

Prayer

Your support in prayer is critical to our ministry, please pray with us!

Give thanks for:

- Our being able to maintain some contact with young people during the challenging months of COVID-19.
 - Our being able to adapt our ministry output to virtual delivery which has aided us in maintaining contact with young people. Also for the good response and feedback received from both young people and parents.
 - The relaxation of COVID-19 restrictions which have enabled us to recommence, albeit in a small way, face-to-face contact with young people.
 - The enthusiasm shown by young people to be able to gather face to face at Illuminate.
 - The continuing good relationship with the local school head and staff despite the school being unable at present to allow access to the school on a face-to-face basis for external organisations.
- Pray For:**
- The young people and the problems they face in coping with the effects of the Corona Virus Pandemic: mental health issues and personal situations.
 - Wisdom and the presence of the Holy Spirit to be with Matthew and volunteers as they deal with the complex and difficult issues presented by young people with whom they interact.
 - God's protection of our own and partner ministries as we seek to reach young people with the Gospel and love of Jesus.
 - For the team at North East Scotland Youth for Christ and The Lighthouse as we try to pave the way forward over the next few months.
 - The successful set up of a virtual pupil support programme in our local academy.
 - The schools as they adjust to the new normal and seek to educate the kids.
 - The success of the Christmas events whether they be virtual or face-to-face with young people.
 - The salvation of the young people of Tillydrone and North East Scotland.

Thank you!

We thank you for your prayer support and interest in the ministry of North East Scotland Youth for Christ. It is truly great to know that there are people out there praying for what God does through us in the Tillydrone area of Aberdeen.

Please spread the word about our ministry and consider giving financial support. Sign up for the Newsletter and find out more at our website www.nesyfc.org.uk.



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Newsletter

Welcome

THE WORK CONTINUES... DESPITE COVID-19

Over the past eight months North East Scotland Youth for Christ have had to adapt to the ever changing circumstances surrounding COVID-19. Back in March we were really facing the unknown. We didn't know how, or if, we could engage with young people or continue relationship-building and investing in the young people of Tillydrone.



However, despite the challenges over the past months, i.e., inability to meet face-to-face with young people, lockdown fatigue among our young people etc., we have managed to largely maintain contact with them and offer support where we could, albeit primarily in a virtual online way.

We are thankful that over the past few months we have seen a slight easing of restrictions regarding youth work and have been able to take the first steps at re-opening face to face activities and connecting with more young people. The road out of COVID-19 will be far from easy, but we trust that our Father God will guide us as a ministry as we travel along that road.

It has, for us, been a privilege to be able to continue our work among these young people and a joy to see such a great response from both them and their parents. As we press on as a ministry to serve Christ in supporting the young people of Tillydrone we are very thankful for the prayers and financial support of those who partner with us, and of our Father God's presence with us, and we pray for our young people as we have negotiated these challenging times.

On behalf of all the team here at North East Scotland Youth for Christ we hope that, despite the far from normal circumstances, you will indeed



have a happy Christmas and will know God's blessing in the year ahead as we hopefully move out of COVID-19.

Pray on, for the work continues...

Tom Cowie, Chairperson

Update from Matthew

We catch up with our youth worker Matthew Hamilton on what has been happening 'on the front line' during the past few months

ILLUMINATE

(Regular Bible study, discussion group and games session for young people in S1 – S6)

Illuminate is definitely, for myself, the jewel in the crown of the youth work that we are involved with at the moment. In March we launched Illuminate Online and for four months we ran the Bible study, discussion group and games session online via Zoom.

This seemed to work well at the beginning of the four months, however towards June time the group began to get considerably smaller and the young people began to engage less. We then made the decision to stop for the summer and take a break.

After the summer the Scottish Government's youth work guidance made it possible for us to meet with up to 30 people indoors for youth work. As a result we prepared a format under which we could meet on a face-to-face basis with the young people in compliance with the requirements of COVID-19 guidance.

We began working with the Illuminate group face-to-face in September and have been able to meet and run the Bible study and discussion group every Wednesday night. Following all the COVID guidance we have been able to play some COVID-safe games. We have found that after not seeing the young people for six months we have almost had to start to rebuild relationships from scratch. Wednesday nights are a real highlight being able to reconnect with the young people.



RADIATE ONLINE

(An online kids club for children in P3 – P7)

Since the beginning of lockdown and subsequent restrictions, we had been doing Radiate Online in a video format. This received some good engagement from the children and their parents. We stopped this over the summer holiday period.

Despite the recent relaxation in COVID-19 regulations in relation to youth work, after investigation, it did not prove feasible to run the Radiate kids club on a face-to-face basis due to the unavailability of any access to a suitable venue.

A decision was then taken to re-launch Radiate online in a revised video format. This went live a few weeks ago and so far has been well received by parents and kids. The videos consist of some songs, a short talk, a memory verse, a minute to win it challenge etc. The format of the videos will change from time to time in light of feedback from parents and children. We are also investigating further ways of engaging with the kids in new and exciting ways online, however this is in its early stages.



ONE-TO-ONE SUPPORT

Over the duration of the pandemic we have not been able to safely meet young people on a one-to-one basis in a manner which would comply with Safeguarding and COVID-19 requirements.

We are, however, currently working with partners on preparing a programme which will enable us to resume our support of young people on an individual basis in line with the relevant regulations.

We have in the past found that this approach was



very helpful as it provided the young person with an opportunity to talk about issues which they would not be willing to talk about, and to obtain support for in a group setting with their peers.

IN SCHOOL YOUTH WORK

At present, in line with many other schools, we are not able to access our local primary school. However there is potential for us, with partners, to access our local academy virtually to help young people whom teaching staff feel would benefit from additional support. Discussions are in progress as to how this could happen and your prayers for the successful coming together of this work would be much appreciated. We were invited to and took part last week in a litter pick with academy pupils during break and lunch time. This went well and proved very useful in getting to know some of the pupils.

CHRISTMAS

We are currently, with partners, looking at developing some form of Christmas event for kids and teenagers which would comply with COVID-19 guidelines. The plan is to be able to have some sort of socially distanced Christmas gathering with the young people. We want to give the young people something to look forward to rather than just a lockdown Christmas. We are also trying to explore ways in which we can engage and connect with them over the holidays.

**All pictures here were taken pre-lockdown*