



## FAMILY

Now that I am a daddy I am well aware that people are far more interested in my daughter than me, so I will begin by saying that we are all doing well and Isla is flourishing (even if sleep is often at a premium). She has started to crawl and teeth are coming thick and fast, so we are kept on our toes. *Philippa does an amazing job (it's far harder than any jobs I do), but please keep her in your prayers, as she often bears the brunt of responsibility for Isla!*

## A NEW TERM

On the first Sunday in September, City Church celebrated its third birthday. This was an unusual gathering for us in a number of ways. First, it was the Sunday after we said goodbye to Kieron, Esther and the family as they begin their new phase of ministry in Immanuel Church Dublin. We were sad to see them go but understand that it was the right thing to do, and we are grateful for the partnership between Immanuel and City. Second, no one at our third birthday service had been there at our launch service back in 2013. This reminded me of the transient nature of city centre ministry, but I thank God that we have equipped and sent out so many people all across the world.



Kieron preaching for his last Sunday on staff at City Church.

We started the year with a new sermon series called "Gospel DNA". Over four weeks we looked at some of the essential building blocks of Christian life and community, such as committing to the Scriptures, making disciples and being a loving community. Since then we began our major teaching series for the year in Mark's gospel called, "The King and His Kingdom". We have been taking a chapter a week and seeing that while we often reject rulers and authority, Jesus' kingship is a good thing for us and for the world. *Please pray for us as we continue this series that people would be built up and encouraged through the Word.*



We currently have one community group operating on Tuesday nights with an average of 14 people attending each week. As mentioned in the previous update, we are using a brand new app called "Read Scripture" and discussing what people have been reading through the week. The hope is that people will begin to take more responsibility for their own spiritual wellbeing and come together to share what they have been learning and any questions they have.

There have been a number of other encouragements regarding community group. First, we now begin each week by sharing interactions with non-Christians friends and colleagues, praying for them and celebrating progress in conversations. This keeps our call to be disciple makers at the forefront of our gathering each week. Second, we have begun to establish and profile partnerships with other church plants here in Ireland. Two weeks ago we met Stephen Childs, a church planter in Castlebar, Co. Mayo. It has been great for us to see how the Lord is moving elsewhere and to pray for kingdom growth across the island.

Another exciting development this term is a new discussion group for non-Christians called "Deep and Meaningful". I was conscious that I needed to be deliberate in seeking out ways to get to know and interact with non-Christians, so I set up a monthly group through the online social website, Meetups.com. I hoped that maybe four people would come along, we would chat for a couple of hours and then maybe agree to do it again. Imagine my surprise when our first meeting had 15 non-Christians in attendance! I have been able to follow up with some people off the back of that. The group meets again Thursday, October 27. *Please pray for open doors and fertile soil among the people I encounter in this group.*

## ACTS 29

As I mentioned in my last letter, we have recently been accepted into the Acts 29 network, which seeks to support and resource church planting across the globe. As I write, I am on a train heading out of Prague in the Czech Republic to a gathering of 100 church planters from across Europe. The purpose of these few days is to help pastors establish and multiply "missional communities", that is, groups of believers who are part of one church plant, but are seeking to reach the particular areas they live in. This is a crucial area of development for us as a church, so *please pray that these few days would be informative for me as a pastor, and that I would be able to implement some of the things taught over the course of the weekend.*



View of Prague, Czech Republic.

## NEW STAFF

As also mentioned in my last update, I was in desperate need of some administrative help. I am pleased to announce that help has arrived! Melissa Kratz, a member of City, has agreed to work 2 days a week with us and is responsible for weekly admin, liaising with our partner churches, coordinating a church weekend away in the spring, and a whole host of other things that I don't have to do any more. She also reminds me to write updates... so you all have her to thank. She is originally from Austin, Texas, and is married to David. *Please pray for them both as Melissa takes on this new role.*

## THANK YOU!

Let me once again thank you all for your continued prayerful support. If you would like more information about anything you have read or our specific financial needs please do not hesitate to get in touch!

Warmly in Christ,

Mark