

Dear supporters in both prayer and finances,

It is my joy to write to you all again, and give you an update of the work going on in Niddrie Community Church. I hope this update letter finds you all well.

Below you will find all sorts of updates from the past months.

But before I get to the updates, I wish to share with something that has been most helpful to me from God's Word.

It comes from Psalm 145 (which is my new favourite Psalm):

"The Lord is faithful in all His words and kind in all His works...The Lord is righteous in all His ways and kind in all His works" – Psalm 145:13,17.

It is twice repeated that the Lord is "kind in all His works". When something is twice repeated in Scripture it is something we are to take notice of, and not skip on by. It is something we are to chew on in our minds. And due to the nature of these truths, treasure them in our hearts. For the Lord is "kind in all His works".

The twice repeated statement that the Lord is "kind in all His works" has been a great comfort to me over these months.

Life has been busy, chaotic, there have been many changes, learning curves, much soul searching. Work has been challenging, overwhelming, tiring, hard, busy, anxiety inducing. My mind has dealt with darkness, depression and stress. My walk with the Lord and heart towards Him has been up and down, cold and hot, faithful and faithless.

I have struggled to see the Lord's kindness in all His works that are taking place in me and all around me. Yet in these verses though I may not see entirely, nor even very clearly that the Lord is "kind in ALL His works", I am indeed reminded that it is the case.

And most notably, I am reminded that the Lord is KIND!

One of my favourite songs is 'Jesus Strong and Kind' by CityAlight. It is a song that is dear to me. And is actually a song that we sing almost every week at our children's club '1to6'. Which is for children aged 5-10, and is attended by church and community children.

It is a song that speaks about the kindness of the Lord towards us. And it is a song that is belted out by these children almost every week. It is such a heart-warming moment when they belt it out it, accompanied by the actions.

Some of them may not know what they are singing, some of them may not fully understand, some of them may not really care about the words, but that's ok; for I pray that each will remember the words always, and know the richness of the song, and of this Psalm, that the Lord is "kind in all His works", for the Lord is infinitely kind in His character.

And that is the bedrock of the Lord's kindness in all His works. It is the fact that the Lord is infinitely kind, which means that the Lord can be, and is kind in all His works, in and around you and me.

I would recommend you read the Psalm, think about the Lord's kindness to you. Kindnesses in your work, family, friends, salvation, sanctification, life.

And as you do that, listen to 'Jesus and Strong and Kind', and not only remind yourself of His kindness to you, but praise Him for His kindness also.

Life Update

As many of you would have seen and heard, but on the 24th June I got married to Amy. It was a day full of so much joy, laughter and happiness. The sun even shone all day, and it was boiling, which was a blessing as we got married in Scotland! It really was the best day ever!

We then went on honeymoon to Kefalonia in Greece which was absolutely amazing as well!

Marriage so far over these months has been a bit of a whirlwind, with getting used to changes, learning about each other and ourselves, getting into routines and all the potential challenges that marriage can bring. Yet marriage has truly been an awesome blessing!

Below are a few pictures from the day.



Children's and Youth Work

As some of you may remember from my previous update letter, I made the decision to go down the Children's and Youth work track for this second year of my internship. Which has now led me to be the overseer of the Children's and Youth work after our current worker went on maternity leave as of the end of July.

As part of this role I had both the stress and joy of planning and doing this year's Holiday Bible Club which took place 1st-4th August. The theme this year was around Secret Agents, and although I oversaw the whole event, I was personally involved in the drama on the day (let's just say an Oscar is not on its way in the post!) Yet, in my opinion the whole event was a storming success. Definitely a stress inducing, manic, hectic and extremely tiring one, but definitely a success.

We had around 40-50 children across the 4 days, most of which were from the community and unchurched backgrounds. So that was encouraging as the gospel went out to these children. Plus, relationships were made not only with the children across these four days, but also with their parents. For on the Friday we did a family fun day with bouncy castles, food, face painting and the like. It was a good day. However, I don't think we saw many if any children come to our clubs off the back of Holiday Bible Club. Yet we leave all that in the Lord's hands, and thank the Lord for the chance to do Holiday Bible club where the gospel was proclaimed and relationships were built.

Another addition to the role has seen me preparing, each week, the Sunday School material for our Sunday School teachers to use. We as a church have gone through the book of Genesis and have done a whole church curriculum. Therefore whatever story is taught from the pulpit is also taught in the Sunday Schools. This has definitely been a challenge at times especially when the chapter is on the defiling of Dinah, or Judah and Tamar. Yet, the Lord has always helped me in this with what to include, what not to include, also the main points, application, craft and teaching material.

One final addition to the role saw myself preparing and leading the childcare at the 20schemes Weekender Conference that took place 6th-7th October. The childcare took place on the Saturday for the full day of the conference. The day itself although tiring was a lot fun, as I was there for the whole day and did the 4 teaching slots as well, with the Exodus story being what was taught. The preparation of the day was also tiring and stressful, but again the day was fun and was a real joy to do.

Prayer:

- Please be praying that I would grow in organisational skills, as I suck at it and work continues to tick along.
- Please be praying for wisdom, understanding and strength in this role, as I make decisions, do the work needed, help others, oversee the work, and plan for the future of the Children's and Youth work.
- Please be praying that in my role I would continue to see the Lord at work in my life, whether that be the help He gives, or whether that be the strength He provides in my weakness, so that I may grow in thankfulness and gratitude for who He is and what He does.

Mighty Men

This term of Mighty Men has by far been the most well attended. We have had around 8-12 boys come to the club, with upwards of 15 if all the lads that do come, came. This is a big encouragement. Plus, we are having at least 5 boys from the community coming, all from unchurched families and backgrounds. This is another big encouragement.

The teaching material for the term saw us learning about 'What God is like?', which has created very good discussion and questions from the lads.

In our skill time we are doing a mixture of sports and cooking; plus, we had a member of our church who runs a welding business, come in for 6 Mondays and teach the lads tools, and other such handy skills with the young boys being given a project to create and complete as well.

As an offshoot of Mighty Men, what we are also planning on doing, is plan trips out with the lads and with their respective fathers or male figure in their life, which could include one of us leaders. We are calling it 'Big Lads – Little Lads'. The purpose of this is to foster better relationships not only with the boys but also with their respective male figure in their life.

The first of these trips was Saturday 23rd September to the football where we saw Hibernian vs St Johnstone. We did have a small group of men and boys come, but hopefully as we plan some more for the future, more will come.

Prayer:

- Please be praying still that these lads would not only know the truth, but that the truth would impact their very lives, minds, hearts and souls.
- Please be praying for the salvation of the young boys who do not know the Lord, and that those, and we think there are few, that do know the Lord would grow in their knowledge, understanding and Christlikeness as they grow older.

Street Team

As of this new school term we started a new ministry called 'Street Team', which takes place every Friday 2-3pm. Street team was born out of a desire to reach and build relationships with the young people, in particular the teenagers in the community. Specifically those that we do not have a formal point of contact with. The layout of Street Team is quite simple; but it involves us as a team going down to the local astro and playing football with any of the lads or ladies that are present there.

The reason for going over to the astro was that it was noticed that many of the children after school congregate there to hang out and play football. So we thought, "why don't we go to them." And so every Friday we do that, weather permitting of course.

The past few months has been very much a success in my opinion. We have always had good numbers, especially of those aged 7-12. For example, a number of weeks ago we had about 30 children. And for some of the children there it was the first time we had met them.

Prayer:

- Please be praying that over time we would build strong and lasting relationships with the young people in the scheme.
- Please be praying that the connections made and relationships built with the young people will lead onto gospel opportunities.

Pastoral Opportunities

As I have moved towards heading up the children's and youth work here at Niddrie, I have naturally moved away from pastoral opportunities I was able to do previously; like shadowing Andy Constable at meetings, or when he visited church members. However, I have still had opportunities to preach. I was able to preach on a Sunday morning for the first time in Niddrie in July. The text was Genesis 29:31-24. And it was a joy to be able to do it.

I also had the opportunity to preach at Hope Church Bingham (a church part of 20schemes in the next scheme along from Niddrie) on a Sunday morning. There I preached a previously done sermon on Hebrews 7 which again was a joy to do.

Niddrie Community Church

As I previously said, we at Niddrie had the Weekender Conference in October run by 20schemes. This year the theme was on 'Relationships', with discussion being around cultivating Godly relationships, as well as good relationships with those within the communities we find ourselves in; plus, a look at broken relationships we may have. Although I sadly did not go to the Weekender on the Saturday due to running

the childcare, I was able to go on the Friday night to the prayer and praise night which kicked off the weekender. That was truly a wonderful evening, where we gained a taste of heaven with all those voices loudly and proudly making a joyful noise to the Lord.

We as a church are also going through some changes in the leadership and membership. As of earlier this year Mez McConnell stepped down from the role of Pastor and Elder, and it was told to us that Mez, plus others within the church would be going to do a church revitalisation in a scheme called Gorgie. This revitalisation is yet to occur and is still at least a year away; yet the changes are already starting to occur and will continue to do so once these individuals leave Niddrie and head over to Gorgie.

Prayer:

- Please be praying for the church and that the Lord would help us to be unified in our mission as proclaimers of the gospel and servants of the Lord and each other, especially as we begin to lose key members to the Gorgie plant.
- Please be praying also in thanks for the Gorgie plant, and that the gospel is going out to a scheme that desperately needs it.

The Future

As many of you will know my internship with 20schemes will officially come to an end at the end of December this year. Therefore conversations have been happening about the future of my job here at Niddrie Community Church. And in conversations with Andy Constable (Pastor), he has decided to offer me the full-time job of Children's and Youth Worker.

For these past few months, after having taken on the role of overseeing the Children's and Youth Work, I have been seeing whether this role is for me, is something I am passionate about and wish to do going forward. And through this experience, the wisdom of others and prayer I have indeed come to the decision to take on the role.

My contract will officially begin in April. And I will have three months off prior to this start date, where me and Amy will come down to Swindon in early January, and will also go travelling to South America in February and March. We are looking forward to those three months as well as the job coming up and our continued stay at Niddrie Community Church.

Prayer:

- Please be praying that I will continue to grow in wisdom and understanding for the role, so that I may do it to the best of my abilities.
- Please be praying for peace about the decision in and amongst the doubts as I trust the Lord for the decision made.
- And please praying that the Lord will indeed provide all the financial support that I will need to to cover the next few more years.

It is with this future in mind that I would encourage you, if you are able, to be willing to support me both in prayer and finances.

I am hoping to raise £10,000 for my future role. If I could have 10 people give £100 per month, I would have £12,000 yearly support. Or the same would be true if 20 people gave £50 per month.

IS THIS SOMETHING YOU COULD YOU DO?

Please think about any amount of money you would be willing to give to not only supporting myself but also the work up here in Niddrie, as we reach the last, the least and the lost with the gospel.

PLEASE CONTACT ME IF YOU ARE WANTING TO SUPPORT ME FINANCIALLY. OR IF YOU WISH TO GET MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE WORK UP HERE IN NIDDRIE, AS WE REACH THE LEAST, THE LAST AND THE LOST WITH THE GOSPEL.

I again, as we end, earnestly ask that you please prayerfully think or rethink your financial support. But also please continue to be prayerfully supporting not only myself but the work up here in Niddrie, as the gospel goes forth and lives are transformed by the gospel.

Thank you again for all your financial and prayerful support of me over the past while. It is greatly appreciated and much needed, as I cannot do what I do without you being financially and prayerfully supportive as you are. Thank you!

All for Jesus,
Ben Taylor