

Other news...

We've recently been in conversation with Rich Miles from **Movement** about their vision to expand their 'worship nights' for teens and young adults from the current 2 locations

to 7 over the next few years—and looking at whether Tone Deanery and in particular St Andrew's Wiveliscombe would be a strategic place for one of these. After Easter we hope to take some of our young people to visit their existing Cheddar Valley bi-monthly event at St Mary's Wedmore and hope to have the team visit us in the autumn for a tour night. If you're interested in finding out more do get in touch. You can read more about Movement in the latest edition of Manna magazine (p5).

Back in November around 20 youth and children's leaders from the wider Taunton area gathered at St James' Church for an evening of worship, encouragement, discussion, prayer and cake.

The Gathering is a new venture in which we're pleased to be partnering with *Taunton Youth for Christ* to offer an regular evening for those involved in youth and children's work with their churches. Do come and join us at the next one:

Wednesday 15 March at Taunton Baptist Church (Silver St) 7-9pm
& Wednesday 28 June—Celebration Evening (venue tbc) 7.30pm

Spring Harvest will be coming to Butlins at Minehead again this Easter holiday and the youth group at All Saints Rockwell Green are planning a day trip to the event. If you'd be interested in joining them or would like to know more about Spring Harvest do get in touch or visit www.springharvest.org

Have you got news...? If you have news of events past or coming up in your church/community do pass it my way and I'll happily share it with the Deanery.

If you would like more information about anything included in this newsletter or would like more copies (or a pdf version sent to you by email) please do get in touch with me.

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Youth Matters

in the Tone Deanery **Spring 2017**

Welcome to **Youth Matters**—news & prayer prompts
for youth & children's work in our Deanery.

In the same way, encourage the young men to live wisely.

(Titus 2:6 NLT)

Early in the new year I got together for what's become a 'new tradition' amongst some of my friends: the Post-Christmas Curry Night!

For several years a group of us 'lads' (mostly in our forties now but who were all friends in our teens) have met for a meal in an Indian restaurant and each year the table has become a bit longer as we've invited along an extra person. Most of us don't meet up very often and some of us haven't seen each other for years, and yet our shared experiences in our teenage years along with similar family/work/life now mean we have much to talk about.

This year's meal had an added dimension as among the 10 at the table were two men who were our youth leaders when we were in our teens. One was our Venture Scout Leader and the other a church youth group leader. Neither are that much older than us - when we were teenagers they were in their 20s.

As I drove home that evening it got me thinking, not only about how good it is to get together after all these years but also about how much time and effort these two guys gave in order to support and encourage us when we were young people. Most likely juggling their volunteer youth work around busy jobs and family life; and as I remember it, doing more than just the hour or so a week at the organised event but going the extra mile to help shape us into young adults with a purpose.

Today I'm grateful to them and all those who helped shape me, and also for the opportunity to do the same for others finding their way through their teens now (which seems harder than ever to navigate). I'm also grateful to be in the business of encouraging and resourcing church volunteers doing the same. Whether it's the big group or the ones and twos let's pray as we seek to help shape this generation of young people. Not easy, but be encouraged!

Andy Levett. Youth & Children's Work Coordinator for Tone Deanery

The Christmas Experience...

In Wellington, December began with something new for St John's Church and the Key Stage 1 children (5-7s) from two of the Primary Schools. Following a request from Beech Grove School for a church visit, a team from Wellington churches welcomed a total of 180 children to St John's Church over 3 days to take part in 'The Christmas Experience', an interactive and reflective telling of the Christmas story. Children and staff from both Beech Grove and St John's Schools heard the story of Christmas told in small groups as they moved around the church building, culminating with each class gathering around the crib.



and the Easter Experience...

As Easter approaches the Wellington churches schools team are offering the Easter version to a number of the village Primary schools as well as those in town—with the idea of bringing 'The Easter Experience' to the village churches as well as to St John's in Wellington itself. Watch this space—but we hope this might be something we can grow to an increasing number of Primary Schools over the next few years.

Also this month, Year 7 students from Court Fields Secondary School will be hearing the Easter story in a special 30 minute multimedia presentation at Wellington Methodist Church. Classes will be visiting at the end of Feb/early March with a number of Wellington church leaders unpacking the key parts of the Easter story, followed by a short Q&A session.



The Big Tent holiday club will be back in Wellington on August 15, 16 & 17 for Primary school-aged children. Lots of team needed as always—come along and hear more about what's happening this year on Thu 11 May & Thu 15 June, 7.45pm, Wellington Baptist Church hall.

Pray for Schools Fortnight

As a Deanery we are again making our local schools the focus of our prayers during May. The dates for *Pray for Schools Fortnight* nationally are 7 – 21 May which includes 3 Sundays (7th, 14th, 21st) on one of which we're encouraging churches to include special prayers for schools in their usual Sunday service or perhaps even plan a service themed around schools and education. Churches could also include a 'schools focus' into other prayer meetings or house groups that happen during these two weeks. If you're involved in leading a service or group and would like more info or help with resources please do get in touch with me. There are also some resources available on the Pray for Schools website (www.prayforschools.org) including an inspiring video that's worth a watch.

In addition, we're planning to run a number of midweek events around the Deanery where the nearby school will come and join us in praying for their school in creative ways.

Wednesday 10 May—St Bartholomew's Oake

Thursday 11 May—St Mary's Bishops Lydeard

Wednesday 17 May—St John's Wellington

Each church will be available at lunchtime for those who'd like to come and join in prayers for our local schools.

I will also be writing to the Headteachers of all the schools in Tone Deanery (18 in total) to let them know we will be especially praying for them during these two weeks. So let us pray!



Messy Church

Each term, St Mary's at Bishops Lydeard run a Messy Church morning in the church centre. Typically this includes 15-20 children of various ages plus a handful of enthusiastic parents joining in a range of creative activities along with a Bible story and some lunch! All lovingly prepared and put together by the Messy Church team, most of whom are also involved in leading *Open The Book* assemblies at Bishops Lydeard Primary School.

This term's theme was 'Hidden Treasure' (taken from the *Get Messy!* material available at messychurch.org.uk) and began with the team acting out two of Jesus parables that liken the Kingdom of Heaven to finding treasure. After the crafts and the ping-pong ball challenge we gathered back together to hear the message that we are treasured by God—each and every one of us. After a treasure hunt around the church it was lunchtime along with lots of good conversation and smiling faces! Next one is Saturday 6 May, 10am-12.