

Youth and Children's Newsletter- May 2017

I can't believe its May already, summer really is now upon us.

It's been a busy few months since I last sat down to write one of these Newsletters. Spring is a beautiful season with new life all around us. We had some amazing baptisms on Easter Sunday, the day was started off with young and old gathering at Ide hill for a Sunrise service.



As a Youth Worker, I take great joy in regularly beating the young people at FIFA. However, during April my reign came to an end as I got smashed 8-2 by one of the young people, they still remind me of it!

Un Baja

Un Baja is our weekly youth group that meets on Wednesday evenings in the youth room. We have had an amazing term with lots of guest speakers. We did a two week special on dating with Andy and Ruth Macgilp, Andrew Alford led a session on how we understand the Bible.



Myself and our new Youth and Children's Deacon Liz Coston recently led a bowling trip where there was mass brain freeze as we had the slushy ice thingys!



As ever, it's a real privilege to be able to work with these amazing young people, to see them grow in faith and character.

One of the reasons I love working with young people is that they are so often spontaneous...recently while playing a game involving water, one of the young people dunked the whole jug of water over their friend (they were not supposed to do that!)

School life

Myself and Charlie continue to lead assemblies in the local primary schools, our most recent assembly was looking at God as our Father. The Girls' football team, who I coach with two other amazing coaches, recently beat another school 15-1. I now understand how some parents get over excited when watching their kids play sports!

The lunch club I help run with the SAYT team at Trinity continues to grow in numbers but also in terms of our relationships with the young people who come along. One young person recently said, "I really didn't want to come into school today but then I remembered it was lunch club so I could see you guys." To just be involved in something that encourages a young person to attend school is amazing. In early June Charlie is taking part in the Trinity school, 'Grill a Christian.' I've encouraged our young people who go there to come up with some tough questions for him!

Coming up

Soul Survivor which is fast approaching is now fully booked, there will be around 20 of us going from BGBC. This year we have hired a van to take all our equipment, I have a driver for the first leg but I'm on the hunt for someone to drive the van from Sevenoaks to Peterborough and back again on the 24th August!

We are really looking forward to welcoming the Potter family into the Church and on the 7th June Andy will be coming along to Youth group to meet the young people.

On the 1st July we are having a joint quiz and BBQ at VEC Church, it's always great to get two groups together.

On the 19th July we are taking the youth group on a photo hunt to Bluewater, one young person said, "can I just do shopping instead"

Plans for the Church family weekend away are coming together. We have a great organisation coming to lead our youth work. As part of the planning I spent a very enjoyable hour deciding which bouncy castle to book for the Saturday afternoon. I can still remember when I was a young person and we went as a church to Ashburnham, great memories were made and I know it will be the same this year too.

Prayer points

- As I sit here writing this on a Thursday morning there are thousands of young people taking exams. Each one of them approaches them and deals with exams in a different way. Please remember them in your prayers over the next month or so. It can be a highly stressful time, please pray for peace, clear heads, for them to give of their best, for them to know that they are not defined by their results and for them to know that they are not alone.

- All the logistics of upcoming trips and events.
- A prayer of thanks for Liz Coston who is the new Youth and Children's deacon.
- A prayer of thanks for all the amazing volunteers who give their time and energy to serve the young people
- Why not look through the Church Directory and find a young person to pray regularly for and when you see them let them know that you are praying for them.

A short thought

I really enjoy reading a good book but it normally takes me about 3-4 weeks to read a book. I read a book recently by Nadia Bolz-Weber called "Accidental Saints" in 6 hours. There is a chapter in the book called "The slaughter of the Holy Innocents of Sandy Hook Elementary." I read this just the day after the unbearable sadness of the attack in Manchester. "When we find ourselves in a world where we see up to the minute images of human suffering like parents running past the police tape outside an elementary school (or a concert), their faces filled with primal panic, not knowing if their child is alive or dead, can we really afford quite so much sentimentality in Christianity? Maybe soft focus photos of doves, quotes on coffee cups and over produced recordings of earnest praise music aren't really helping us. I often wonder how Jesus responds to our ignoring of reality in favour of emotional idealism, but I know for sure that the church and those we might serve aren't benefiting from it." I hope this made you as uncomfortable as it made me.

God Bless

Josh