

'Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, that I may discern between good and evil, for who is able to govern this your great people?' (1 Kings 3:9)



Elise and Edith

The last three months have been a lot of fun through which the Lord has been showing us how to trust in him daily evermore.

Our Bible study group continued to meet until the middle of June when we closed for the summer with a pizza evening. A couple of new people have started to come although we had to say goodbye to another person who moved away. We have had opportunities to think and pray with one another about how the work in Gort looks going forward. We have mentioned different times about wanting to meet as church on a Sunday with arrangements now in place to do so from September. We feel very vulnerable in this transition. But the Lord knows exactly what we need. He has already provided a lovely building to rent and one of our newest arrivals plays piano. How lovely to think we'll soon be able to praise him in song 😊

We feel ever more at home in Gort. It's a colourful little town – not without its problems, but somewhere we feel the Lord is present increasingly. Both of us have a passion for being involved in the community either through our employment or extra-curricular activities. Recently Alastair sourced a new container for the Tidy Towns group to store their equipment. Through these pursuits, we sometimes get a glimpse of different personalities in the town and tensions between people with different agendas. Our prayer is not how do we attach ourselves to one group or another but simply how might we be salt and light to all? We have no doubt a living, breathing church that actively teaches the Bible and welcomes lost sinners to know Jesus and be among us is the answer to this.

Conversations with our neighbours and work colleagues etc. happen continually with some, in the Lord's grace, becoming gospel opportunities. In the little village where we live, everyone knows us as the family 'in the old pub' that are a bit different! Now I think Christians have no problem being different but often in a weird and eccentric manner. Our aim is to sit both comfortably within and without or as the Bible says, 'be in the world but not of it'. We're also trying to get the dynamic right between everyday chat and the more formal Christian activity such as door-to-door evangelism. We mentioned last time that we were planning one or two further outreaches following time with the Californian students in March. Interestingly, one of Elise's fellow scout leaders asked her about why we moved to Gort and when she mentioned the Bible study he asked her if we had anything to do with the 'young Americans who delivered him a leaflet'. This resulted in an encouraging gospel conversation between the two of them.



Commissioning

We continue to seek the Lord on the balance between employment and preparing for Bible study and pastoring people. Alastair is still learning to drive a bus – he failed the test but has a retest in September. Patience is ever needed. Elise recently finished in her after-school employment and her colleagues and boss were truly sad to see her leave which was encouraging. The children also finished the year at school with school trips, allowing Edith to now put her energies into learning how to ride her bike WITHOUT stabilisers 😊

As you know, we have attended Calvary Church Loughrea since moving to Galway two years ago. In that time, we have been blessed with friendship and so much kindness and have been able to serve in various ways throughout. Josiah and Edith have really loved being part of the Sunday school and Elise has been able to teach occasionally. At the end of May we were 'commissioned' as a family to further ministry in Gort and we received a lovely send-off...and an even lovelier cake 😊 Thank you Calvary Church.

With the commissioning over and our upcoming trip to Canada in July, we had the opportunity to visit some old friends in other churches during June and renew some friendships. On a trip to Christ Church North Dublin, our good friends Cameron and Alex Jones gave Josiah a spin in their MG. In the last week of June, Elise attended a training weekend for the Bible camp we will serve at as a family in August. Alastair, meanwhile, helped at a Christian surf camp in County Clare with some friends. Please pray for all these opportunities and the upcoming children's day camp in Canada, that the Lord would use these occasions, and us, to draw some young people to his Son.



Josiah in the MG

As we close, we give thanks for a couple of days with Alastair's family immediately before leaving for Canada. Alastair's mum awaits her date for knee surgery which hopefully will be confirmed soon. While out in Canada we look forward to a retirement party for Elise's father after 40 years in road maintenance, and please pray for a funeral service for Elise's grandfather who died after long illness two days before we went out. When we return home, Alastair's sister Janice will celebrate her 40th birthday. Life contains both joy and sadnesses, but we find contentment in all and his leading as September approaches.

Thanks again to anyone reading for all your love and support this past year. Some of you might have the opportunity of a little break yourselves these next couple of months but, whatever you find yourselves doing, we pray it'll be restful and restoring. All our rest is ultimately in Christ, and we can do all things through him.

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