

Youth and Children's Newsletter - July 2018

I have a confession to make...as I stand in the line at WH Smiths with £20's worth of World Cup stickers in my hand I feel like a child, so excited to sit down and stick them all in neatly within the lines. I get to the check out and the lady looks at me with a slight smile and says "Are those for your son?" I suddenly feel all the other real adults behind looking at me, about to judge me if I say no. I straight out lie and say "Yep, they are". I walk out in a cloud of shame, yes because I lied but also because I felt I had to justify myself buying stickers.

Why can't an adult buy stickers for themselves! Anyway, football didn't quite make it home but it sure was the best World Cup I can remember.

Looking Back

A while ago two of our young people suggested to me that we have a youth group meal together, I loved the idea. David Malan took the lead in planning the menu, doing the shopping and leading a team in the kitchen. Sue Norton kindly helped supervise while the young people, prepared, cooked, served and then washed up. It was a brilliant evening that we will definitely do again next term. Other trips this term included a trip to Laser Quest. Amidst the sweat of lots of



teenagers running around we had a great time. Of course I won and the plastic medal sits proudly on my desk!

Also in the past term we had Julie Boddington come and lead a session called "Porn Scars" looking at the damage that pornography can have on our lives. We held a session on sexting, where we learnt about the complicated laws surrounding it and the impact it's had on people and the culture. Two of our young people, Annemarie and Johannes led us one evening in a Bible study on Ruth and Naomi. Liz Coston joined us one evening for a session on relationships and boundaries.

We ended our term last week with our summer social, a BBQ and watching England get knocked out in football. A huge thank you to the Ingram Family who kindly hosted us, despite the result we had a great evening together.



Powerhouse

In Powerhouse we have spent some time looking at the story of Joshua. Powerhouse plays such an important role in the forming of faith for the Children who attend, the older young people always talk about their memories of it and how much it influenced them. To all the leaders who help run Powerhouse, thank you so much, it's such a huge blessing to have such an incredible team of volunteers.

Schools work

Schools work is one of the favourite parts of my job, I always find it's such a great chance to try and model the Christian faith to young people whether that's through assemblies, lunch clubs or informal chats with students. We have the privilege of being involved in 5 schools, 3 of them on a weekly basis. The highlight last term was being involved in taking a group of around 50 girls from Amherst to the Women's FA Cup final at Wembley, it was a brilliant day and truly inspiring for all those young players.

Coming up

In just a few short weeks we will take 28 young people to Soul Survivor, piling into the Minibus and cars, scrambling to put up tents and marquees, then 5 amazing days of worship, teaching and friendship. For me this is always a huge highlight in the year and I can't wait to spend the time with them.

In September we will be holding our children's trip away to "By the Beach"



We have about 10 spaces left so book in quickly to avoid disappointment. It will be a great trip with lots of activities, games

and dips in the sea. Please do come and chat if you would like to know more about the trip.

Prayer points

- Please pray for our trip to Soul Survivor on the 18th-23rd August, pray that the young people encounter God in a powerful and beautiful way. For safety, friendships to flourish and for us to have an all-round brilliant time.
- For the young people getting their exam results in late August.

Short thought

I was reflecting a while ago on why stories are so important, whether in a sermon or round the dinner table, we all tell stories. In Rachel Held Evans' new book "Inspired" which I highly recommend she writes this, *"Jesus invites us into a story that is bigger than ourselves, bigger than our culture, bigger even than our imaginations, and yet we get to tell that story with the scandalous particularity of our particular moment and place in time. We are storytelling creatures because we are fashioned in the image of a storytelling God. May we never neglect the gift of that. May we never lose our love for telling the tale?"*

What stories do you tell? Standing in the line at WH Smiths I ducked out of my story, ashamed of finding simple pleasure in a sticker book.

Our stories don't define us but they do help shape us, don't duck out of yours!

Josh