



...FOR
THOSE
BEYOND
REACH

NEWSLETTER

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HFA & PRAYER

St. Augustine said *"True whole prayer is nothing but love."* *"The heart of God,"* says Richard Foster *"is an open wound of love."* God's heart is open wide, He longs for all people to have the opportunity to know Him, to come home. So, at *Hope From Above* we work and we also pray, knowing this work we do is God's work and we need His help, His involvement and His direction. We cannot do it alone. Prayer at *HFA* is not an option but a fundamental necessity. Something to be factored in to the schedule, not tagged on when there is time.

HFA was birthed in prayer. This new mission began after much prayer for discernment, direction and wisdom from God. It was launched with a service and time of prayer.

When new staff join the team, and an induction is given into their new roles, the priority of prayer is also emphasised. At *HFA*, prayer IS work. We encourage staff to take thirty minutes each day to pray into their work day. For some that's a prayer walk, as finding a quiet, warm space in the busy factory is not always possible. Many solutions, often direction, ideas or reminders have come to me as I've walked and talked with God about the tasks of the day. But there are days when the work is so busy, there seems to be no time to stop and pray. I've learnt over the years, that actually that is when we need to make time, seeking God's help and strength amid the busy-ness and His help to sort things, find solutions, get through the work-load.

Competency is something that is considered so important in our society and in work places. Yes, it IS important that we do our work competently. Yet "competence" can be misleading, especially when we depend on our own competence to help, sustain and guide us, instead of relying on God. 2 Corinthians 3:4-6 tells us why: *"Such confidence we have through Christ before God. Not that we are competent in ourselves to claim anything for ourselves, but our competence comes from God. He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant – not of the letter but of the Spirit, for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life."*

It is the Holy Spirit who enables and empowers us in our work. We are not competent by having the necessary ability, knowledge, or skill to do something successfully. We are competent because God makes us so. This only comes

through our dependence on God through our prayers and the help we receive through His Holy Spirit. As Proverbs 3:5-6 says *“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.”*

Charles Spurgeon called prayer meetings: 'the powerhouse of the church'. If the engine room is out of action, then the whole mill will grind to a halt. So, it is with *Hope From Above*; prayer has always been an essential part of the work we do. We've come to see that if a culture of prayer exists and is established and embedded it is like an engine room that powers this work. This is the reality on which *HFA* is built.

Regular prayer meetings were established early on in life of *HFA*. They have become *HFA's* life-blood. We first met together in person at the office each fortnight. We learnt more from each other about the power of praise in prayer. Praise God for who He is, our Creator, Sustainer, Master, Father; and the Lord Jesus who lived a perfect life, died in our place and rose victorious over all the dark powers so that we might live through Him, and be a part of his great commission. The key is prayer, the door is Jesus.

When Covid hit, these prayer meetings moved to Zoom, a useful tool that enabled the team to continue praying regularly together, though not in person. However, when we could meet for prayer again, we realised that giving folk a zoom option was still a useful thing as they could attend wherever they were – whether working from home, geographically too far away, looking after children, travelling. Wherever people were located and as long as they had an internet connection, we could meet together, share matters for prayer and bring them before our heavenly Father in unity and faith. This has especially become a life-line for those who work overseas. It is such a valuable time for the whole team to share and pray together for the work



Image Source: Pexels, by Tara Winstead.

of *HFA* around the world – with valuable input from staff wherever they are and whatever they are involved.

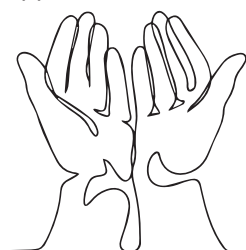
And we are not alone. There are *HFA* Networks in Europe who also pray regularly and are actively involved in this work of God around the world, and partner organisations who commit to prayer, such as a group in India who meet on occasions for all-night prayer and fasting for *HFA*. Closer to home, the members of the *HFA* board meet each month for prayer. Each year the Australian team also take time out for a day-long Prayer Retreat.

Then there are the individual Prayer Warriors around the world who pray. Many receive the fortnightly *HFA* Prayer Update (available by email). This vast array of friends, many of whom we have never met, are the ones who put in the hard yards, giving invaluable support to *HFA* through their prayers. These prayer requests are also picked up by churches in different countries who share our needs during their church prayer meetings or have special times of prayer for *HFA*. We are so grateful to this group of wonderful people, who work so hard through their prayers.

Warriors? Yes, there is a battle raging that we often don't see. It is at times when we are closest to a breakthrough and the enemy is clearly rattled that we realise how real that battle is. Key staff get sick, things break down, parts aren't available, things go unexplainably wrong. Have we prayed, team? On a work trip, a painful pull back reminded us not to let our guard down. Though the trip had been plain sailing up to that point, and our prayers for safety and anonymity had been answered – we were reminded to stay vigilant. At the same time one of the team members had a fall on rocks that could so easily have resulted in a more serious injury than the bruises and grazes received.

Yes, prayer features large in the work of *HFA* – the two are inextricably linked. Prayer most certainly is a huge and necessary part of the work! Prayer and faith must go hand in hand: we trust in God alone, and He enables us to do His work.

In Philippians 4:6-7 Paul reminds us:



“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”

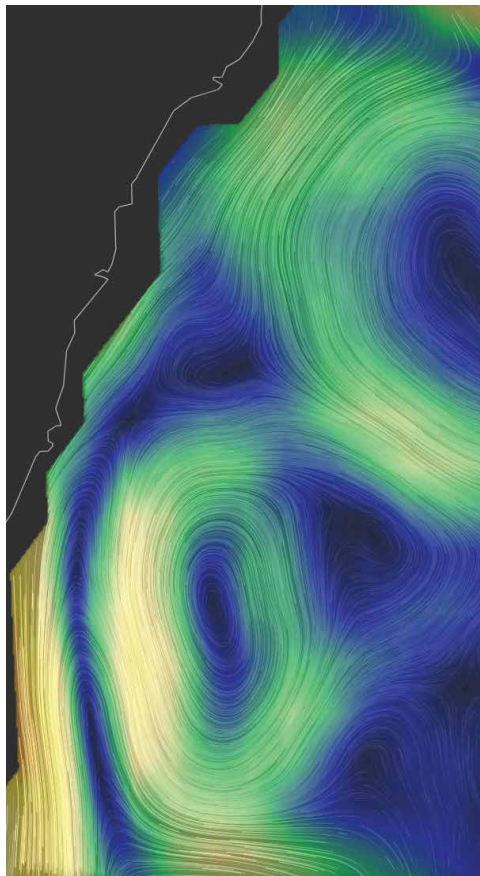
Carol
HR/Admin Manager

IT'S NOT THAT SIMPLE...

In October 2023 HFA launched its first ocean going waterdrone. This statement is seemingly small but for the teams of technical people who contributed to it, this is a huge step forward. There have been so many skill sets involved: painting, vacuum sealing, Bible packing, wiring, soldering, electronics engineering, launch testing, driving, ocean current and wind analysis, navigation planning, post launch navigation, welding, component selection and the list goes on. Each of these efforts represents a person that made themselves available to serve and then just as importantly they persisted through the 'ups and downs'. They kept going and because of that the launch happened. What had never been done, was achieved.

For a moment, for those who find the details interesting, let's delve into some of the launch technicalities. Firstly, the team needed to decide on the time and initial waypoints for launching. It may sound like a simple decision with not much to consider but there are tidal flows and swirling ocean currents to think about, among other factors.

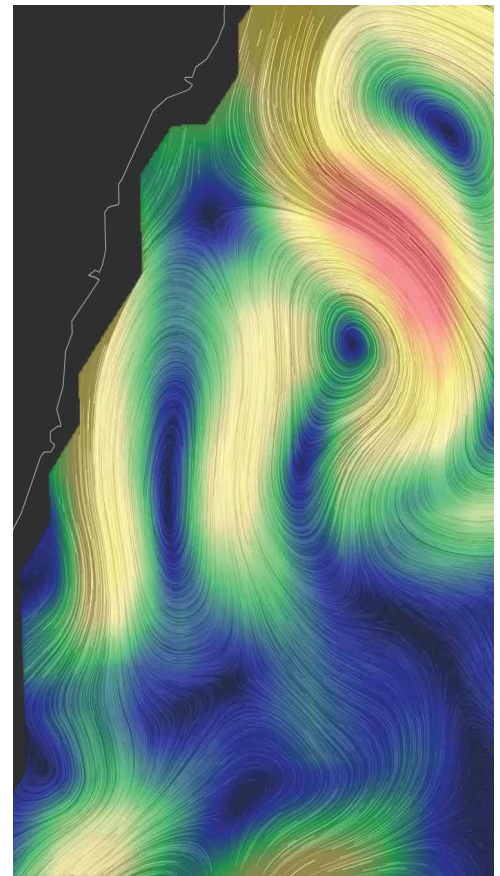
Have a think about the tide. Around the world the tide has an enormous effect on the currents surrounding any land mass. The tides can be quite large depending on where you are and at the time of launching, the difference between high and low tide was huge. For the waterdrone, which



Currents off the east coast of Australia a month ago. Image Source: earth.nullschool.net.

is quite slow, we need to launch it at high tide for two reasons: One, waterdrones sit quite deep in the water thus needing several metres of water depth to launch and the outgoing tidal flow helps us get away from the coastline.

Once clear of the coastline, the water gets deeper and the tidal currents get smaller. At this point the actual ocean currents begin to take greater effect. One may think that there are prevailing ocean currents and you simply find a current and sit in it till you get to your destination. Well from a world-wide perspective that is generally true but as is normal in deploying any project into reality there is much more to contend with once you look into the details. Take a look at the currents off the east coast of Australia in the images. One image is at the time of writing and the other image is from a previous month. You will note that the surface currents have changed completely. What does this mean? It means that with a slow moving waterdrone you have to be mindful on a daily basis where it is going and where it is being pushed.



Currents off the east coast of Australia at the moment of writing. Image Source: earth.nullschool.net.

Constant adjustments are needed to the immediate waypoints every few days to avoid islands, reefs and busy shipping lanes. This we encountered after the launch. In effect rather than each waterdrone being self-sufficient we now have a new role. One who monitors a drone every day, a navigator.

In the time observing the first drone after launch it is clear our learning, redesigning and improvement cycles are not done. We press on knowing that the unreached are waiting to hear the Good News and we must do all we can to reach them. For now the waterdrone project is the method we have been given to reach them and so the next craft with the new hull design and navigation sensors becomes our focus. So yet again we are thankful to be part of a team of technical people pooling their efforts to lift the project to the next level. To see again a new step closer to effectiveness as we saw in the first water drone launched.

Robert
CEO

OUR 'UNSEEN TEAM' AT WORK

"Hello, you don't know me, but I have a request," was the intriguing start to an email my husband and I received on the mission-field in Southeast Asia many years back. "In our new cell-group we'd like to consistently pray for missionaries. Would you be able to send us short prayer requests and then follow-up news how the Lord answered those prayers?"

As greenhorns in our new country and roles we were 'in over our heads' but then again, so is everyone who's aim it is to bring the gospel to unreached people-groups. It doesn't take long to find out that we're not 'wrestling against flesh and blood'. It took us some time, however, to recognize the spiritual component behind mundane things like supplies stuck in customs, visa problems, or the computer acting up, but when our own efforts to resolve the problems failed and we got together with the whole team to pray, things usually came 'unstuck'.

We typed up our most urgent prayer-points and sent them to the new cell group as well as some friends and family members. That was the day we could have marked on the calendar! Some people had prayed for us from the start – a few even daily – but after we started sending out the specific prayer requests to more people, things tangibly changed for the better.

Just like today at *HFA*, back then we weren't in direct contact with the indigenous people living in isolated jungle villages but we had joined the battle for their souls. Many of these precious and unique people-groups are living in danger of extinction due to tribal warfare, diseases, high child-mortality, revenge-killings, dangerous terrain, no access to health care as well as outside threats such as mining. And almost all of them have one thing in common: constant fear of evil spirits.

Life was still hard work and often felt

like wading through thick mud while dodging bullets and trying not to fall off cliffs – but now it seemed like someone helped push us through, put up invisible guard-rails and shields and when we did end up 'falling off a cliff', we landed more softly. Not every Christian can physically go abroad but every Christian should still be involved in fulfilling the Great Commission – and prayer is one invaluable way to do that.

In the 10 + years of *HFA's* ministry, the regular prayer updates have played a key role. As the work and the *HFA*-network grows, so does the need for prayer supporters, which I like to refer to as 'our unseen team'. When we get to work together, we keep experiencing God's intervention – sometimes in small ways and sometimes spectacularly.

A few years back a team-member went on a work-trip to Asia covered by prayer – especially for his suitcase with legal but 'hard-to-explain' contents. "My mouth was dry and my knees felt weak," he later reported. "But as the plane descended, I felt God's peace. When I got to the customs counter at the airport, the officer seemed irritated by a problem with his ear. He looked at the strange contents of my suitcase and when I asked how much duty I had to pay, he said 'Just leave!'" Now the valuable equipment was in the country and ready to be used by our partners. Praise the Lord!

Have you realized yet how powerful and effective prayer is? We have and we thank you for standing in the gap on our behalf. Let's continue to pray and things and situations will change. If you'd like to make a difference to our work and become an *HFA*-prayer-warrior please go to the website and sign up for the prayer updates. The people-groups whose lives will be changed as result of your prayers will be eternally grateful – literally!

Elke
Supporter Liaison

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Please send to:
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