

# The Thatchers

## Waterford, Ireland



January 2025

Dear Friends,



- Ireland's population, 4.5 million
- 34% of population 25 years old or younger
- Dublin's population over 1.2 million
- Waterford's population over 46,000
- 85% still claim to be Roman Catholic

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Well, we have had a lot of things going on over the past couple months. Lisa helped again this past November in the ladies' retreat that takes place for all of the missionaries and their church ladies. Evangelist Mark Lancaster and his wife were with us for some special meeting in mid-November. The Lord used the preaching in several of our church folk's lives. Kaleb was part of the college choir tour across Romania and part of Hungary at the end of November. In early November we had our Christmas tract printed and put our Christmas Gospel gift packets together. Then in December we began handing them out. Little did we know that our Christmas season would soon bring about a change of plans. Kaley and Kari have finished all the required driving lessons and are awaiting openings to taking their driving tests to get their full Irish driving licenses. Getting a driving license takes a long time and is a very expensive endeavor especially with the way the insurance works here.

We were in the countdown leading up to Christmas. The concerts were on in town, the Waterford Winterval fest was in full motion, the church Christmas dinner fellowship evening was about to take place in a couple days when we got the phone call about 7pm on Thursday the 19<sup>th</sup> that our son Kevin back in USA was admitted into intensive care with liver failure and things were looking grim. Within two hours I had tickets booked for Lisa and the girls to fly out at 5AM on a flight that just had 4 tickets available. While I was working on ticketing, Lisa and the girls were packing. We were packed and the house quickly put in order and then hit the road at 1AM to get to Dublin Airport for 3AM check in. My dilemma was furthered because Kaleb was enroute at 5AM on his already regular flight home from college in Romania. He was not due in until 10AM. The only tickets I could find 5 days before Christmas were 2 seats on the last flight out of Dublin to the USA at 11:48AM that day. There were several complexities concerning baggage, and timing between Kaleb's arrival in a different terminal and our departure. One of which is the 3 hour check in time in Dublin Airport as all flight passenger to the USA must go through USA Customs, Border and Immigration in Dublin before boarding a plane. Somehow, by God's grace and a few helpful Airport staff Kaleb and I made the flight in less than an hour and a half. At any rate Lisa and the girls arrived by the afternoon and then Kaleb and I arrived the night. We were all thankful to find Kevin was still with us when we got up to the hospital.

In short, God was at work and Kevin began turning the corner and improving by the next morning. By god's grace Kevin was able to be discharged on Christmas Eve! Though he is still very unwell and in need of a liver transplant, Kevin is doing ok day by day. He is still fatigued and weak as he lost a lot of weight and his leg muscles are weak. Kevin has begun physical therapy for his legs and his bloods are greatly improved. We are praying for God to restore Kevin's liver back to functioning on its own. We are thankful for God's goodness and grace, for being able to spend Christmas together, and to be able to be in the USA for about 5 weeks to be a help to Kevin and his wife. There will be plenty of doctor appointments going forward and trusting God to meet the needs.

So, Lisa in all of that, managed to grab ALL of the supplies to put together more of our Irish Christmas Gospel packets. We were able to give out well over 100 of them in the USA and had many gospel opportunities. THANK YOU for all who gave extra gifts for Christmas and for those of you who have helped with our unexpected expenses of the trip to USA. WE are so grateful for you, our friends and partners in ministry. We appreciate you and your prayers. Please do continue to pray for Kevin's liver function and healing.

May the Lord find us faithful,  
Don and Lisa Thatcher & Family