

Welcome to our termly newsletter which aims to update you on our activities over the past term as well as keep you informed about future plans.

Providing an opportunity for primary school age children to hear about and learn from the Christian faith

Autumn term – even more videos!

A set of four **Connect** videos were sent to schools for use in their collective worship, class assemblies or RE lessons this term. Steve, Kathryn and Helen had to take the advice of the first video and persevere even when it was not easy – to come up with new ideas and scripts!



Life Lessons – Keep Going

Looking at perseverance, this video shared that we all face tough times but can choose to keep going, to persevere. Christians believe that God can be with us through the ups and down and will give us strength. David took to a boat to tell the story of the disciples persevering, with help and encouragement from Jesus, to catch a netful of fish.

Life Lessons – Words, Words, Words

Using verses from Proverbs 15:4, James 3:4-6 and Phil 4:8, this video looked at the power of words, whether written or spoken – power to do good and build up; but also power for damage and tearing down. It challenged the children to THINK before using words, whether they are: True, Helpful, Important, Necessary, Kind.

Life Lessons – Who is my Neighbour?

The story of the Good Samaritan was the basis for this video – with Paul telling the story and playing all the parts! The puppets, Jasmine and Ben talked about compassion and how it is like walking in someone else's shoes – seeing something from another person's point of view. The video ended with a reflection on how our neighbours can be both here in this country or elsewhere in the world, and that we can be good neighbours to others.



Life Lessons – You are Precious

Jan told the parable of the lost sheep from Luke 15:3-7 as we reflected on the value of each one of us. The video also shared that we are precious and valuable to God. Precious things need looking after and so it is important that we look after one another.

These videos involved volunteers from across the assembly teams, both local to the Cambridge area as well as the affiliate teams in Suffolk and West Norfolk. Volunteers rose to the challenge – whether it was throwing a beach ball globe to one another on Zoom, getting tangled in toilet roll or failing to say a tongue twister such as red lorry, yellow lorry!

Christmas Presentation – Advent – Getting Ready

It was so exciting to actually visit schools with an assembly for the first time since our Easter tour was abandoned in 2020. Many schools booked us in enthusiastically and we were welcomed like long lost friends! The script was written by Amy Robinson and looked at the need to know what we are preparing for during Advent and that this is the celebration of the birth of Jesus, God's son. Getting Ready was illustrated using the narrative from Luke 3 concerning John the Baptist who prepared the people for the start of Jesus' ministry. We presented the song by John Hardwick, 'Jesus went out of his way', which talks of how Jesus gives us an example of how to live. In these times we did not sing but shared the actions – which actually was a significant moment in many schools. It was just great to meet as teams to rehearse and 'get ready' to go and share the good news of Jesus in person again. Teams visited 29 schools although sadly some schools had to cancel at the last minute due to Covid outbreaks – we produced a video so that those who we were unable to visit did not miss out. All the videos were sent to schools with accompanying reflection and activity sheets. If you are interested in viewing any of them please visit www.genr8.org/videos



Inspire Prayer Spaces

Siân produced five **Reflect videos** for the autumn term, with short thoughts and activities under the titles *Bouncing Back*, *Peace*, *Diversity Mosaic*, *Handwritten* and *Gifts*. Each video is 3-5 minutes long and is designed to be a short reflection that classes can watch as an act of collective worship. The videos are consistently well received in schools and have been viewed many hundreds of times.

In *Peace*, for example, Siân asked Iris and Bev to share what brings them peace in their busy lives. She then shared that in the Bible, in Philippians 4:7, it says that God's peace is far beyond human understanding. She then encouraged the children to create a peace garden using paper flowers, and to write on these flowers their reflections on what peace means to them.

Gifts helped children reflect on their own gifts and talents. This video was sent close to Christmas, so Siân talked about it being a time when we remember that the wise men gave special gifts to Jesus and we too are thinking about giving gifts at home. Siân shared that Christians believe that God gives us our talents and gifts and in the words of 1 Peter 4:10 – 'God has given each of you some special abilities; be sure to use them to help each other, passing on to others God's many kinds of blessings'. She encouraged the children to think about how they could use their gifts and abilities to help others.

If you would like to view or would like to share these videos then please visit:

<https://genr8.org/prayer-spaces/>

We have had some lovely emails to thank us for the videos:

'We are really finding these brilliant - thank you. Especially as we have now increased measures in schools and are having less whole school worship.' - Headteacher

'Can I say just how much I appreciate you doing these videos regularly... They have been a really fantastic resource – with just the right balance of story, themes, prayer, reflection, so relevant - just the right length and the themes are always very apt too. Please pass on my thanks to the team. And please don't stop!' - Headteacher



Looking Ahead

The Xcellr8 weekend is going ahead this year in person (without overnight sleeping) on 12 & 13 February 2022. Our theme is 'Illumin8' focusing on Jesus as the Light Of The World. It promises to be a fun weekend for all. There are still a few spaces so please get in touch if you are interested or see www.genr8.org/what-we-do/xcellr8

As mentioned in the last newsletter GenR8 is looking for a new director to take over from Steve. The post is being re-advertised in January and we hope that the right person will come forward to take up this role. More information will be available on the home page of our website under 'Latest News' soon.

The Easter assembly is in the planning stage and we hope that volunteer teams will be able to visit schools in the spring term to share the Easter story, however we also plan to produce an Easter video for those schools that are unable to accommodate a visit.

Following the success of the 450+ individual 'transition' prayer spaces bags, produced to give to Year 6 students in July 2021 to support their move to secondary school, we are considering something similar on an Easter theme for 2022. It's early days so pray with us for good ideas!

Prayers...

- ❖ Give thanks for the autumn term resources and thank God for all those who gave time and energy to produce them.
- ❖ Please pray for the spring term and for God-given inspiration for everything we do in the coming months.
- ❖ Pray for the Xcellr8 weekend – for preparations, for the team and for life-changing impact on the children who attend.
- ❖ Please pray that God will guide the search for a new director and the right person will apply.
- ❖ Pray that we will be filled with the hope that comes from the Holy Spirit as we look ahead in these uncertain times.

At the start of 2022 our prayer comes from Romans 15:13 - 'May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit'.

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