

Horsham Parish Youth Report 2019

A year of challenges but lots of encouragement.

Youth work across the parish is quite coordinated between St Mary's, St Leonard's Holy Trinity and St John's, reflecting the fact that the children scattered across our churches go to the same schools. Growing up knowing you are part of something wider than your own church and building relationships is important.

This year has seen the departure of several key people from the parish leadership team involved in youth work in church or in the community. These include;

Judi Cox (Parish Youth Worker): The PCC has decided to continue to look to appoint a parish youth work enabler, despite the impending changes in the parish structure, as it is such a key role. This is currently in progress.

Matt Lee completed his placement and graduated in the summer. At present there is no student youth worker in place. Nigel Stalley (churchwarden) has applied to St Mellitus College in London and is hoping they will place one of their students with us in 2019-2020.

Guy Bridgewater, and Paddy and Ann Beresford who were all very supportive of youth work.

Despite this, many volunteers continue to run and support youth work across Horsham from all the churches in the parish both in church and in the community.

TGIF, the youth club for all young people in the Barn, ran until December. Potential relaunch is pending appointment of a youth worker. Toasties, the youth club in Broadbridge Heath for Years 6 to 8, continues to meet weekly led by Donna Puttick – now under the auspices of *4TheYouth* rather than *Horsham Matters*.

Café Connect, the monthly youth event for Year 6+ in the Horsham area, has been relaunched led by Natalie Loveless and Billy Crook (worship). This meets in the Leslie Room. The associated monthly Café Connect Cell groups also continue. The Year 10+ cell group is led by Richard Herrington (St Mary's) and Sarah Lilley (Holy Trinity), the Years 6 to 9 group is led by Damian MacDonald and Chris Robertson (both St John's). Several of the TGIF youngsters are in the St Mary's choir and/or CIA, led by Becky Hawkins and Neil McLaren, and are encouraged to attend Café Connect.

Becky reports that the St Mary's CIA Group (Christians in Action) is for year 7 and up and has been meeting twice a month (on 2nd and 4th Sundays 9.30 am in the St Mary's Vestry). This has worked well, and we have been getting a good attendance each time. We explore what our faith means to us in everyday situations and how we can live life fully as God intended. So far this year, we explored how we use our time, what our goals for the year are, our identity and being true to ourselves and our faith.

We have two older young people who are supporting us and taking up roles as volunteer helpers, Billy Crook and Becca Inglis Taylor, for which we are grateful for all they bring to the group to encourage the younger members.

This year as last we are taking youth both to the Diocesan May Camp (Year 6+) and Soul Survivor (Year 8+). Chris Robertson is leading both owing to the current staffing hiatus, but he is blessed by an amazing team of older and younger youth leaders to help at both events drawn from churches across the parish.

PRAYER POINTS:

- Thank you to God for our amazing team of leaders and helpers, safeguarding officers (your work largely goes unnoticed but is so important), and our supportive loving churches across the parish.
- For all group leaders - for inspiration.
- That the right person will be appointed as parish youth work enabler.
- For a female leader to join the younger Café Connect cell group.
- For God's hand of protection on our children and our children's work.
- For the deepening of relationship with schools and community youth groups.



Chris Robertson, St John's Youth and Children's Coordinator, (standing in as reporter) April 2019