

IN THE SCHEME OF THINGS

This is my first newsletter in a LONG time. I am sorry for the lack of news over the last few months. I really don't have any excuse for it apart from pure

Dance Academy

This took place during one of the first few weeks of the kids summer break from school. This club has been running for a few years now and this year, I was in charge of it (fortunately, by God's grace, it wasn't a disaster). The kids would come in each morning, we would dance and play games and then have a bible study during lunch while they were stuffing their faces, followed by more dancing in the hall where they learned their actual routine. On the final day of Dance Academy, we invited all the parents for a late lunch and the awards ceremony where the girls performed their dance routine.

(This picture to the right and above was taken on the final day of Dance Academy 2017 just before the performance.)

Holiday Club

Holiday Club (British VBS but run at midday) was the week following Dance Academy. Our theme was Pirates' Adventure Cruise and we had on average 65 kids a day. This club ran Monday-Friday and had much the same activities as VBS in the states. We had three groups that moved to different stations (craft, bible study, games). We got to sit down and enjoy lunch together and have casual chats about what the kids had been learning that day.

Both Dance Academy and Holiday Club were extremely encouraging as we had kids asking good, serious questions about the gospel, bibles given out, and they provided good interactions with parents.



laziness (which isn't an excuse but my own sin problem). I'm coming home in November for a brief visit so you can corner me then and rebuke me or just email me any time telling me off for my laziness and lack of communication. But, in this newsletter I'll try to briefly hit all the highlights and fill you in on things you've missed!

Let me start off by telling you how good God has been to me. He has been reminding me what a privilege it is to be here, to have the job that I have, to serve with the people on my team, to be living in the home I'm in, to have the friendships He's given me, to be able to go home and visit, and to experience these things that most other people never get to do. I have been uniquely blessed in the position that I have working in Niddrie. And it is definitely a blessing. However, it's so easy for me to forget that. I get caught up in the job and distracted by what needs doing rather than living my life in constant worship of the One who made me His and gave me the honour in the first place. I get to serve my King in ministry and the Lord has been faithfully reminding me of that in the last few months. There's no line drawn between my work life and my Christian life (not that there ever should be, as we should all be living missionally and seeking to make disciples no matter our career). It all meshes into one and that's something that not many people have the joy or ease of experiencing.

None of this is to say that I am overflowing with thankfulness for this job all the time. It's hard and hurtful and stressful. Kids that we do our best to care

Prayer Points

As you can tell from the rest of this newsletter and my previous ones, these kids desperately need Jesus and that means that they desperately need prayer. Here are a few of the major things I would like each of you to pray for:

- Ultimately that each of these kids will come to know Christ as their Saviour and treat Him as LORD of their lives. Not just eye-service but that they really, really love Jesus and want to serve Him with all of their hearts and give up their vain idols.
- Their physical protection. These kids are literally surrounded by drugs, alcohol, and sex. Some of their parents are dealers, other are abusers, and still others are just abusive/neglectful. Many are a combination of those things. Living in a small community like a scheme gives no protection from any of it and makes it more likely the kids will fall into the same patterns as their families.
- Wisdom for Natasha, myself, and others who help with all the youth stuff. We desperately need it, particularly when dealing with complex situations.
- A male youth worker. Lewis is no longer officially on the team as he had to get a higher paying job to bring his future wife over to live here (absolutely unacceptable excuse in my opinion) so we are in need of a man who can speak well into the lives of the young boys in our community.

“Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to Him be glory in the church in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”
Ephesians 3:20-21

for go from being your best pal to hating your guts and shouting abuse at you. Some of them I have known since my first summer here four years ago. Watching them grow up and choose things they should have absolutely nothing to do with, things that will destroy their lives and ultimately leave them with **nothing** is by far the hardest part of this job. We have told them the gospel. They know the truth but they refuse to believe it. They suppress it and follow in the footsteps of their parents and friends, choosing things they hope will give them some sort of life and peace when all it really does is kill them. The more I have gotten to know them, the harder this job has become. Last year, it was almost an easy thing to talk about the reality of a typical child's life growing up in a scheme. Now, I sit here writing this with tears in my eyes as I consider the pain and grief that these kids are going through and the consequences they will soon face for their actions, both in this life and the next if our loving Father does not do a work in their hearts. This is no small matter and I am pleading with you to be in prayer for these kids.

In other news, the weeks following Dance Academy and Holiday Club were the most relaxing and stress free weeks I've had my entire time here. I spent one week with a group of friends on the Isle of Harris (one of the Outer Hebridean islands) and the following week just chilling out in Niddrie. Now, however, we are right back into the



Natasha and I with a stolen trolley (it's not actually stealing if we just found it, right?)



Listening to the bible study during Holiday Club

swing of things with the start of the new term. Our small team in Niddrie now consists of two Americans, one Kenyan, two Englishmen, and two from Scotland.

Here is our team's mission statement:

"Glorifying God, preaching the gospel, and making disciples of Jesus Christ."

And our vision statement:

"Winning Niddrie for Jesus"

Pray for all of us as we seek to make Jesus Christ known throughout Niddrie.

If you have any questions, if I haven't been informational enough (more than likely the issue most of you will have), or if you would like to know how else you can contribute to the work going on here (that would be amazing) please email me. It would also just be good to hear from any of you. Its encouraging to know people actually read these on the rare occasion I do send them.

I miss you all!

Niddrie's youth workers. . . the kids are in good hands.

