. Children are often perceived as 'getting in the way' of what people 'want to do' or even what they are 'called to do', but this is the deepest kind of fallacy. Children are a gift from God and investment into them will never, ever be wasted.

Therefore, whilst it is sometimes hard for us, we knew that we would never resent them - and God did provide. We had an abundance of baby-sitters and by choosing to eat with the students every day we have obtained 10 new uncles and aunties!

Egypt

In a wonderful way, God provided a great opportunity, specifically for Sue, to recharge and experience a new culture and deeper understanding about Him. She was invited to visit a retreat in

Egypt hosted by a Coptic monk who teaches on prayer, stillness and the value of becoming more like Jesus in our everyday lives. He explains how this becomes a route to effectiveness in whatever we do. This is applicable whether we are missionaries or miners and was a tremendous time for her. See the website for more details.

Strategy

This has confirmed in us what we believe is a key strategy to reaching those who live in the Welsh culture. Responding principally to relationship, we believe our visible lifestyle of commitment to Christ will bring the fruit that we desire most - revival again in Wales!

With a growing network



Sue experiencing the Pyramids

of contacts, an incredible confidence in the language and the further encouragement of friends like you, we are more convinced than ever that God has placed us here for time as this.

We love you - and do visit if you can. Come and get some real air in your lungs!

Lots of love

*Mark, Sue, Zaak & Tasha
xxxxxxx*

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Prayer Points

Moving to Wales has been a tremendous time for us. As we engage with the things God has for us, knowing you are praying for us is a great encouragement.

With continuing development in language learning and making new contacts it is often easy to miss the third area that God spoke to us about. ie, looking to see what He is doing and listen and sense as to how we might 'join in'.

We all know that it is often easy to stay busy with all sorts of things - often **good** things - but not always straightforward to take necessary time being quiet before God. Taking time to listen, seek His guidance and ensure that we move in step with the Spirit is a challenge. But with His help, and your continuing prayer we **know** that He will provide - and that we will focus on the **best**.



I. Join us in praising God for

1. *A great place to live. They say that moving home is one of the 3 most stressful things (marriage and death being the others!). We love living in Wales and it is joy to be here.*
2. *Amazing fun with the language. As we have said, language learning is not a natural skill of ours. But somehow God is letting lots of it 'sink in'. Thank God with us that He is equipping us with this language.*
3. *New friends. From a year ago where we were alone, we now have some good friends and a wonderfully supportive church to supplement our fabulous support from Frimley Baptist Church. God is good!*



II. Encourage us by praying to God for

1. *Continuing equipping for our task. That Sue's experience in Egypt and the emerging revelation we are sensing about Christ-likeness being so key to success in Wales would permeate deeply into us and all that we do.*
2. *Wisdom for our various 'hats'. Sue continues to manage the National Finances and Mark's responsibilities for National Coordination and as a Director for YWAM England and Wales demand high integrity and wisdom. That and the important factor of our children cause us to ask God for daily help.*
3. *Putting down roots. We are sensing that Wrexham may be strategic for us for the next few years. Should we put some roots down then? Buy a house? Stay in rented accommodation? Where should we live? A good dose of guidance in this area would be gratefully received!*

Perhaps one of you has a word or prophetic encouragement - if so please get in contact!