

Youth and Children's Newsletter- Jan 2018

Well 2018 is here and maybe it's just me but getting out of bed in the morning is always harder in January! At the start of a new year and a new term we reflect back on the year just gone and all it held. We look forward to the coming year and all that might come to be.

Looking back

Can I take us back to the 8th October when we celebrated a beautiful day of baptisms with a number of the young people being baptised. It's such a joy to journey alongside them as they discover more about their faith each week. In late October we held a "Light Party" in the back hall, we had over 40 children attend from all over Sevenoaks. It was a great evening, involving games, food, craft and the message about the light that Jesus brings into our lives. At BGBC we are blessed to have a growing youth group, we have a number of older young people who were really keen to start a group where they could discuss the big questions that they have about faith and life. We try to meet once or twice a month on a Friday evening to chat, support, and learn together, it's so encouraging that we have young people who really want to spend time digging deeper into faith.



In early December Liz Coston, Andy Francis and I took a group to Winter Wonderland in Hyde Park. It was an "interesting trip!" It had changed a lot since I last went, we had to queue for over an hour to get in which the

young people loved! However once in they did manage to go on a few rides and consume lots of sugar. The trip may be remembered though for the moment I got my head stuck in a tube door. While everyone else was freaking out I heard one of the young people behind me say, "Oh it's because he has a big head" which in hindsight is comedy genius!

December also saw us going to an Ice skating rink and of course we had the brilliant Powerhouse nativity led and put together by the marvellous Craig Coston. The Christmas Eve Children's carol service is now a firm fixture in the Church calendar and once again it was a great chance for the local community to hear the good news of the Christmas story. A huge thanks to Anna Burrows and all that took part to make it a success.

Un Baja

Our Wednesday evening youth group starts again this week, we really look forward to seeing all the young people again after the break. This coming term we will be focussing on evangelism and how we can best share our faith with our friends. We also have a couple of guest slots, one of which is an evening focussing on how best to tackle exam stress.



I would also like to thank Sue Norton who has led the group with me for the past 2 years. Sue is stepping down from this group and we are so grateful for all she brought to the group. We have had some fantastic volunteers who have said they are keen to

start leading at the group and we look forward to them joining us from January. As ever we hope and pray that this group is a place where young people can come and relax, feel safe and loved and are able to explore and discover faith.

Schools Work

Towards the end of last term the Amherst Girls' football team, which I help coach and lead, took part in a big tournament with lots of other schools. By the end of the afternoon I thought I might burst with excitement as we finished 2nd. We were so proud of the effort and skill that the girls showed. We continue to lead assemblies in local schools and are privileged to now take part in assemblies at Lady Boswells School too. The Tuesday lunch club at Trinity run by SAYT and myself continues to grow in numbers but also in our relationships with the young people who attend.

Coming up

Over the coming months we have a number of trips, including a trip to the Stag Theatre to support one of the young people who is taking part in a production there. We hope to have some of our young people attend the Bountiful conference for women and girls on the 3rd Feb. Plans are slowly coming together for our summer trip to Soul Survivor, we have 30 young people signed up!

Prayer Points

- For our group of students who head back to Uni, College, work placements. Please pray for them as they begin to look at their exams, for them to know they are loved and supported by us here at BGBC.
- We give thanks for all the amazing volunteers who give up their time and energy to serve, often going unnoticed. We are so grateful for the work you do.
- We pray for all the young people who we meet during the week at various clubs and services, please pray that through their time here they will know the transformative power that comes through knowing Jesus.
- Please pray for us, the leaders who try to show them this through all we do.



Liz and I would love to invite you to come and visit us in the youth room whenever you like, come and get to know some of the spectacular young people.

Short thought

I love social media I have to say though, I become increasingly worried about Donald Trump's use of it. Trump though, during his campaign into office was a social media genius, especially at giving people labels. "Little Marco" "Crooked Hillary", he called them that at every chance and they stuck, so much so that people started to believe it. Awful as he is (personal opinion) he is very clever at giving people labels. We can sit here and think well were better than that we don't do that, but our society loves to simplify people to a label and if I'm honest it's something that I've also done. Labels though never tell the whole story, one aspect of us does not define us, and humans are so deeply complex that a label can never fully define us, yet they are so powerful.

In the New Testament James and John were given the nickname "Sons of Thunder" not because they farted loads but because they had bad tempers. It took 3 years of hanging out with Jesus every day before John was known for the way he wrote about love. When we see Gods love it causes change in us, like John its often not overnight but through relationship with Jesus. It's hard because like Trump did the negative labels shout louder, we need to instead learn to listen to the gentle whisper of Jesus. Check out 1 John 3. That is our identity. Josh