

# The Skirtons

Serving with



January 2022



*Dear Friends,*

2021 is now well and truly finished and in this newsletter we glance back at last year but also are very much looking ahead and sharing about plans for 2022.

We would like to say that we purposely delayed sending this latest prayer update so as not to get lost amidst all the other Christmas communications. In reality, a combination of Christmas seemingly coming around faster than usual, most of the family being struck by Covid in December and general procrastination held us back, however, we can now present to you a brief glimpse of the second half of 2021...



We ALL completed the Welsh Three Peaks Challenge in July—thank you to everyone who sponsored us!

We enjoyed a family holiday with the boys and Rachel to the Isle of Skye and also finally fulfilled Helen's long held ambition to visit Hadrian's wall—which we all enjoyed



# 2021



Helen enjoyed a surprise 50<sup>th</sup> birthday party

Matthew's mum moved to our village and now lives just down the road from us



Christmas was a wonderful time together as a family



# 2022

It was wonderful to end 2021 and begin the New Year at home together as a family. We have all (re)committed ourselves to daily Bible reading and value your prayers as we seek to remain disciplined in this.

**Helen** has settled well in her new role serving in the Personnel Team and has completed several different training courses. She will continue balancing her Personnel and Hospitality roles whilst also providing ongoing support for Matthew as he is due to speak in a number of Bible schools, Christian Unions and churches over the coming months. Helen also continues in her role of taking care of the family!



**Matthew** is still working on a book entitled 'Mac and Me, looking to the Master', that he started during his sabbatical. He has written most of it but just needs some time in the final chapters before going to editing. Together with ongoing leadership responsibilities, increased opportunities to travel and several preaching and teaching engagements Matthew's calendar is looking quite full over the next months—although the last few years have reminded us to hold all plans lightly and trust God to work everything out.

We are very much looking forward to being back in **Moldova** at the end of March to take part in the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the launching of OM in Moldova. (although it's actually 27 years since that first visit in 1995). We are hopeful that "Missionary...Me?" will be launched in Romanian at that time.

**Hanna** continues her studies in law at University of Liverpool. She has enjoyed being involved in the Just Love group as well as the CU and a local church, St James. Despite having had Covid three times through the year and at times finding her Coeliac diet a real challenge, she is doing well and has recently taken up climbing as a new hobby.

**Lydia** started studying Maths at Royal Holloway in London and has enjoyed her first term at Uni. She has made good friends in her flat, the CU and local church and her busy social life sometimes even allows her time for studying! She and a friend are looking forward to joining Matthew and James on the 4997 vision trip (see next page).



**Rachel** is preparing to take her A-levels this year. She is applying to study Bio-Chemistry and is awaiting offers from a number of universities. She hopes to defer a year to take a GAP year with OM. She plans to be involved in a number of discipleship and mission programmes and hopes that her year will not be as disrupted as Hanna and Lydia's were.

**David** sits his GCSEs this year. He has been nominated by his school to apply for an engineering scholarship and is looking at studying Maths, Further Maths, Physics and Computer Science at A-level. David enjoys his football (when not cancelled), is growing fast and is very disciplined in the gym, although he's still not as strong as his dad!



**James** has managed to avoid Covid, despite possibly breaking the record for the most time isolating due to positive tests in his classes. He has missed many weeks of school (as have so many) but seems to be keeping up with his work and very much enjoys playing football for the local Welsh team that is challenging for the League and Cup double this season.

## **Project 4997 - Himalaya Trek and Vision Trip**

Matthew has been seeking to mobilise a group of church leaders and their teenage children to join him for a vision trip to an unreached region in the Himalayas and hopes a group of a dozen or so will be with him in April. Lydia (as a final part of her GAP year that never quite went as planned) and a friend from university will be joining, as will intrepid explorer (and Matthew's personal Sherpa) James. We are really excited not only to help folks grow in vision for ministry where Christ is least known, but also for the discipleship opportunities for team members whilst travelling. If you would like to sponsor James, Lydia and Matthew who will be seeking to raise money for the AidsLink programme please ask for details.



### ***“In his heart a man plans his course, but the Lord determines his steps.” Proverbs 16:9***

With a sense of optimism and stepping out by faith we are excited about the possibilities and plans for this next year. We appreciate your prayers for us over the coming months especially for the following ...

#### **January**

- 20<sup>th</sup> – OM Global Day of Prayer
- 24<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> Helen on Counselling Course at Cloverley Hall
- 25<sup>th</sup> – Matthew Preaching at London School of Theology
- 26<sup>th</sup> – 27<sup>th</sup> – Matthew at meetings in London

#### **February**

- 1-16<sup>th</sup> - Leadership meetings and staff appraisals
- 17<sup>th</sup> – OM Global Day of Prayer
- 18-20<sup>th</sup> – Teen Street weekend at Quinta
- 20<sup>th</sup> – Preaching at Ascot Life Church
- 23<sup>rd</sup> – Board Finance Meeting

#### **March**

- 2<sup>nd</sup> – Leadership Meetings in Birmingham
- 6<sup>th</sup> – Preaching at Ashley Baptist
- 9<sup>th</sup> – Board Meeting and OM UK's 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary event with George Verwer in South London
- 13<sup>th</sup> – Preaching at Ladyfield Evangelical Church
- 17<sup>th</sup> – OM Global Day of Prayer
- 21<sup>st</sup> – Sharing at Sheffield Christian Union
- 24<sup>th</sup> – Sharing at Royal Holloway University of London Christian Union
- 25<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> – Matthew and Helen in Moldova (25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of OM MD)

#### **April**

- 7<sup>th</sup> – OM UK staff community day at Halesowen and Global Prayer Evening
- 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> New Recruits weekend
- 9<sup>th</sup> – 22<sup>nd</sup> – Matthew, Lydia and James—Himalayas Vision and discipleship expedition with church leaders





We are excited to announce that **TEENSTREET** is coming to the UK this summer!

TeenStreet UK is not just a summer event but is all about creating a year-round multi-cultural community of teens and youth leaders which begins with the main TeenStreet UK event at the Quinta in Shropshire. Our goal is to help teens be disciplined so that they too will become disciple-makers.

The multi-cultural nature of TeenStreet UK and exciting opportunities for mission trips for teens to put into practise what they are learning, together with the way we encourage youth leaders to accompany their teens and disciple them through the summer event is what makes TeenStreet stand out from other programmes.

Why not encourage your church youth group or other teens you know to join us for this fantastic event!

For more information follow this link : [TeenStreet UK | Operation Mobilisation \(om.org\)](https://www.uk.om.org)

We truly thank you for your continued support and encouragement for us as a family. We value your prayers and recognise that without your support we would not be able to continue in this ministry to which the Lord has called us.



If you would like to be part of our support team, please follow this link to our personal support page where you can make a donation or set up a direct debit.

<https://www.uk.om.org/skirton>

***Thank you for your continued partnership  
with us!***

***With love from,  
Matthew, Helen, Hanna, Lydia,  
Rachel, David and James***



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Financial support for us can be sent to: Operation Mobilisation, The Quinta, Weston Rhyn  
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