

APRIL 2020



Dear Friends,

As we stand on our terrace, the stillness and quiet of Valencia is unnerving. The city is usually alive with a hubbub of noises, whether from people chattering and laughing in the streets, parks, cafes and bars around us, from passing vehicles on the busy roads or planes overhead, or sirens and police whistles in the area. At the moment, all we hear in the daytime is bird song from the finches, blackbirds, wood pigeons and swifts that have recently returned for a new season. We also hear sirens from emergency service vehicles and the sound of a police helicopter as it circles the city, patrolling the streets, parks and rooftops to enforce the strict lockdown rules. To date, we have been locked in for five and a half weeks and have only been allowed out individually for trips to the supermarket or to relieve the dog. Children are not permitted out of their homes at all but we hope this might end shortly. We thank God every day for the patience he has given to us in these very difficult days and we also thank him for good health, access to shops, electricity, running water and the internet.

“ We thank God every day for the patience he has given to us in these very difficult days, and we also thank him for good health, access to shops, electricity, running water, and the internet...



The church has continued to function together via Zoom and Julian sends regular messages to the church family via WhatsApp. Our mid-week groups have also continued to function with the exciting creation of an additional group and with more people attending overall. For this we thank God and pray that the commitment to these groups will continue when 'normality' is resumed. Sadly for some church family they are unable to join us or can only join us sporadically because they don't have internet access or can only afford very limited data. Some of our church family have no work at the moment due to the restrictions or their income has been halted due to the

serious economic position Spain now finds itself in. So this is very hard for them and difficult for us to know how best to support these people.

As Julian holds a virtual church service in our living room on Sundays, Nicky, Jemima and Theo have their own small 'church', sharing bible passages, listening to and singing along to songs and being creative! We have all actually had a very blessed time during the lockdown. Towards the end of the service on Zoom, Nicky and the children join in to say hellos and connect with the church family. We really miss seeing each other but the internet has been a great medium for us to continue to make links with each other.



We have also been able to join together with some of our partner churches in the UK, either in real time or listening later to services and even joining in a prayer meeting. This has been a great blessing for us too. It is good to feel part of a larger community of God's people and especially those who have a direct link to our ministry here in Valencia.



Our time as a family stuck inside has had its ups and downs, as no doubt many others are experiencing. We have tried to make the most of our time together, playing games, being creative, reading and cooking. Julian has been trying to master the art of baking a local sweet dish called 'torrijas', which is a little like French toast with cinnamon and brown sugar.

Before the lockdown, we enjoyed visits in February and March from friends from one of our supporting churches, which also happens to be our old church in the UK! It was great to catch up with news and we felt very supported by them.

Theo also celebrated his twelfth birthday and Jemima visited the dog park pretty much every day with Julian and Koda, where they are really getting to know some of the local dog owners!



Last Sunday, we looked at Psalm 91 and specifically how God is our refuge and fortress and how we can trust him. Verse 4 reads, **'He will cover you with his feathers, you will take refuge under his wings. His faithfulness will be a protective shield.'** We thought about how God holds us safely for eternity when we trust him. We asked God to continue protecting us from the virus so that we can continue to minister here in Spain, sharing the gospel. It is a great comfort to know how God is with us all, wherever we are and whatever situation we find ourselves in. We are thankful for your prayers in these days, as always, and we too pray for safety for all of our partners, friends and family. We know that God has a good and perfect plan.

With our love, Julian, Nicky, Jemima and Theo.

Prayer points

- Give thanks for the good things that God has given us and for patience.
- Give thanks that Julian is able to continue to hold services online each week and that we have regular contact with our church family. Give thanks for the three mid-week bible study groups.
- Give thanks that Julian is in regular contact with our Spanish teacher, Alex, and that he continues to read through Julian's bible talk each week. Pray that he will be saved.
- Please pray for those in our church family who are in a difficult financial situation at the moment.
- Please pray for Theo's schooling as he continues with all of his lessons online at home, and for Jemima as she continues home learning with Nicky.
- Please continue to pray that we will continue to feel at home in Valencia and that God will use us to make Jesus known.