

Torch News for Your Prayers

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Torch Trust
Torch House, Torch Way,
Market Harborough,
Leicestershire,
LE16 9HL UK
Tel: +44 (0)1858 438260
email: info@torchtrust.org
website: torchtrust.org

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“We walk by faith, not by sight”
(1 Cor 5:7)

From: The Chair of Trustees

Hello everyone!

As chair of Torch trustees I am delighted to announce the appointment of Julia Hyde as the Acting Chief Executive of Torch Trust.

I have come to know Julia over the last fourteen months since she came to Torch as Chief Development Officer. I have seen for myself her love for the Lord and her passion for the work of Torch. As trustees we have sensed that she is God's person to lead Torch into the next phase.

This is a time of great opportunity for Torch to grow and develop its crucial work, reaching out to churches and communities with the love of God to people with sight loss.

Please support Julia with your prayers and your love as she shoulders this responsibility and offers herself in God's service.

With my love and appreciation to you all,

Yours in our dear Lord's service,

Marilyn Baker, Chair of Trustees

From: Gordon Temple

Dear prayer partners and supporters,

I am writing this very special letter with the purpose of introducing my successor as Chief Executive of Torch Trust. From Easter 2018 Julia Hyde holds the position of Acting Chief Executive.

This doesn't happen very often! I have served Torch in the capacity of Chief

Executive for sixteen years. So now I'm seeking your prayer support for Julia as she shoulders this challenging responsibility.

When I took on the leadership in April 2002 I never for a moment imagined I would hold the position for so long. It has been my privilege to lead the diverse and dynamic work of Torch for more than a quarter of its entire history.

I knew when I started I would be the last leader to have known and worked with Torch's extraordinary co-founders Ron and Stella Heath. And I knew back then that my calling to this ministry included the handover and preparation to a new generation of leadership that would not have had that link.

It has been the responsibility of Torch's trustees with their chair Marilyn Baker to interview candidates and discern

God's leading in the selection of the new Chief Executive. This is a heavy responsibility which I know they have undertaken diligently and prayerfully, considering a number of well qualified applicants concluding that they would appoint Julia, initially in the capacity of Acting Chief Executive.

Naturally I was not directly involved in the interviews, but I was involved in interviewing Julia for the role of Chief Development Officer somewhat over a year ago. I knew then without a shadow of doubt that Julia had been called by God to work with Torch.

During the past year Julia has become very much part of Torch and established as one of the key leaders within the work. Over this period her responsibilities have already been extended to include oversight of the Torch Holidays programme at the Torch Holiday & Retreat Centre in Sussex.

Julia is a lovely and capable Christian with a deeply rooted faith. Her previous working life has been in primary education and she has served as Headteacher in two schools. She lives nearby Torch House in Market Harborough with her two teenage children.

Torch is God's work. We who work with Torch are privileged to be caught up in his work through Torch, to be those who put into effect God's perfect will. And those who lead Torch do so under God and supported by the fellowship, love, prayers and expertise of our trustees.

In her new role Julia will draw upon the experience and support of established senior leaders in Michael Heaney as Chief Operating Officer and Paul Wood, Chief Technical Officer as well as other staff and leaders across the work.

I am assisting Julia in the period of transition. I will be released from the staff at the end of April but remain available for Julia to consult. My wife Pat and I have been connected with Torch since we both volunteered in our late teens so it's likely that we will continue to be involved in some way!

From time to time the baton of leadership must be passed on from one to another, something eloquently expressed in a Psalm: 'Your kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and Your dominion endures through all generations' (Psalm 145:13).

Many of you supported me in prayer back when I started and I've been aware throughout of your prayerful support. I take this opportunity to thank you from the bottom of my heart. Now I ask you to support Julia with your prayers. Many among you have made that support very practical too, volunteering

your time or by sending donations. It's vital for Torch's work that Julia knows that same faithful support.

It's in this connection that I ask you to give your kind attention to the back of the mailing slip that came with this letter. The new data protection regulations (GDPR or General Data Protection Regulations) require that we ensure that you still welcome the information Torch sends you, including letters like this one and the quarterly Torch News, whether in physical form or by email.

As you know by experience Torch is not going to bombard you with appeals for funds. Torch continues to run as a Christian faith organisation, dependent upon God for his provision. We turn to him in prayer for his provision rather than fund raising programmes. In this we depend on the

generosity and prayerfulness of God's faithful people.

I would like to take this opportunity to say a big THANK YOU to those who have donated and do donate to Torch.

I realise this tangible support bears witness to your all-important prayer support. It has been a source of great encouragement to me and I know that Julia will draw encouragement from your continued support. I know just how heavy the sense of responsibility can weigh at times and how important an awareness of the wide support Torch enjoys can be.

This is Torch's Year of Advancing in Faith. Torch continues to journey in faith, Christ-centred and focussed on discovering his will in all matters, trusting that he will provide for the work he leads Torch into.

Throughout my time in leadership I have anchored my faith with the words of Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount: “seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well” (Matt 6:33). I give thanks to God for bringing Torch through these years to this time and providing Torch with a new leader under God in Julia Hyde.

Julia needs to know your love and fellowship, support and prayers as she steps out in faith. As our verse for the year reminds us: “We walk by faith, not by sight” (1 Cor 5:7).

Keep following the unfolding story of Torch and focus your prayers with the quarterly Torch News, available in a range of formats to suit everyone.

Farewell and God bless you. Yours in Christ’s service,

Gordon Temple