



Looking backwards. Looking forwards.

"I'm amazed you work for the organization that has touched deep within my heart and spiraled so much positive change already. I am starting to believe that a wonderful force is guiding or helping me find or looking after me, as so many things seem to be happening."

We may have shared some of this with you before, but this is part of an ongoing conversation Lisa has been having with a lady she met at our church coffee house. (This has become a great method of outreach; ask people their story in a coffee house and see if God opens doors!) Not only was Emma interested in chatting, she was an attendee at one of our A Day Together events that we hosted in November. The only reason Lisa didn't already know her was that she was working a different event up in Manchester that weekend.

Stories like Emma's are what encourage us and keep us focused on the work we have before us. (By the way, since that first conversation in November, Emma has been an amazing encourager of FamilyLife and has attended our Vision & Equipping weekend. Please keep her in your prayers!)

We're excited at the ministry opportunities God has lined up for us in 2016, but it would be remiss to not to look back over the past few months and give God the glory for all that happened toward the end of 2015!

Beginning the evening of Friday November 13th, Lisa ministered with colleagues Mark and Christine to 65 couples from Kings Church in Manchester. They delivered what was called **Flourish**; a seminar designed to give a sample of FamilyLife events and resources. Couples enjoyed a wonderful dinner at tables for two on Friday night, and the evening set a great atmosphere for the weekend.



The following day, we gave them sessions about love and resolving conflict as couples and in the afternoon people spent an hour in small groups discussing God's purpose and plan for marriage using our small group material; Together. According to the feedback this proved to be the highlight for nearly everyone and the room was buzzing!

At the end of the afternoon we cast vision and people responded massively. There was much interest in being in Together groups, and becoming involved in marriage ministry and local mission. We look forward to partnering over the long term with Kings Church in Manchester.

That same weekend, Chris worked with other members of our facilitator team to host our A Day Together event, locally, in the small town of Amersham. A great day was had by all the couples attending and, from feedback, it seems much conflict was resolved over the course of the day. And, of course, this was the event that Emma and her partner attended!



Recent Highlights

- Towards the end of November, Chris had the privilege to attend CXI, an initiative to train 100 leaders within Agapé (Cru). It was a full-on week of training, but very productive and fruitful.
- Filming began in two locations for our digital project. This was such an amazing time - hearing the couple stories and filming. When the stories go out on the internet as part of our new digital resource (working title: ADT Online) we're sure they will bring help and hope to many couples as they see the reality and work of good marriages.
- From 3rd December until just before Christmas, Chris began software development of ADT Online. With a month-long pause on this in January, development continued for the next 14 weeks on February 4th.



- Just a few short weeks ago, on 16th January, the team travelled into London to host our 4th annual A Day Together event at All Souls Church. Join us in praising God as three people checked the box to find out more about Christianity as a result of the day. Another couple (beyond the three people mentioned) also signed up for Christianity Explored in response to what their heard on this day.

- For roughly the last eight years, FamilyLife has hosted an annual Vision and Equipping weekend for our volunteer network. This weekend aims to do just what it says; we aim to recast the vision of FamilyLife to our network and to equip them to bring help and hope to others through biblical principles and knowing Jesus. This weekend we hosted three days of Vision and Equipping for the UK and European FamilyLife networks.
- Instead of our usual Celebration Dinner to kick off the V&E weekend, on Friday we held an outreach event: What is Love Actually? – Over 120 people registered and 6 people asked to learn more about the Christian faith. We rejoice in this and are particularly excited to say Lisa's friend, Emma, brought her partner and they both thoroughly enjoyed the "What is Love Actually?" evening.



- On Saturday we had around 100 people attend our training from across the UK and Europe. The theme this year was, "Go! Equipping You for Local Mission." Our focus verse for the day was Ephesians 2:4-10. The day was full of the grace of God and people were equipped to engage their frontline through prayer, a focus on what compels us to share our faith, how to do that through short, personal stories, and little steps that help us develop deeper relationships through meaningful conversations.

- On Sunday our 47 European guests from Malta, Portugal, Spain, Germany, Netherlands, Cyprus, and France came together for a special day to encourage and equip their teams to grow a movement in their countries. The privilege of seeing people from so many countries united in the purpose of sharing life and sharing Jesus with others is beyond words. We are always deeply touched and encouraged by our time with these teams.

2016...so far...

Our “diary” is filling up for 2016. When we look at all that is scheduled for FamilyLife, we get both excited and a wee bit overwhelmed. It is definitely cause to rejoice and pray! Would you please pray for God to provide the energy and other resources needed to deliver all of these events while working on improving our processes for growth, designing our online A Day Together product, and helping Ethan with his exams? It all feels very important, but we don't want to forget Who is at the center of it all and that relationship is primary.

So here it is: 2016!

A Day Together: All Souls (Jan 16th)

Vision & Equipping (Jan 29th - 31st)

Together Training (Feb 25th)

Agape Training Day (Feb 27th)

“What is Love Actually?” Cambridge (Mar 5th)

A Day Together: Walthamstow (Mar 19th)

Associate & Network Prayer/Dinner (Mar 21st)

Facilitator Training (Apr 22nd - 24th)

A Day Together: Cambridge (May 7th)

Associate & Network Prayer/Dinner (May 9th)

A Day Together: St. James (May 14th)

A Day Together: Eindhoven (May 28th)

Associate & Network Prayer/Dinner (Jul 4th)

Agape Staff Conference (Aug 15th - 22nd)

London 2 Paris (Aug 24th - 28th)

Associate & Network Prayer/Dinner (Sep 26th)

A Day Together: Newcastle (Oct 15th)

A Day Together: Liverpool (5th Nov)

Associate & Network Prayer/Dinner (Dec 12th)

In 2017 FamilyLife's Vision and Equipping gathering will take place as part of a special weekend celebration for the 50th anniversary of Agape. There will be time for us to focus on equipping ourselves for FamilyLife ministry as we also get to draw on stories from across the Agape family of ministries. All of this will take place Feb. 3-5. We would love to have you join us.

You help make all of this possible and coming near to experience an event like this is powerful. Please let us know if you're interested. Thank you for your support!

Chris and Lisa

Praise Items

- Praise God for Lisa's safe travels to see her Grandma after Christmas & for Grandma's recovery.
- Praise God for the unity and success through the Vision and Equipping we hosted in January.

Prayer Requests

- Pray for Lisa's Mom to recover from her shoulder replacement on January 5th.
- Pray for Lisa's extended family: there have been numerous health crises that are not yet resolved.
- Pray for Ethan as he prepares for his GCSE exams (see below.)

Ethan's Escapades!

I have 14 weeks to prepare for my GCSE exams! GCSE stands for General Certificate of Secondary Education. My parents said I could actually get into some U.S. colleges with 5 passing GCSE subjects. Whoa!

If I counted correctly, I will sit 21 exams between May 17th & June 24th. I would really appreciate your prayers! I need to get A's in my maths and science exams, because I want to study those subjects in Sixth Form. I am on target, but I need to finish strong.