

**23 July 2023**

**Mission Partner prayer and update from Paula and Dean Finnie, our Mission Partner in South Africa**

While parts of Europe are suffering from extreme heat an early Winter has begun in South Africa bringing severe cold weather and flooding. Many people have been flooded out of their homes and are on the street for the first time in their lives. The church community has been busy sourcing extra food, blankets, toiletries and clothes and the Soup Kitchen has been inundated. Paula and Dean have written to thank us for the recent funds that St Andrew's has sent (£1,750) - as always, the timing of this gift has been perfect. Despite all the recent hardships, Paula writes in her latest newsletter:

*"Life at The Gathering has been such a blessing recently, especially as we're seeing growth in numbers amongst our Soup Kitchen regulars. We currently have around seven regulars who have joined church, and just two weeks ago one of the more committed Soup Kitchen regulars opened our worship. This was a huge blessing and an exciting step forward as the other regulars saw that they are truly welcome amongst us."*

God is clearly using the challenging circumstances to bring spiritual growth in the Firgrove church community.

Please continue to **pray** for provision for the Soup Kitchen and all the volunteers who serve in it. Also please continue to pray for the purchase of the church building- the church is expanding, and the space is required.

Family news: Eli has been accepted to study at North Kent College in September and Joel is planning on travelling to the UK in July. He will stay until the end of November. Please **pray** that the boys will find all the support that they need – accommodation, job opportunities etc.

Please continue to support and pray for all the family.