

# David & Teresa Fittro

## Missionaries to England

8 Sherborne Road  
West Bridgford  
Nottingham  
NG2 7BN  
England  
Phone: 011-44-115-9233-183  
Email: DLF92@aol.com

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### Children in Need

Every year there is a huge charity TV marathon in England called *Children in Need*. It features the biggest names in entertainment and politics. It completely captivates Britain for at least 24 hours. All of it is aimed at raising the profile of hurting children in Britain and around the world.

It can be difficult to imagine young people in this community being in need. When we are surrounded by the trappings of Western middle class, we can overlook the fact that behind the closed doors and drawn curtains, these young people are hurting. Some are experiencing physical or emotional pain. There are many more who are wrestling with the pain of hopelessness. They have *stuff*, but what they lack cannot be bought. They lack a purpose that will help them believe there is a future worth living. They lack a reason to form lasting relationships. They are missing the depth of unconditional love that can only be found in the One who knows them best.

### Jill

Let's call her Jill. She's 16 years old and seems to exist between a dysfunctional home and youth shelters, when Mum and Dad kick her out of the house. She and her sister come to our mid-week youth club. Occasionally, they can be the sparks which ignite the rowdy fire among the group. Looking from the outside, it can appear that they are just troublemakers, not interested in relationship. In fact, this seems to be the opinion of many adults here: youth are just interested in creating trouble. Our aim has been to develop deeper relationships with these young people and show them the love of Christ as we get to know them.

It was during one particular evening at the club that a group of youth seemed to be having an intense conversation. Their conversation drew the attention of one of our workers. Initially, there was resentment that he would step in to make sure that everything was okay. However, he soon found himself sitting with Jill and another young person talking about things they do to alleviate the pain in their lives. From various anti-social behaviors, to drugs, drinking and smoking, these young people find ways to numb what is hurting in their lives.

Nathanael

David

Teresa

Rachael

It appears that Jill and her sister have been the victims of serious abuse. Jill stated that her attempts to dull the pain continue to prove ineffective. Our co-worker shared his own story of an abusive and painful childhood. He also shared his faith in Christ, how Jesus had done more than just dull pain. Christ had resolved it and given our friend a new life. Seeds were planted which we will continue to water and pray that we see a harvest one day. Please pray for Jill and many like her who tend to be misunderstood by society. Pray that they will see and experience the love of Christ.

### Andy

We will call him Andy. He is 14 years old, and has been coming to our youth club since the beginning. He seems a healthy and happy 14-year-old. He is very talented in art and enjoys doodling, playing *Guitar Hero* on the Playstation, and chatting. In a recent conversation while doodling, Andy raised questions with one of our workers about God. It was an interesting time as a few of us had recently been in to Religious Education classes at Andy's school. In those classes, we had discussed topics such as the existence of God. While Andy was not in any of those classes, it was obvious that he had his own questions.

It became clear that Andy believes in God. He just isn't sure if it is the Christian God he believes in, or what relevance that belief may have on his life. As the conversation progressed, the idea of a youth church was presented to Andy. It is understandable that he did not immediately connect with the idea. However, as it was described as a youth club organized in such a way as to have a meaningful experience in finding out more about God, Andy lit up with excitement. It seemed to click with the questions he has in his own mind about God. Pray for Andy and other young people with many questions and few places to find meaningful answers. Pray that Andy will be able to believe what he has seen and heard in us.

As 2008 draws to a close, we thank God that He has placed us in a work that is directly linked to what happens in this community. It has been a slow process, but as we

consider the work we do with local politicians, youth, and community workers, as well as like-minded Christians, we are humbled at God's provision. Our prayer is that He would be glorified here – not just among the youth, but among those whose decisions impact the lives of so many people in this section of Nottingham. So many are in need, and our prayer is that they would become Children of God rather than children in need.

Please see a report on our 2008 ministry at the end of this newsletter. If you would like a full report including our goals for 2009, please contact us at [dlf92@aol.com](mailto:dlf92@aol.com), and we will email a report to you.

## Emmanuel

The peace and purpose that Jill and Andy are missing is found only in the One who knows their pain and confusion. He is familiar with it because He risked becoming one of us. As we celebrate His coming this Christmas, our prayer is that you will know His peace and a renewed purpose because of His presence in your life.

God bless you,

*David & Teresa*  
David and Teresa Fittro

## Prayer & Praise

- **Fish.net:** *Our monthly email update has not quite been monthly during this year. Please accept our apologies. We are working to schedule it more regularly. We have heard from a few people who used to get it that they are no longer receiving it. If this is the case, please let us know and we will add you again. If you have changed your email address recently, please let us know. Finally, if you have never received it and would like to, please let us know at [dlf92@aol.com](mailto:dlf92@aol.com).*
- **Families:** *Please pray for our families in America. Several of them have been experiencing various struggles with health over the last 12 months.*
- **New Car:** *During this past year we issued an appeal for help in purchasing a larger car. Your response was amazing. We were able to purchase a Ford Galaxy, a seven-passenger van. It has helped us immensely. Thank you.*

- **Finances:** *Thank God that the exchange rate has dropped. However, it is still a financial struggle to live in England. Even with the drop in exchange rate, the reality is that the cost of utilities, petrol for our cars, and the cost of food continues to skyrocket. Thank you for your faithfulness in your support. We recognize that these are difficult times on both sides of the Atlantic. However, if you are able to increase your support it would be a blessing as we are currently in the red. Please, would you or your church consider ways to increase your support? It would be a huge help to our operating costs for 2009.*
- **Intern:** *Austin O'Connor has spent four months interning with us. He is a senior at Lincoln Christian College. As a mission major, his focus is on working with youth in Europe. What a blessing he has been to us! Please pray for Austin and his fiancée Carolyn as they seek God's leading for their future in ministry.*

## Ministry Update

The year 2008 has been very full, as you will see in the following update. One thing we are excited about is having an identifying name for our local ministry. We have chosen to call ourselves *Lifebridge Ministry*. For a long time, our team has been known as David and his team – this is not conducive to a growing ministry. Therefore, having identification among the local church and community will serve to further establish our profile.

### January

**Hope 08 Revolution Launch** – Youth workers from the local churches joined efforts to launch an event to mark the year of hope. Featuring a band, food, speakers, and games, over 100 young Christians gathered to celebrate the launch of a year of special events.



Caleb with Tasha

### February

Caleb Trapp, a senior at Lincoln Christian College joined us for a three-month internship. Caleb trained in youth work and had been part of the LCC team two times before the internship. Lincoln Christian College brought 16 students to work with us in the school and community. It was a

whirlwind of a week in the secondary school classroom and sponsoring community outreach events. The week was capped with a band, café, and games night at the Trentside club. We had nearly 50 young people come out for the evening.



LCC team get their hands dirty at Trentside



Trentside building with our new green Galaxy parked outside

### March

We began partnering with the local council in running a community youth club. The Trentside Youth Club is for 13- to 18-year-olds. Recognizing that the provision for young people here is poor, we saw this as an opportunity to directly impact the young people of this community. We are now running this on Thursday evenings with approximately 25 to 30 young people.



*Trentside Talent Show - Rachael and two friends win!*

### April

Sports afternoon in the park with games and activities in partnership with other youth workers.

### May

*Open-Air Youth Club* – We helped sponsor an open-air youth club in the center of town. Nothing like this had been tried before by the council or the churches. The club was aimed at relationship building with youth in our community. On a beautiful spring evening, we assembled a bronco bull ride, games, a free barbecue, music, and a testimony given by a teen from a local church. When the evening concluded, we had been visited by over 200 young people. The police who were in the area were thrilled that such an event could prove a success.

part of the LCC team two years ago, Austin trained in missions with a focus on youth work. He is searching for God's leading following his graduation in May.

### September

Filled with meetings and planning for the autumn term. Our after-school club resumed its weekly meetings.



*Water sports adventure*

### October

Our after-school club sponsored an ice cream giveaway. This was to boost our profile within the school. Having seen a handful of young people join us after school before the event, we were hoping to make quite a splash. Having served nearly 115 teens, it seems we made a big splash. Since then, we have been hosting nearly 15 every week.



*Crystal, Amy, and Austin take a break from the water*

### September/October/November

Crystal and Amy spent six weeks in America visiting their families, supporters, and friends. They have each committed to working with us for a second year!

### November

*Evangelistic Outreach* – We are currently helping lead youth talks and discussion about Jesus. We are calling these events *The Point*. Our publicity asks, "Jesus: what's the point?" They are being held in a local pizza shop. As I write this, we have held three events with attendance increasing weekly. We have doubled in size from 7 to 14!

*Music Event* – featuring a local teen band and a worship band – the possibility is that near 400 young people could attend.

In addition to this schedule of events, we have been:

1. Visiting other youth church plants to learn from those who are doing similar works.



*Trentside rock wall*

### June

At Trentside, we sponsored a band and café event. This was a good evening with a local teen band, food, and activities.

### July/August

Trentside features rock climbing, water sports, and graffiti art events.

### August

Austin O'Connor arrived for a four-month internship. Having been a



*Trentside youth party*



*Worship at Soul Survivor*



*Zone pumpkin carving*

2. Meeting local borough councilors (politicians) who have an interest in provision for young people in our community. These relationships have proven extremely valuable.
3. In the schools, which have been busy places this year, with lessons on the existence of God, sex and relationships, medical ethics, and the Sermon on the Mount in the secondary school. In the primary school, we led two assemblies. One was intended to promote our after-school club in the secondary school.
4. Street pastoring on Friday evenings once a month with other youth workers. Meeting with youth who are in parks, on the streets, waiting at bus stops, or wherever, allows us to build trust and share our faith and some hot chocolate.

We have felt God leading us in our strategy to reach the young people of Nottingham. What we see coming together is a combination community youth center and youth church. We desire to bring Christ to the youth in this community. We recognize that many are totally unfamiliar with the traditional church. It's a foreign thing to them. Therefore, we want to introduce them to church in a way and a place designed specifically for them. Please pray with us as we continue to follow God's leading in this next year!



*David, Nathanael, & Rachael*

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317-578-2700  
 INDIANAPOLIS, IN 46250-6020  
 PO BOX 501020  
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 David and Teresa Fittro



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