



**May 2018**

Dear friends,

We are so grateful for your partnership in the work out here.

**PLEASE GIVE THANKS...**

For the regular attendance of five non-believers to all of our weekly meetings:

- L through a friendship with Jane at the schoolgate and the evangelistic women's bible study.
- G and T through the distribution of 2750 Romans booklets in the area surrounding church. Mark also studies the Bible with them every Monday afternoon in their home and then G gives him a lift home (see picture).
- R through the invitation of a friend to church one Sunday evening.
- F through his seven year-old daughter dragging him into church one Sunday evening having heard the children singing at Sunday school.



For the Faith and Reason evangelistic event (20 March), for the presence of a number of non-believers, in particular F, father of one of the youth group and a scientist who has expressed interest in the gospel in the past. He was particularly struck by the event.

For the baptism of Antonio (8 April) - a math's student, who defined himself as an atheist, was invited along to a student evangelistic event, started reading the Bible one-to-one with Francesco and was converted.

For the launch of The Gospel Coalition Italia (TGCi) (see picture) at its first ever conference (30 April - 1 May), attended by over 100 adults and children. TGCi's aim is to build a network of reformed churches and to encourage and model expository preaching. For the unity currently experienced on the council, for the churches that attended and for the encouragement of sitting together under the teaching of 2 Timothy.



For Francesco and Milena (and Gaia) deciding to stay with us for another year.

### **Forza Napoli!**

One thing that unites Neapolitans is their love of football and specifically of Napoli. Unlike many Italian cities, Naples has only one football team, so all of the emotion, energy and passion of 4.5 million Neapolitans is concentrated on these 11 men. You don't need to watch the match to know the score, the shouts of joy or frustration, the car horns (hooting more than usual) and the fireworks exploding all serve to indicate the final score. As I write, sadly, Napoli's hopes of winning the Scudetto have been dashed. Superstition pervades all of Neapolitan life, as the famous Italian journalist Matilde Serao writes, 'Superstitions from all over the world come together in Naples where they are then magnified and multiplied' and football is no exception. Maurizio Sarri, Napoli's manager, was late for a training session. The players began warming up. Half an hour into the session he had still not turned up. He was called and found sat in his car. A black cat had crossed in front of him and he was waiting patiently for another car to pass him in order not to fall foul of fate, the problem was he was on a deserted road with no other cars around! How to bring the gospel to bear on such a people? We speak of the wonderful Jesus, who satisfies our deepest longings having secured the scudetto of salvation for his people - never to be lost again. We speak of the one who is stronger than any strong man, demon of darkness or evil eye, who has rescued us from folkloric superstition and curses by becoming a curse for us. We speak of Christ crucified.

### **PLEASE PRAY FOR...**

The liberations of L, G, T, R and F from the domain of darkness and their transfer into the kingdom of the beloved Son. Pray also for their families to rejoice in the freedom that Jesus brings.

The Gruppi Biblici Universitari midweek lunchtime bible studies. With Francesco now working four days a week as a teacher in a local school, and Mark's commitments at church growing, both have struggled to attend these studies regularly. The students have continued to meet in four different locations and are working through Acts. Please pray that the existing students would be emboldened in their evangelism and that non-believers would be reached with the gospel.

The church as we work through Romans 9-11 and spend our study day (19 May) considering the sovereignty of God. That we'd be loving, gentle and humble as we engage with this doctrine and with each other, longing to submit to God's word, even when we don't fully understand it.

The men of Neapolis - that we'd be living distinctively as Christian men in our relationships, workplaces and communities. That we'd support each other in this and that genuine friendships would grow as we meet together for a monthly men's bible study and meal (see picture).



The third Neapolis Holiday Club (11-15 June). Last year we had our four and 42 other local non-believing children. This is an enormous gospel opportunity for the church. Pray that the church would own it, getting behind it in many different practical ways. Please pray for sufficient adult leaders to enable us to have a similar number of children and for the team coming out from St Michael's, Fulwell. Please pray for young hearts to be delighting in the scudetto of salvation as we work through five talks from Mark's Gospel.

The children to finish the school year well. Sofia and Luisa both move up schools in September. Sofia has an end of Middle School exam to take in June - that the Lord would help them to study and work with him as their teacher and that they'd take every remaining opportunity to reach out to their classmates with the gospel.

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