



Faith Words Action

Kidbrooke and Eltham Mission Greenwich Centre of Mission

Dear kind friends,



Some family news - Starting with the youngest, Samuel (10), who is good at maths and science and preparing to go to secondary school. He far too often beats his Dad at chess. Isabelle (13) is flourishing especially at art and textiles, but is also a competent all-rounder, now coping better with maths. Dance is a favourite and she wants a dog - but not while she has guinea pigs! Both are better climbers than me now!

Helen is working flat out as a year 1 teacher qualifying on the job, often preparing late into the night and getting up very early, finding it rewarding as well as stretching.

We now have 3 fresh expressions of church, including a youth church, as well as our Sunday morning Communion. Improving attendance is hard work for all, but the new Christians in our fresh expressions are learning fast, even if the behaviour of children and young people can be a bit wild! We have an open questioning/debating style of teaching, which makes it easier to understand where people are in faith. Our vulnerable adults have a well-established faith.

Many of the people we are working with are in the 3-5% most deprived communities in the UK. Superkidz youth work remains very challenging in a deprived environment where very young mothers often suffer from anxiety and depression and self-medicate with ever-present illegal drugs, while drug dealers recruit especially from among children with disturbed behaviour who have been excluded from school. Bad behaviour invariably comes from abuse or neglect or disturbing experiences of domestic violence.



We are making progress and a number of very damaged young offenders are now in employment. Construction site qualifications (far left) are a help to many. We maintain links with others in prison. Knife crime (especially drug gang related) is ever-present, and we provide anti-knife training.

**DON'T CARRY A KNIFE BECAUSE**

- A KNIFE FIGHT IS MORE LIKELY IF YOU DO
- A KNIFE FIGHT WILL DEFINITELY END IN SERIOUS INJURY OR DEATH
- YOU COULD GET ARRESTED YOURSELF AND JAILED
- IT IS BETTER TO LET YOURSELF BE ROBBED AND TRY TO REMEMBER AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE ABOUT THE ROBBER FOR THE POLICE LATER



We are mentoring young mothers and teenage girls at risk of under-age pregnancy. Greenwich Borough has the second fastest growth rate in London for under-age pregnancy, and some children can be very at risk of abuse or neglect when born to struggling young mums putting their hope of happiness in boyfriends who may be violent as a result of their own upbringing. Drugs to deal with anxiety and depression create more poverty and enrich the dealers. Children under these circumstances can be the future violent offenders of our estates.

Our local employees - "Local Leaders"- now number over 20 and receive training in self-employment and in return help us in an extraordinary way to understand more deeply the issues facing them and the young people in their communities. They have transformed our approach, and are constantly growing in competence and leadership. Often young people will listen to them rather than us who have not experienced their troubles and problems. Two are ex- young offenders, and have special influence on boys vulnerable to recruitment into drug dealing, an ever-present danger.

The other half of our work is prevention, starting with our mothers' and toddlers' groups, where some carers struggle to parent, and then our children's clubs where we teach children perseverance and build up self-worth. Our youth club mentoring keeps young people from giving up on or being expelled from mainstream school. The aim is to do all this in a caring, fun environment and replace negative outlooks with positive ones.



Over 100 at each children's party!



Homework at junior youth club

Thank you for your prayers and support, and a very Happy Christmas and blessed 2020!

*Nick Russell*