

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

Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Romans 12:12

The term was warm, with a warm welcome into around 100 schools with various different programmes. Here is a snapshot.

Summer Assembly – We can make a difference

Four teams visited schools with a presentation largely by John Hardwick about making a difference in the world, even though we might feel small. We started the assembly trying to eat popcorn with very long spoons – an illustration of how we need to help each other. The Bible story was ‘the feeding of the five thousand’ – where a small boy’s gift to Jesus made a big difference as Jesus used the five loaves and two fish to make sure no-one was hungry! The puppet sketch showed that it is not only superheroes that make a difference – we can all do so every day with our words and actions; and the song, God’s People, shared that God’s people are just like you and me. We ended the assembly with a reflection on what it means to love our neighbours as Jesus taught. We had some lovely feedback from schools: *The pupils really enjoyed the session and it was wonderful to see their engagement. Thank you for leading such an active, interactive and enjoyable worship.*



Permanent Prayer Spaces

We have been delighted that William Westley Primary in Whittlesford have joined the Permanent Prayer Space project this term. That makes eleven schools that we now support with a prayer space, whether that is a chair, table, alcove or wall space. The theme of each space changes every 5/6 weeks as we move through the year, looking at a mixture of Christian festivals and values.

These spaces make a recognised contribution to pupils’ learning, spiritual development and well-being as well as encourage a partnership between school and church. This is a brilliant example of how schools, local churches and GenR8 can work together in triangulation, each supporting the other.

Each of the eleven schools plan to continue their involvement for the coming academic year – a testament that we are providing a worthwhile resource to schools!



Church services

GenR8 wouldn’t exist in the capacity it does without the support of local churches. We are really blessed to be ‘mission partners’ for a number of churches and very much appreciate them praying regularly for our work with schools, giving financially and highlighting what is happening right on their doorstep!

Last term we shared the work of GenR8 with Great Shelford Free Church and St Peter and St Paul, Bassingbourn. Members of both churches said afterwards they hadn’t appreciated the breadth of the work within GenR8 and quite how many children hear and are impacted by the messages we bring.

If you would like GenR8 to come and visit your church to share more about our ministry, please do get in contact as we would love to share with you too!



It’s Your Move and transition prayer bags

In July a fantastic team of 11 young people visited 14 primary schools with Steve and Siân. They delivered a 1-hour interactive workshop, to reassure Year 6 pupils about to make the big move up to secondary school. The sessions are based on the Scripture Union *It’s Your Move* books which are full of stories, advice and top tips to help make this a successful transition. In many of the schools, they were joined by a member of the local church, often a school governor. Thank you to all those who helped with transport for this week, driving the team to each school, and to the team who made the prayer bags that were gifted to all Year 6 students.



‘Thank you for delivering such a lovely, calm workshop: it was great for the children to talk to people who had recently been at secondary school regarding different scenarios, potential worries and things to look forward to.’

Looking ahead

Christmas assembly

As soon as the summer assembly tour finishes we set our thoughts on the message that we will take into schools next term. The process of working out what to do begins with a script and goes through a team leader meeting where we pray, read and discuss what we will present, to ensure it is relevant.

- ❖ Please pray for the planning, rehearsals, booking of the assembly visits and for the assembly tour itself.
- ❖ Pray for new volunteers to come forward, catch the vision and join the GenR8 assembly teams.

Growing Young Disciples

Working in partnership with Nicola Grieves, Children and Youth Development Officer for URC Eastern Synod, we are holding another Growing Young Disciples day for young people in Years 6-8, at Histon Baptist Church on Saturday 11 November. The day promises to be a fun and interactive opportunity for young people to grow as followers of Jesus. During the day we will be delving deeper into what it means to be a disciple of Jesus: in all we do and say alerting others to the reign of God.

- ❖ Pray for Siân, Steve and Nicola as they prepare and write the material for the day.
- ❖ Pray for young people in churches to join us, and for their faith to be encouraged and grow.

Cool Choices

Every day we are all faced with choices, but how can we make the right choices? Who or what can influence our choices for the better? GenR8 will be leading 22 Cool Choices sessions in September and October with the aim of encouraging Year 6 students to make positive life choices and to help them sift through the challenges they face in making choices. Six of those sessions will be a partnership with our friends at Actios who work with schools in the St Neots area. It's so encouraging that so many schools get back to us quickly to book in sessions each year as they see the value of this interactive workshop for their students. *'The children really enjoyed it, and it definitely got them thinking about the choices they are making now and in the future.'* Year 6 teacher

- ❖ Pray for the workshops and their positive impact on the students as they navigate the choices they have to make.

Connect and Reflect videos

After over three years of producing videos for primary schools we have decided not to make any new videos for the academic year ahead. In place we will be looking to update several of the videos we already have and make them available to schools. It's been quite a journey from March 2020, with one person sitting in a room with a camera that kept falling over, to where we are now. There is no doubt that, although not experts by any means, we have improved (as one student delighted in telling us after a recent assembly!), and feedback from schools over the three years has been hugely encouraging. A massive thank you to the GenR8 volunteers for their willingness to do things differently over this time and to be the stars of GenR8 outtakes... we all needed a laugh!

If you want to check out the videos we have made and are now available to schools, visit our website: www.genr8.org/videos and www.genr8.org/prayer-spaces



Celebration - GenR8 is 21!

GenR8 will be celebrating 21 (ish) years of children's ministry in schools and churches on Saturday 20 January 2024 from 2pm at Great Shelford Free Church. We are planning to spend time together sharing the GenR8 story with the usual sketches, puppets, songs, prayer spaces, and fun too. We hope this afternoon will be a celebration of all that GenR8 has done over the years and will allow us to recognise Steve Whyatt's role in the development, growth and continuing impact of this ministry. Please do put the date in your diary - we hope to see as many friends, family and those connected with GenR8 as possible there! There will be cake!



Also:

- ❖ Give thanks and pray for the ongoing impact of the summer term activities: assemblies, Inspire Prayer Spaces, IYM.
- ❖ Pray for the term ahead – that we will be guided by God in all that we do.
- ❖ Pray for the staff team and for their work, both in schools and in the background.

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