

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

*Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail.
They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. Lamentations 3:22-23*

Here is a snapshot of four of our different programmes last term.

Christmas Assembly – Christmas Hope

Five GenR8 teams visited schools in late November and December with an assembly called 'Christmas Hope' by Gail Featherstone.



The assembly, that shared the good news that God's son was born as a baby to bring hope to the world, was given a great reception in schools by children and staff alike. The assembly included: puppets discussing their roles in the school nativity; a mini-nativity play from the perspective of the angels; a song – 'The Angels Say' by Fischy Music; and a time of reflection. We presented more than 120 Christmas assemblies in primary and first schools across Cambridgeshire, North Hertfordshire, and West Norfolk – how amazing that thousands of children in this region heard that Jesus is the hope of the world and what that can mean for us all.

Cool Choices

The Cool Choices team of Siân, Steve, Liz and Bev visited Year 6 classes in September and October with workshops about making good choices. This term four schools were visited in a partnership with Jenny from Actios in a partnership that has been really positive. The Cool Choices project is now well established in schools and has been running for 10 years. Penny Kite, trustee, who visited one of the sessions gave her perspective: *I had never seen the programme and only had the vaguest idea what to expect. We were shown into a Year 6 classroom, where the teacher and the pupils sat expectantly. Frankly, I was astonished. The programme, designed to help pupils to consider how to make good decisions, neither preached nor cajoled. The GenR8 team accepted suggestions without any sign of concern, however difficult the subject matter that arose... Finally, reflection stations gave pupils the chance to think again about Cool Choices – ones that provide good outcomes for themselves, for others and for the world. Penny concluded: I was so proud to watch the team in action, amazed at the professional session that they had delivered, and profoundly thankful to God for the work of GenR8.*

Inspire Prayer Spaces

In the autumn term the Inspire Prayer Spaces team have been to Guilden Morden and Kennett Primary Schools; for both this was their first prayer space experience and we are delighted that Guilden Morden have started a Permanent Prayer Space in response to the visit. We also had new opportunities in the form of two visits to Royston; to Make Lunch and to the Saturday Coffee Break at Royston Methodist Church. The latter was organised after a volunteer at the former was so impressed that they wanted to share it with their church! For those who do not know, Make Lunch is a programme that provides hot meals and activities in the holidays for children who normally receive free school meals. The children at Make Lunch engaged well with the prayer spaces and at RMC there were positive and encouraging conversations about the work of GenR8 and prayer spaces in schools and a great response to the reflective activities.



GYD

Ten young people in Years 6-8 joined Siân Thorne, GenR8 Director, and Nicola Grieves, Children and Youth Development Officer for the URC, for a 'Growing Young Disciples' day on a Saturday 11 November. The day focused on what it means to be a disciple of Jesus - in all we say and do - alerting others to the reign of God. Over the day we ate bacon rolls, played games, read the Bible together, and reflected in prayer spaces on what that looks like for us in our daily lives.

'Thank you so much, I really enjoyed the day.' Attendee
'My child has said afterwards how much they enjoyed the day, even though they came to the one last year, they got so much from this time learning more about Jesus.' GYD parent



Looking ahead

GenR8 Administrator

We are delighted to announce the appointment of Ruth Gabe as GenR8 administrator. Ruth currently volunteers as the booking coordinator for the West assembly team and will continue this initially in addition to the admin role. Ruth has been a primary school teacher for the last 30 years and has seen GenR8 from 'the other side'; the admin opportunity came up just as she had decided to look for a change in direction. Thanks go to Kathryn Gee for taking on the administration tasks temporarily in March 2022!



❖ Please pray for Ruth as she takes on the many tasks involved in the smooth running of GenR8.

Cool Choices

Choices, choices, choices! We are all face so many choices, but it is often hard to make the right choice. GenR8 will again be leading Cool Choices sessions in January and February to encourage Year 6 students to make positive life choices and to help them sift through the challenges they face in making choices. *'The children really enjoyed the visit from the team – who were very skilled communicators, managing our Year 6s really well. Please pass my thanks to the team – fabulous!'* Year 6 teacher in September

❖ Pray for the bookings and the workshop leaders, plus the Year 6 teachers and students – that the sessions might make a positive impact on lives.

Xcellr8 weekend

This annual event for 8-11 year olds has the theme Particip8 this year. The four main sessions focus on Paul's sporting analogies for our journey of faith in this Olympic year: Getting Fit; The Team; The Event; The Prize. It takes place on 17 and 18 February at Histon Baptist Church and is a mix of fun, friendship and faith.

❖ Pray for all the preparations and those involved in the plans, for the bookings, and for the weekend itself.

Easter assembly

Once the Christmas lights and decorations are put away we start to plan our next assembly tour. Easter is relatively early this year so we need to start rehearsing and booking school assemblies soon. The assembly is one we have taken into schools in the past, 'A New Start', written by Amy Robinson, that includes the John Hardwick song 'How broad, how long'.

❖ Pray for new volunteers, for bookings and our booking coordinators, and for the school assembly visits.

Inspire Prayer Spaces

The Permanent Prayer Spaces in the 12 schools GenR8 support have seen three theme changes happen this term - Harvest, Remembrance and Advent. Each change comes with a different colour for drapes, cushion covers and voile nets, as well as all the laminated information for each display. Janet and Siân then deliver these kits to our brilliant local church volunteers who liaise with each school about putting up the new display. Schools involved in the project are: Abbots Ripton, Babraham, Barton, Dry Drayton, Elsworth, Fordham, Great and Little Shelford, Guilden Morden, Oakington, Steeple Morden, Whittlesford, and Wilburton Primary schools.

❖ Please pray for: local church volunteers and that stronger links are made with their local school.

❖ Pray for safety on the roads as Janet and Siân travel to deliver kits.



Celebration - GenR8 is 21!

Don't forget to join the celebration of GenR8's 21+ years of children's ministry in schools and churches on Saturday 20 January 2024 from 2 – 4 pm at Great Shelford Free Church. We are planning to spend time together sharing the GenR8 story and giving thanks to God. It will also allow us to recognise Steve Whyatt's role in the development, growth and continuing impact of this ministry. Please come along - we hope to see as many friends, family and those connected with GenR8 as possible there!

Also:

- ❖ Give thanks for the autumn term activities and pray for the children who were involved.
- ❖ Pray for the spring term: the celebration, assemblies, Cool Choices, Inspire activities, and more.
- ❖ Pray for Steve and his health, and the health of other team members who are struggling at present.
- ❖ Pray for more people to catch the vision and join the volunteer team.
- ❖ Pray for more opportunities to visit churches and share about the work of GenR8.

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GenR8 is a Local Mission Partner of  Scripture Union