



New signing

If you are a football fan, January can be a tense moment as you keep an eye out to see who your team signs before the 31st January transfer deadline. We don't have to worry about a transfer deadline, but we do have news of our own signing. Last term, we were trying to recruit a new youth worker. We were very aware that it is currently very hard to find people, many posts remain unfilled, with few suitable candidates available. Following the recruitment process, we have appointed Matt Craig as our new Youth Work Lead. He will join us sometime after Easter.

Matt is currently the youth worker at Hillingdon Park Baptist Church in London, and also has considerable retail management experience. It is not the first time we have employed a youth worker from Hillingdon Park Baptist. One of their previous youth workers was Paul, our current Centre Director. When Paul

worked in the church, Matt was one of his young leaders. Paul was an important part of Matt's development as a youth worker. Twenty years later, they will be reunited as co-workers. Matt brings a wide range of experience and will add depth to the great team we already have. Over the next few months, Matt and his family will be preparing to make the move from London.



Matt Craig will be joining us after Easter. We are particularly excited about him bringing donuts to the office!

The opportunity to employ Matt full time arose just before Christmas. We were not expecting to employ anyone full-time, and whilst our finances are healthy, the extra hours made it a challenge. As we all stopped and considered what this would mean, we asked God to provide. Over the next three weeks, we saw a

significant increase in income. We had shared our need with a small group of people, and we were constantly blown away by their generosity. Coupled with the money raised by walking the Cotswold

Way in 2021, we were in a position to fund a full-time post for the first couple of years. We will still need to raise more funds over time, not least due to the cost of living crisis. What was undeniable, was God's provision for the post.

We are very excited about Matt joining us. He will be able to help us extend our work and take it into new areas. He brings enthusiasm and passion for our work, backed up with an excellent level of experience. He has a track record of delivering good youth work.

Following his appointment, Matt said, "I have always admired the work of Youth for Christ, reaching out to young people in the local community. I am incredibly excited to be joining Paul and the team at Youth for Christ Gloucestershire and can't wait to get started."

Please pray for Matt and his family as they make the move to Gloucestershire. We know they will particularly value prayer for their house move and for school places for their two children.

Fueling faith

Hanna started her role as a youth worker for St Luke's Church in September and has been welcomed with open arms by the church family.

She currently plans the children and youth sessions for a Sunday morning, runs the youth sessions, is the contact person for students and 20-30s, and is involved in the Sunday services. The youth group consists not only of St Luke's regulars but also newcomers and young people who have outgrown the children's group, so during her first month, Hanna focused on the young people getting to know one another. They had their first social in November, a great evening of watching Shrek, eating popcorn and pizza, and enjoying sparklers, which was a good bonding experience for the whole group. The church has seen a sudden growth in their 20-30s age group, with several people joining on a Sunday morning who are discovering Jesus for the first time. Hanna has been reading the book of Mark with a young woman who has started

coming to the services and wanted to learn more about Jesus, faith, and religion. She had an old Bible that she found quite confusing. We gave her a Youth for Christ Youth Bible, which is simpler to use, so she could get more familiar with it. There are also sections that help her think through issues facing young people. Alongside this, Patrick and Hanna are halfway through running a Christianity Explored course for this age group and are encouraged at the conversations that have started based on it.



As part of her role, Hanna has been going to St John's Primary School every week to lead their collective worship. She has been telling Bible stories that align with the school's values. During the winter term, they looked at courage and humility by exploring Queen Esther's story and some of Jesus' parables. With the start of 2023, they've been exploring the Lord's Prayer, making it applicable to them, and learning it off by heart together.

Hanna is supported by Rev. Patrick

Wheaton, the vicar from St Luke's, and a team of 4 young people in charge of setting up and running the collective worship.

A year 6 student has said, "I like collective worship because it is interactive, interesting and a fun way to learn, I like that there are different people teaching us. I enjoy the singing and Hanna has lots of fun with us all with different games."

Last term brought many opportunities for Hanna to build a relationship with the school and its young people while being able to share her faith. In the last few weeks, Hanna has established Faithfuel, a lunchtime club for school years 4,5 and 6. Together they have been looking at the beginning of Genesis in a playful way, thinking about God's creative aspects and how that might reflect in their own lives. Faithfuel has been very popular, despite only just having started. Many of the older students remember the previous lunchtime club run by St Luke's

before the pandemic, and have been keen to come back and bring their friends along. The group consists of roughly fifteen students with different faith backgrounds and has been a lot of fun to establish and run.

Patrick said, 'Hanna has brought a great energy to our vision at St Luke's to be rooted in Jesus Christ and flourishing

under God's love. She has shown a passion and care for the children at Saint John's, our church of England Primary School, helping us deliver biblical collective worship. We are so excited that under Hanna's leadership, we have been able to start a lunchtime Christian Union for Years 4,5 & 6 called Faithfu(e)l. Gospel ministry seeking to flourish in our parish in partnership with Youth for Christ.'



Patrick Wheaton and Hanna at St. Luke's

It is really good to be working in partnership with St. Luke's once again. Many years ago, we shared a worker, Wes Bell. A number of the congregation have commented about how nice it is to be working together again. We are looking forward to seeing the youth work develop in the church.

At a time when many churches are struggling with reduced numbers of young people, we are committed to supporting the local church. We want to see youth work flourishing across the churches in the area.

We work with a number of churches, providing access to the Youth for Christ online resources, as well as supporting youth groups with visits, advice and sometimes practical support. We always try to go into schools in conjunction with youth workers from churches in the area. Whilst this is not always possible, we want to try to do local mission with local churches wherever possible.



Together

One of our values is partnership; we believe we are better when we are working together with others united in mission. We value mutual partnerships. These are many and varied. We work in collaboration with churches such as St. Luke's, where Hanna delivers youth work; West Cheltenham Team Ministry, helping to deliver youth work and also in schools such as St. Mark's Junior delivering collective worship. Our Big Weekender is a partnership between ourselves and Swindon Youth for Christ. The weekend is also a partnership with local churches, demonstrating, that when we do something together, it can be bigger and better. We know without those of you who pray and support our work financially, we would not be able to work with young people. It is for this reason, we will always refer to you as partners.

Another one of our partnerships is with Youth for Christ Cyprus. Over the last few years, we have developed a strong partnership with each other. We have prayed as teams and Paul talks and prays with their National Director, Loukios, on a regular basis. Last year, two members of their team paid us a visit. Those times were spent building relationships as well as investing in training and allowing their

team explore how we do youth work. In 2020, Paul was due to visit Cyprus along with a small team. The team were going to be involved in the Cyprus annual youth camp and Paul would be the main speaker. Due to Covid, this did not happen, but three years later, plans are in place to make the trip this summer. To this end, Paul and the team will be fundraising, to not only cover their costs, but also bless the team in Cyprus. Paul had chosen to undertake a local one day cycling sportive of 64 miles. At our last Trustees' meeting, it was suggested that Paul and Helen, one of the trustees, should do the event together, on a tandem!

Helen has never cycled 64 miles, and neither of them have ridden a tandem for more than a mile. Their only option of escape was hoping we could not find a tandem to use. This was quickly dashed when a suitable bike was found in a few days. As a result, they will be taking on the challenge on 13th May. It does seem incredibly appropriate, that we fund our partnership with the ultimate partnership challenge. Why not help us extend the partnership further by offering to join us. Don't worry, you won't need a tandem, you can use a normal bike for one. We

would love to have a group of people join us, all aiming to raise £200 each. If you would prefer, you can take on the 100 mile challenge. To enter, book in the event via the link below. Once you have entered, please email Paul to let him know on paul@yfcgloucestershire.co.uk. He will then support you to arrange sponsorship.

Cotswold Sportive



To join the team and register for the sportive, visit ukvelo.co.uk or use the QR code.

The Big Weekender

Our Big Weekender is nearly upon us. At the end of February half term, we will be running our annual residential. This year we are running it in partnership with Swindon Youth for Christ. We have over 100 young people and leaders booked in. This year, we have sold out. Please pray for us as we put the final preparations together. Please also pray for the young

people attending. We will be exploring the theme of “Anchored to the Rock” and will be considering the difference Jesus can make in our lives when He is our foundation.

The weekend takes place between the 24-26th February at the Poplars, near Ledbury.

Big Questions

How do you know God is real? Why does God allow bad things to happen? Do miracles happen? These are just a few of the questions that Paul got bombarded with by Year 6 students at St. Mark's Junior School in December. As part of the RE curriculum, the students gather evidence from a Christian to support the existence of God. Each year, Paul visits both Year 6 classes and answers their questions. The lessons



feature a lot of testimony as well as some deep theological and philosophical discussion. We are always amazed at the

depth of thinking of the students.

Throughout this term, Paul and Hanna will be visiting all the classes in the school to answer their “Big Questions”. Last year, we created boxes in which they could write their big questions

that they would like to discuss with us. Based on the Year 6 students, we know we will have some interesting discussions.

The man who stands on eggs

Just before Christmas, Paul was in church when a pupil from a local school came up to him and asked "Are you the man who stands on eggs?" A few weeks later, two siblings from the same school were discussing assemblies with Paul. They were recounting assemblies we had taken over the years, many of which Paul had forgotten. After a while, one of the siblings said, "All the best assemblies are done by Youth for Christ".

Over the autumn term, we were involved in nineteen assemblies in three different primary schools. In total, these schools have over 600 students. During the Spring term, we will deliver another sixteen, with a possibility of more being added in a fourth school.

These assemblies are all part of the



Paul really does stand on eggs!

schools' Collective Worship programme. One school recently had an inspection in which our input into collective worship was recognised. We want our assemblies to be fun and memorable. Collective Worship should engage students and make them think. The Inspection guidelines for church schools talk about collective worship helping pupils and adults to appreciate the relevance of faith in today's world, to encounter the teachings of Jesus and the Bible. We do this through standing on eggs, playing quizzes and games, retelling Bible stories and carrying out science experiments. All the while, the students and staff are engaged and having fun. If a student can tell us about an assembly a year ago, and

remember what the message was, we are pretty pleased!

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Over recent years, we have generated a small but steady income from Smile. Amazon. Unfortunately, from February, this scheme is stopping. As a result we are once again using "Give as you live". If you shop online, you can probably help us raise funds at no cost to yourself. Whether you are shopping for insurance, clothes, pet food, holidays or even doing your grocery shop, the chances are you can help us raise funds. You will need to register with "Give as you Live" using the QR code or the link below.

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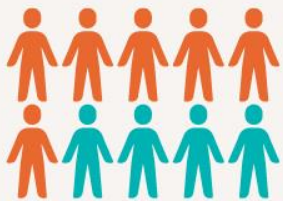
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AUTUMN TERM UNWRAPPED

2022



15

The number of young people who have attended the Bournside Christian Union since it restarted

21

Assemblies and RE lessons delivered since September

624

Students who attended assemblies



400

An approximate estimate of the number of coffees we have drank at work!

4

Church youth groups visited or worked with

4500

Approximate number of interactions with young people



Make a splash

Thinking of taking a gap year? Want to stay local? Join us.

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 splash for God.

Get in touch with us to find out more.



Afternoon tea

There are not many things that can beat an afternoon tea. Fresh sandwiches, a selection of handmade cakes, scones and jam with clotted cream and some good tea or coffee.

On 25th March, we will be holding a Youth for Christ Afternoon Tea, when you can come and sample some excellent fayre. Last years event went down very well, and we know you won't be disappointed.

We can provide vegetarian and gluten free alternatives upon request.

It will be held at Cheltenham Elim, 115 St.

George's Road, Cheltenham, GL50 3ED on 25th March from 3-6pm. Different time slots are available upon booking. The price for adults is £12 and children under 14 are £8.

Afternoon tea



To book your place for the afternoon tea visit www.ticketsource.co.uk/youth-for-christ-goucestershire or by using the QR Code

Yetti

Yetti, may sound like the abominable snowman, but it is also a game by Youth for Christ. Our wonderful resources department have created it as a way to engage young people as they consider aspects of life and faith. It can be used in a variety of ways, in total there are seven games. We have used it with our Underground youth group to help us learn to listen to God's voice. We think it is such a great resource that we are giving a copy away to all the churches who support our work.



Hanna playing Yetti



A long walk home



A member of the team who works away quietly in the background is Geraldine. As our bookkeeper, she manages our finances, playing an important behind the

scenes role. She recently has decided to take on a challenge throughout lent in order to help raise funds to support young people. Throughout the forty days of Lent, Geraldine will walk 4 kilometres (2.5 miles) per day. Over the forty days of Lent, it will add up to over 300,000 steps. Geraldine intends to walk most of these steps alongside her dog Alfie. She hopes to raise £400 towards our work. If you would like to sponsor her, please visit the link or use the QR code.

Geraldine's Lent Walk



To sponsor Geraldine, please visit

<https://rebrand.ly/kwb1swu>
or use the QR Code

Get up and walk

Do you like walking? If so, we have a challenge for you. During May, we are gathering a group of walkers together to walk from Broadway to our office in Cheltenham to raise funds to develop our work. The walk is 18 miles, and would be walked in one day. We are doing this on Saturday 20th May. If you would like to

consider walking with us, please contact the office, using the details on the back page. It will be a challenging but fun walk. We are looking to raise funds to develop our work in schools across Gloucestershire. Please join us and make a difference to a young person.

Back to School

In September, Hanna was able to restart the Bournside Christian Union in partnership with the youth worker from St Matthew's Church, Becca. It was their first time back in the school since the outbreak of the pandemic.

We regularly see eight students on a Monday after school, sometimes the number doubles! This is mainly because the young people have started inviting their friends to come along, which has been encouraging.



Hanna and Becca heading into Bournside School

A few weeks into term, Paul received an email from parents, who had just taken a tour of the school and, by coincidence, seen the CU flyer. Two of their children were going to be attending Bournside, and they had been praying for them to be able to link up with other Christians. Both siblings turned up a day later at the CU, despite it being their first day at school. They have come along regularly ever since, and it's been nice to see them form friendships with the other students in the group.

Anyone for coffee

It is no secret that we as a team like our coffee! In our Autumn Term Unwrapped, we estimated that we drank 400 coffees during work last term. There is a distinct possibility that this estimate could be too low! We also like good coffee and want it to be ethically sourced. We have developed a relationship with a coffee company based in North Devon, who are producing coffee on our behalf. This means that you can buy a high quality coffee, secure in the knowledge that it is ethically sourced. You can even read about the farmers who have supplied the coffee. As you sip your morning brew, you will also be making a difference to the lives of young people. All the work is handled by the coffee company, who then pass on a donation for each bag sold.

Steve Nuth, the owner of Dancing Road Coffee said "Five years ago, I learnt

enough about filmmaking to tell the story of how coffee can be used to fund and facilitate mission. I was able to visit a mountain region in Uganda where coffee was being sold in order to fund, Christian mission, education and healthcare. I came back to the UK with a fire in my heart to try and bring their coffee to sell in the UK. It is exciting to work with Youth for Christ Gloucestershire, so that the profits made from every transaction from farm to cup helps to fund the spreading of the good news of Jesus."

You can buy the coffee in individual bags as beans or ground coffee. You can also set up a regular subscription order. With five coffees to choose from, you can try to find your favourite.

You will be able to sample them at the afternoon tea.



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.

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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 week at 9.30am Monday and Thursday mornings 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, 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.

February

12th Grid Youth Group
16th Underground young leaders
24-26th The Big Weekender

May

13th The Tandem Challenge
18th Underground young leaders
20th Cotswold Walk

March

12th Grid Youth group
16th Underground young leaders
25th Afternoon Tea
26th Grid Youth group

June

15th Underground young leaders

Donate by text

Text YOUTH followed by your donation amount to 70490 to give that amount. E.g. Youth 20 to donate £20

Texts will cost the donation amount plus one standard network rate message, and you'll be opting into hearing more from us. If you would like to donate but don't wish to hear more from us, please text YOUTHNOINFO instead.



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 below:



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07855 408068



Hanna Stürcken
Church Partnership Youth Worker
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