



Update

Easter 2024

The Big Easter Bash

Following the success of the Big Christmas Bash, we once again worked alongside churches in Gloucester for our latest Big Bash event. With the lights dimmed, music playing, there was a buzz in the room as 130 young people packed out Gloucester Elim for the Big Easter Bash. The anticipation grew as the evening kicked off with a welcome followed by games, an Easter Egg Hunt and food. With hot dogs, popcorn and candy floss devoured the noise level built once again as rap artist Jon Jackal took to the stage. The young people jumped, sang and danced as Jon shared his faith through his music and personal testimony. The Big Easter Bash had well and truly kicked off!

Jon, who works for British Youth for Christ, uses his music to share Jesus with young people. The young people really connected with the exciting atmosphere and his personal story that he shared – helping them to see how we all need Jesus and how He truly does change our lives.



Seventeen young people decide to follow Jesus and be prayed for at the end of the event. A number of these young people had been brought to the event by a friend. One young person, Bethany, shared the story of the friend she brought along.

“Hello, my name is Bethany and I’m in year 7. A few Friday’s ago my friend became a Christian – isn’t that so cool! I’d been trying to invite her to Christian events for a while. Every time there was an opportunity I’d say, “There’s this event today, do you want

to come?” but she’d always say, “Sorry, I have something on”.

Last Friday, there was an event called the Big Easter Bash so I asked her again if she’d like to come. She wasn’t feeling too well and she had a dance class, but she said yes! So that night I met her at the door to the event and we went in together.

There was popcorn and candy floss and food there (which she came for!) and there was a rapper called Jon Jackal. He rapped for a bit and we were dancing, and we had a ton of fun.

But the thing that impacted her the most came towards the end of the evening when Jon Jackal talked about how Jesus had changed his life. I think it made her think that maybe Jesus could change her life too. So when he asked if anyone would like to give their life to Jesus, she put her hand up! I went with her into another room that was quieter where people prayed for us, and she became a Christian!

This week at school in PSHE, we were talking about healthy decisions, and on her laptop, she wrote, "God loves me" I knew then that the Big Easter Bash had helped her to discover Jesus as her Saviour."

Bethany's friend was just one of a number of young people who had been invited by friends. A number of young people said how excited they were to see people from their school who they didn't realise would be at the event.

It was a night that will live long in the memories of the young people.

We are looking forward to our summer event on the 6th July as we continue to work with youth leaders and churches to provide an opportunity for the young people of Gloucester to come together and experience Jesus.

50TH ANNIVERSARY LEGACY FUND

— £50,000

— £40,000

— £30,000

— £20,000

— £10,000

**CURRENT
TOTAL**

£6292



50th Anniversary Legacy Fund

Make an impact on the next generation by donating to our 50th Anniversary Legacy Fund.

Your donation will help us see young people's lives changed by Jesus.



Big Decisions

Schools work is always special, but recently it has been a privilege to see God moving in the lives of the young people who attend the Bournside Christian Union.

We have been discussing the significance of Easter. As part of this Matt used some paper to demonstrate the Gospel. This was helpful for the young people and even won a few 'oohs and aahs'! There was a point in



one session where the young people started to question how the resurrection is possible, and how Jesus is both fully God and fully man. You could tell that there were some things that started to make sense in their minds, and it was really encouraging to see them have the confidence to keep questioning us when they didn't understand.

Following this, eleven young people decided to follow Jesus – incredible! Most of these young people are not currently going to church or have never been before, they have just come along to the Christian Union because their friends brought them.

Each of these young people have been given a pack with a Youth for Christ Youth Bible, some devotionals notes and a journal to help them to get started in their walk with Jesus. Please pray for them as they start this new adventure. We look forward to watching them grow in their relationship with Jesus as we help them on their discipleship journey.

Easter Celebrations

At the end of term, Paul had the opportunity to talk at the St. Mark's Junior School Easter Service. The school held the service at St. Mark CofE church, with the whole school joining in a presentation of the Easter story. Paul had the opportunity to speak to the students and parents about the Easter message and what it means for each of us.

We normally visit the school every other week for collective worship. We have a strong relationship with the school and the students. Our high energy and engaging collective worship sessions are always well received.



50th Anniversary Celebration

1974 brought us a number of good things. The Rubik's Cube was invented, Skittles were released, Abba won the Eurovision song contest with Waterloo and New Year's Day was a Bank Holiday for the first time. As if things could not have got any better, we were also founded. Initially known as CYCLE (Cheltenham Young Christians Link Up Events), we have continuously shared the life changing message ever since. Our name may have changed, and we now operate across a wider area, but our mission remains the same.

Fifty years of continuous ministry is worth celebrating. We want to celebrate fifty years of God working in the lives of young people. Fifty years of young people discovering Jesus and being changed by Him.

We have a lot to celebrate. In 2024 alone, we have seen thirty three young people make a decision to follow Jesus; imagine how many this will have been over fifty years.

We would love you to come and join us from 7pm on 20th April at the Pavilion to celebrate what God has done, and look forward to the future. We will also have a time of worship, hear from young people involved in our work and share testimonies of people who have been changed over the last fifty years. The National Director of Youth for Christ, Neil O'Boyle, will also share his heart for young people and Jesus.

After our celebration, we would love you to stay behind and join us for a drinks reception, where there will be an opportunity to talk with young people, staff, volunteers and trustees.

As if that is not a full enough evening, we will also have some exciting news to announce. This news will have a significant impact on our work, and opens up a very exciting mission opportunity.

It will be a great evening, made even better by your attendance. Please do join us to mark this significant milestone.



50th Anniversary Celebration

7pm Saturday 20th April 2024

**The Pavilion, Hatherley Lane,
Cheltenham. GL51 6NP**

Speaker: Neil O'Boyle
British Youth for Christ National Director

Following the celebration, there will be a drinks reception.



The Anniversary Challenge

To celebrate our 50th Anniversary, we will be undertaking five challenges, one for each decade of ministry amongst young people. We are looking for people to join us and help to raise money that will be added to the Legacy Fund. The five challenges take in a variety of activities. Everyone who takes part will be given fundraising support, access to an online sponsorship page and offline forms. Most importantly, your support will help us see more young people's lives changed by Jesus. If you can't do one of our challenges, why not take on one of your own. Let us know what you want to do via the form, and we will send you a free fundraising pack.

The Big Row: 15th June 2024

We started in 1974, so we are going to row 197.4km in 24 hours! There will be no water involved, as it will be completed on row machines. The distance will be completed as a team. This means you can join us for half an hour, the whole 24 hours, or somewhere in between. We may have enough of us to finish it a lot quicker than 24 hours!

The River Walk: 20th July 2024

This 15 mile walk from Tewkesbury Abbey to Gloucester Cathedral follows the River Severn. It is a fairly gentle route that can be comfortably completed in a day.

The Big Ride: 10th August 2024

Cycling challenges have been a big thing for us over the years. This year we are staying local with a one day challenge. The

ride will feature a 100 mile route, but it is possible to join in for a smaller distance, as the total ride will be made up with a series of different loops.

The Big Run: 1st September 2024

On 1st September, a number of us will be attempting to run the Cheltenham Half Marathon, others will take on the 10k run on the same day. We are looking for more people to join the team.

The Circular Walk: 14th September 2024

This 23.6 mile walk around the outskirts of Gloucester takes in Sharpness Canal, Chosen Hill and Robins Wood Hill. The hills and the distance add an edge to the challenge.

Paul and Matt will attempt to take on all five challenges, but they would like other people to join them. Would you consider joining them on one or more of the challenges? If you are interested in find out more, please get in touch with Paul or Matt.

To register for any of the events, please visit:

<https://forms.office.com/e/RRSV1Hu7HW> or use the QR code below.





Break Away 2024

When the supermarket delivery turns up at a residential with our food delivery, they must wonder what is happening. To start with, our shop takes up most of the van. Endless amounts of bread, milk, vegetables, desserts, cereal and cheese, to name just a few things that are offloaded and packed away in the kitchen. Before long, 75 ravenous young people and 20 youth leaders descend upon the Poplars in Ledbury. In total, 110 people consume nearly 700 meals along with piles of cake. The catering task is huge, but the effort is worth it to see 75 young people having their lives changed by Jesus.



The Poplars is firmly established as the home of Break Away.

Throughout the weekend we explored how Jesus is the Light of the World. We discovered the impact He can make in our lives, and how He asks us to take light into the world around us.

There are always many special moments



Jon Jackal kicking off the weekend.

on a residential, and this year was no exception. The weekend kicked off with a performance from songwriter and rapper, Jon Jackal, who has become quite legendary amongst the young people of Gloucestershire!

Five young people made first-time commitments, with many more making decisions to recommit their lives to Jesus. Young people experienced God in such a way that they felt moved to take living out their relationship with God to a deeper level. It was amazing to see the change in some of the young people from the beginning to the end of the weekend. Weeks later leaders have shared with us the considerable change and continued spiritual growth in some of their young people as a result of the weekend.

Residentials are always non-stop, action-packed fun with lots of sport, including cricket, archery, netball, football, basketball, and a whole load more. Nine Square in the Air was new to us, but it proved very popular.

The young people were excited to try out our new gaming stations, whilst others got creative in dance and songwriting workshops. Alongside craft sessions, opportunities to explore our purpose, and learn about ways to share our faith, it was hard to get bored! We even had a cinema night with popcorn and candy floss.

All this was against the backdrop of exploring Jesus as our light. Whilst everyone enjoyed the high energy games and fun, they did not detract from moments of deep worship and connection with God. After all, this is what it is really about. It is a special moment to spend time with young people wrestling with what Jesus means for their lives, relationships, purpose and identity. The non stop work for 72 hours, the three week build up, countless shopping trips and disturbed sleep is all made worthwhile to see 75 young people encountering Jesus and being changed by Him.

The young people left with torch key rings to remind them of the memories and the message of the weekend. It is a privilege to be able to host something that we know can have such a long-lasting impact on young people.

Next year's residential is already being planned. We are considering a second weekend as we are already at maximum capacity. To make this possible, we need to extend the team. Serving on the residentials is hard work, but incredibly rewarding. We need people willing to be on the catering team, sports teams, worship and youth work teams. If you would like to find out more, please contact Paul.



Life changing habits



In a recent conversation, we discovered the impact that a Youth for Christ devotional had on Robyn. It was such a great story, we wanted to share it in this edition of Update.

Robyn said “As a young person I was really encouraged in my faith by a youth devotional booklet called Mettle. It wasn’t until the other day when I was looking through the Youth for Christ website that I realised that this was a Youth for Christ resource!

My older sister bought me a Mettle subscription for a birthday present when I was about 13. I don’t think I was that interested at first, but because they were quite short and inviting, (and I also felt a bit bad just ignoring something that had been given to me!) I decided to give it a go.

I started reading the devotional in the evenings before I went to sleep. It quite quickly turned into an evening habit and before I knew it, reading the Bible every day was something that had become really

important in my daily routine. I became hungry for more and started not just reading the few verses of the Bible book that were part of the devotional, but reading the whole chapter or more.

I remember an adult at church being positively surprised when I said that I read the Bible everyday, and I shared that it was because of a devotional that I did.

Looking back I can see how this resource made a way for God to transform my life through His powerful Word and how, from this, He has taught me to be led by Him alone.”

This is why we believe that our Together family devotionals can make such a big impact. Over thirty families are currently receiving a free weekly email devotional from us. This number continues to grow, and we are continuing to hear how much of an impact the devotionals are making on the families.

These devotionals give families the opportunity to read the Bible, pray and discuss things together.

To sign up, use the QR code below or sign up on the homepage at:
www.yfcgloucestershire.co.uk



Together

Devotionals for the whole family

All change

In the last edition of Update, we advertised a part-time Youth Work role. Very shortly afterwards, we began conversations with a local church about turning this in to a shared role. These conversations are still on-going, but we have paused the recruitment until these discussions have run their course. We expect to be in a position to move forward with this shared role during the summer term, at which point we will restart the recruitment process.

This partnership is very exciting, and we look forward to being able to share more about these plans in the near future. It will allow us to extend the team, whilst also supporting another church in developing their youth work.

This is just one of a number of partnerships we are currently working on, others include helping churches develop youth work within their community. The Church in general has lost confidence in knowing how to engage with unchurched young people and young people have lost confidence in the church. Less than 4% of young people in Britain have active engagement with the church, and only 8% view the church positively. We want to change the narrative.

The Term in Numbers

13

Bibles given away to young people.



33

Young people making first time decisions to follow Jesus.



700

The number of meals served at Break Away, not including seconds!!



2169

The number of interactions with young people across the term.



500,000

Approximately how many steps the Break Away team walked during the residential.





Gloucestershire
**YOUTH
FOR CHRIST**

Internships

Are you considering taking a year out, either in 2024/5 or later?

Do you want to see young people's lives changed by Jesus?

Do you have a heart for evangelism?

We are recruiting for gap year volunteers for the next academic year. Whether you are about to finish school or university, we can offer you an experience that will change you.

Set a year aside to make a difference and be changed.

To explore what a year out could look like scan the QR code.



I would like to become a Youth for Christ Gloucestershire partner.

Title: Full Name:

Full home address:

Postcode: Email:

Telephone: Church:

Are you involved in youth work?

Communication Preferences

I would like to receive from Youth for Christ Gloucestershire newsletters and information on events and fundraising activities/ appeals. I am happy to receive communication via (please tick all that apply)

Post SMS/text message Email

I enclose a cheque made payable to YFC Gloucestershire for £_____

Gift Aid declaration

Boost your donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1 you donate. Gift Aid is reclaimed by Youth for Christ Gloucestershire from the tax you pay for the current tax year. Your address is needed to identify you as a current tax payer. In order to Gift Aid your donation you must tick the appropriate box below.

I want to Gift aid my donation of £_____ to Youth for Christ Gloucestershire

I want to Gift aid my donation of £_____ and any donations I make in the future or have made in the past 4 years to Youth for Christ Gloucestershire

I am a UK taxpayer and understand that if I pay less Income Tax and/or Capital Gains Tax in the current tax year than the amount of Gift Aid claimed on all my donations it is my responsibility to pay any difference.

Signed Date

Please notify us if you: 1. Want to cancel this declaration. 2. Change your name or home address. 3. No longer pay sufficient tax on your income and/or capital gains. If you pay Income Tax at the higher or additional rate and want to receive the additional tax relief due to you, you must include all your Gift Aid donations on your Self-Assessment tax return or ask HM Revenue and Customs to adjust your tax code.

Youth for Christ Gloucestershire Standing Order Authority

Your Bank Name and address

Account No: Bank Sort Code:

Please pay: Youth for Christ Gloucestershire. Account no: 00028687 Sort code: 40-52-40

CAF Bank Ltd, 25 Kings Hill Avenue, West Malling, Kent. ME19 4JQ

The sum of £ on the and thereafter from my account

monthly / quarterly / annually (delete as applicable) until further notice. This instruction cancels all previous instructions for standing order payments to Youth for Christ Gloucestershire.

Signed Date

Please return to: The Treasurer, Youth for Christ Gloucestershire, 115 St. George's Road, Cheltenham, GLOS. GL50 3EG Charity no. 1163587

We only use your data in connection with our work and will only use it in ways you request. To read our privacy policy and find out how we use your data please visit www.yfcgloucestershire.co.uk/_tos.html

Events Diary

Each Monday and Thursday morning at 9.30am we gather for our prayer meetings. All are welcome to come and join the team to pray for our work. The prayer meeting is available on Zoom, so, if you would like to join us, please email office@yfcgloucestershire.co.uk for the Zoom codes.

The following are a few of our less regular dates for this term. Please do pray for these events.

April		June	
15th	Youth Workers prayer	10th	Youth Workers prayer
16th	Gloucester Youth Workers	15th	The Big Row
20th	50 Year Celebration	18th	Gloucester Youth Workers
May		July	
12th	Paul preaching in Norton St. Philips	6th	The Big Summer Bash
13th	Youth workers prayer	8th	Youth Workers prayer
21st	Gloucester Youth Workers	16th	Gloucester Youth Workers
		20th	The River Walk

Donate by text

Text YOUTH followed by your donation amount to 70490 to give that amount. E.g. YOUTH20 to donate £20
Texts will cost the donation amount plus one standard network rate message.



How to get in touch

Feel free to get in touch with us. We love hearing from our supporters. It is always worth checking we are in the office before popping round as we are frequently out working with young people.

For general enquiries, please email office@yfcgloucestershire.co.uk

We can also be messaged via our social media accounts.

To contact a staff member directly, please use the details to the right.



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