

Dance Ministry Choreographs Olympics Outreach

As Olympics outreaches gear up, Operation Mobilization is sending for dancing evangelists, of sorts.

DanceLink, a ministry of OM Arts, functions at OM Lifehope as a creative avenue for dancers to share the love of Jesus in a variety of styles and settings. With a dedication to pursuing excellence, dancers at OM Lifehope have the opportunity to collaborate, rehearse and perform in outreaches throughout the U.K. and Europe.

OM Lifehope's dance ministry leader, Amy Williams, shares about DanceLink, the Olympics outreach and the future.

OM: Tell us about the start of DanceLink at Lifehope.

Williams: We have spent the last several months starting to find our feet. We did the Easter **outreach** with one local church, we've worked with a girls club in a Muslim area of Birmingham and we've worked with a local **youth group**. Those have been workshop style, so teaching basics in one of the genres of dance.

With the Lifehope community outreach participants, we have a little more time, so we've been able to talk through the heart of dance. Why do we dance? How do we use it as a form of worship? None of them really had any dance experience, so it was a brand-new area for them to explore. We'd like to develop the program more fully, to partner with the community outreach program and make the dance component really take off.

OM: Take us behind the scenes. How do you prepare for an outreach?

Williams: First thing we ask: Where is it happening? What kind

of space do we have? What is the church looking for? In the event of one outreach, we knew that it would be in the park, so we went and looked at the park and found a location we could use.

We choreograph dances with that in mind. We also want to know the focus of the outreach. Some outreaches have an **evangelistic** focus, so we would pick music and choreograph pieces that are clear in their message about who Christ is. Next, we get into the studio and **pray** that God will give creativity. We create these dances and then teach each other. Then, it's a lot of prayer again. It's amazing to see what He chooses to do through us.

OM: Speaking of outreach, tell us about your upcoming Olympics outreach.

Williams: We will have eight dancers on our outreach: five from the States, one from the Netherlands, one from France and one from Wales.

The core of the outreach is two weeks long, but at the beginning we have rehearsals and time to bond as a team. We have a couple of days in London prior to the **Olympics** starting. We're going to **prayer walk** through the heart of the city, and then we're hoping to be able to dance in parks encircling London. The focus of those two days is just preparing the city of London for the outreaches that will be happening during the Olympics. Dance has that ability to clear the space, spiritually speaking, and make it ready for the **Spirit of God** to work, so we're going with that intent.

We'll be dancing primarily in London, and we look forward to seeing how God will use the pieces we've prepared to speak to people. We are especially excited about a piece we've choreographed to "27 Million," the song by LZ7 and Matt Redman, which talks about human trafficking.

OM: Looking back at the last six months, how do you feel about

the future?

Williams: The outreach and workshops we've done amount to just a handful of days in total, but they're markers of how we're moving forward. With the summer outreach we'll have several new pieces in our repertoire we can draw from. We can start being more purposeful in how we go about doing our ministry.

We want Dancelink at Lifehope to continue and continue well, to encourage people in their craft and to bring them along. Lifehope is becoming a field where artists can develop. There is an element of nurturing and community here that is very healthy for arts and for artists.