

# Inspired Generation Report for AGM 2013

This past year has been a positive one for Holy Trinity's Junior Church group, Inspired Generation. Over the course of the year, the group has taken part in a number of activities and services and ran a successful year of lessons.

Since stepping forward to take on leadership roles, Inspired Generation's leaders have settled into their roles leading the three class groups. At the start of the last year, the overall group was split into two class groups aged 4-9 and 10+, this was due to the number of young people in each age group. Over the course of the year, the numbers in the group have increased and the ages have spread allowing us to create three class groups ages 3-5, 6-10 and 11-16. The 3-5 group is led by Siobhan Bartley and Lorna McPherson, the 6-10 group is led by Jennifer Alexander and the 11-16 group is led by Wendy Walker and Theo Rutherford.

Although the groups are now a comfortable size, we are still looking for more volunteers to join the Inspired Generation leaders to allow us to create a flexible rota system and give others in the Church an opportunity to get involved in leading the young people

Over the course of the year, we have seen around 30 young people in our classes. Approximately 70% regularly attend and the others we try to encourage to come more often.

Two of our young people, Lauren McPherson and Matthew Odubanjo have non-voting seats on the PCC and another Shenneka Hutchinson has a seat on the Bishop's Youth Council. We are making sure that the young people not only have a voice but also have sight into what is happening in the Church around them. After attending meetings, they feedback to the older group.

There are a number of young people in Inspired Generation that are now at the age of 16 or over. The leaders have discussed this and have decided that 16 should be the top age of the group, at which point the young person should consider attending regular Sunday services. This will also allow us to use teaching styles that target a more specific age group and allow the older members to become more comfortable in the regular Church environment. Although we believe 16 is the top age for teaching a junior scheme, we decided to make sure that all of our young people are prepared for this transition before making any changes.

Members of the group who are 16 and over will be taking on a more active role within the group, taking responsibility for discussion groups and family services, for example.

Throughout the year, Inspired Generation have been involved in a number of events, most notably Holy Trinity's first Convention and a number of 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday Family Services. For the Convention, the young people wrote and acted out their own drama and performed a dance. The Convention was a big success and the young people are happy to have played a part. For family services, we have taken near full responsibility for the running of services, organising readings, speakers, intercessors, singing and playing instruments. More of this to come.

The older Inspired Generation group have been meeting up with the youth group from St. Paul's Church in Great Barr for recreational sessions. Both groups have thoroughly enjoyed these sessions

and we are looking to be able to invite St. Paul's youth group to Holy Trinity and extend the welcome to them. This is the sort of relationship we hope to build with other Churches and youth groups in time. The Bishop's Advisor for youth ministry is particularly interested in us building relationships with neighbouring Churches, Aston Parish Church and St. George's Church in Newtown.

Due to the amount of time it takes to prepare for leading family service on a 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday, the group will now only be running the service every 2 months. On other 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday's the group will still be in Church. Last year, some members of the group volunteered to receive Acolyte training and training carrying the Cross. This was one of our aims noted in last year's report. So far, some of them had the opportunity to use this training on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent.

The group are exploring the possibility of attending 4-day Christian Arts Festival, Greenbelt this August. The festival which been going on for 40 years, takes place in Cheltenham and is very popular among young teenagers and young adults. The festival will cost a lot of money for a group however, it is possible that we may be able to secure funding through Transforming Church. We are still looking into this.

One thing we aim to improve on this year is rewarding the young people for their hard work. With an increasing pressure to do more and be more involved, our young people put a lot of effort into what they do and help where they can and the leaders are very proud of them. We have received a lot of positive feedback from members of the congregation and other Churches over the course of the year and we would like to be able to do give something back to the group by way of reward. We are already planning a day out for them.

The group leaders have started a confirmation class with Revd. Eve to help understand the Bible better and allow us to better prepare for lessons and teach the young people. The class started in January and has been a great help to us all. Thank you to Revd. Eve for sparing the time for this.

We have struggled arranging regular Inspired Generation lessons in 2013 so far. There have been a number of talks/services going on that have required us to stay in Church instead of having normal classes. Coupled with an early Easter, the start the year has been busy for the Church but we expect normal flow to resume soon.

Looking toward the future, we recognise that there are a lot of challenges ahead but our aim is to inspire the young people that attend on a Sunday and encourage them to keep coming. We are in a time where so many young people turn away from the Church or simply do not make any time for the Church. We aim to make the Church a safe, friendly, enjoyable environment for young people where they can learn about God, study the Bible and have fun doing it.

Running Inspired Generation and indeed any youth-based group can seem like a full time role and can be difficult to manage but between the five leaders with the support of Revd. Eve and the entire Holy Trinity congregation, we have had a successful year and have been able to watch our young people start to come out of their shells, start to enjoy Church and truly start to blossom. We are happy to see our juniors starting to take more of an interest Church too. We have high hopes for the coming year.

God bless, **Inspired Generation.**