

Inspired Generation Report for AGM

This year sees a brand new start for Holy Trinity's Sunday school, with a new name, new leadership, new faces, new books and a new approach to teaching the young people.

Firstly, we are proud to note that the group, formerly known as Junior Church have made a democratic decision to change our name to something completely new: Inspired Generation or IGG for short (Inspired Generation Group). This was a decision made at our first meeting of the year where the young people came up with their own ideas for the name and took a vote.

Inspired Generation is excited to note that we have started the year with a brand new leadership team. The team now consists of 5 youth leaders, Siobhan Bartley, Jennifer Alexander, Lorna McPherson, Wendy Walker and Theo Rutherford. The team have agreed that once we have settled in, we will operate a rota system to allow the leaders to have a break some weeks and remain in Church some Sundays while the other leaders take charge of IGG. We are extremely lucky to have a team with such enthusiasm toward care principles, youth work and God.

From the start of the year, we have been privileged to work with some very familiar young faces but also new faces too. We see this as a positive sign that the group is destined to grow and expand beyond the regulars that already come to Church.

The group have invested in a new collection new Living Stones teaching books. These books are an excellent guide for providing lessons for the young people. The collection is aimed at young people ages 4 to 14 and follows the regular Anglican lectionary so that the lessons we teach the group pair up with the normal readings in Church. Living Stones divides the young people into 3 different age groups – 4-7, 8-10 and 11-14, however due to the small number in the 8-10 group, we have restructured, creating 2 groups – 4-9 and 10+. This may be a temporary measure but is very convenient at the moment while we prepare for the Convention.

We have a number of young people outside of the Living Stones age range up to the age of 17 and we feel that this is perfectly acceptable as this is a young people's group, as opposed to a junior group and we would very much like to encourage as many young people as possible to stay in the Church and be comfortable in their surroundings. The diocese recognises youth up to the age of 25.

Our new leadership team have an approach to teaching that we feel the young people enjoy and this is because we work *with* the young people on a relatable level enabling them to feel comfortable and equal. We actively encourage the group to come up with their own ideas as to what they want to do and we are making efforts to integrate everyone's interests into our lessons or future lessons. This allows the group to start taking indirect responsibility for their learning, making it interesting, fun and challenging all around. This approach keeps them interested and shows them that Church is not just a boring service that they are forced to go to once a week but that there are other ways to worship and learn.

At the start of the new IGG year, the entire group sat together can came up with a list of mutual rules to abide by. Again, this gives them control and responsibility for how the group is run. To this day we have not had any major behaviour problems and we are pleased to say that the atmosphere is very light.

Each week, we ask the group for a volunteer to start the morning off with opening prayer and we ask another volunteer to read the Collect. This will instil the importance of prayer and also help the young people learn *how* to pray, giving them the confidence to do so along the way. Volunteers are hard to come by at the moment but it is hoped that in future, this will become second nature to the group. That said, the enthusiasm of some of our youngest members is astonishing.

So far this year, we have had our main focus on the upcoming Convention of the Holy Spirit. This has meant that we have had to draw attention *away* from regular lessons to focus on planning and rehearsals for our part in the Convention. IGG have a 2 hour slot on the last day of the Convention from 4pm – 6pm. Our own young people will be taking part in drama, music and prayer during the slot whilst we also have young people external to the group taking part also. We have had to commit an extraordinary amount of time on the Convention in planning and rehearsals but it is hoped that after the 6th May, we will be able to focus on regular classes before taking a break in the summer.

Despite preparations for the Convention, IGG have still found time and put excellent efforts into taking part in Sunday services and arranging a Good Friday workshop. So far, we have lead the first Sunday service each month, which had also involved helping during baptisms. We also arranged the annual Good Friday workshop in which we provide a number of practical and theoretical activities for the young people to get involved in including the creation of the four Easter gardens currently at the front of the Church. This year, the workshop took place in the Vicarage as the hall was in use.

For Mothering Sunday, IGG also prepared hundreds of daffodils for every mother and grandmother in the congregation. A handful of young members and volunteers spent over 3 hours preparing the flowers the prior evening. On Easter Sunday, we gave out Cream Eggs and Caramel Eggs to everyone in the congregation.

So what do we have planned in the future? All of the group have already expressed a deep interest in getting more involved in the Church – they want to take part more and have more of a say but they want this to happen at their own pace. It is our intention to ensure that they have this opportunity and make the most of it. This will involve getting more people involved in doing readings and prayer. This will also involve training the young people to do things such as carrying the Cross or becoming Acolytes so that when we lead the service, we can really take part in running a full service.

It is also important that we get involved in the wider Church community as this will be accomplished through links with the Diocese and their youth connections such as the Bishop's Youth Council. There are a number of youth events ran throughout the year at which it would be excellent to see IGG attend or get involved.

Many member of IGG have expressed a burning desire to make a more extensive use of music in the Church. Many of the group already sing and play instruments such as drums, piano, steel pan, and guitar to name a few. The interest is so great that sometime in the future, we may be able to assemble a music group for them to express their talents, collaborate and bring lively, youth-inspiring music to the Church.

We currently have 20 young people on our register, of which currently around 80% turn up each week. We are happy with this number but will work to encourage more attendance where possible and better timekeeping.

Every few weeks, we will feedback to the Church during weekly notices about what we have been getting up to. If any events pop up or if we arrange any big events, we will communicate this through announcements in Church and/or we will send a letter home with the young people.

At some point in the near future, we will be working to tidy up our stationary supply including paper, pens, books, Bibles and hymn books to avoid waste and confusion.

In summary, it was been a busy and challenging year for IGG and it is only April but we are in high Spirits and look forward to working together in the coming months and years.

Inspired Generation would like to say a big special thank you to Mrs M Bartley, Mrs A James and Mrs Callendar for their help the past few months and thank you to Revd. Eve and Anthony for allowing us to use the Vicarage and opening the Church for us during the week for rehearsals.

God Bless, **Inspired Generation**