

Autumn 2018



Working in Partnership to take the Good News relevantly to every young person in Swindon.

Over the next few pages you will see, hear the hearts of people and experience the changes that are going on at Swindon Youth for Christ. In the past 10 years we have been on a journey that has seen the gospel shared with ten's of thousands of children and young people on the streets and schools right across Swindon and Wiltshire.

- We have seen children and young people from all walks of life, backgrounds and ethnicities experience the love of Jesus, and through working with churches we have been able to do more than simply by ourselves;
- Through your love, prayers and financial support you have enabled us to engage with teachers, community workers, police, shop keepers and charities throughout Wiltshire;
- You have hosted interns, supported events, sponsored crazy team members on physical challenges, attended quiz nights, kicked footballs and threw netballs in the sports competitions;
- Together we have put on music concerts, kitted out buses and mobile youth clubs, employed staff, taken on gap years, and met with various members of the royal family.

All these things have been amazing and have effectively reached people with the gospel but now we sense a shift, a change, and a calling to engage with young people in a slightly different way. Take a journey through these pages and you will read how peoples lives have been changed by Christ, and how He is also calling Swindon Youth for Christ to change with the culture here within Wiltshire.



Your New Good News Magazine.



Insight into Swindon Youth for Christ

Synergy update

Over the past 12 months Swindon Youth for Christ have partnered with churches in the *Good news for Swindon* network to facilitate and provide a Swindon wide sports and faith event for young people called *Synergy*. God is so good as the event has now been able to move location to a dedicated 5 a-side football academy, which helps us to facilitate the event much better for the young people attending. This event brings together 120+ young people represented by 10+ churches, to have fun through sport, and encounter God through testimony and worship. Recently one youth leader mentioned how they had brought some young people to the event who had never been to church before. Since hearing the testimony and worship, they have started going to their local church and have decided to get baptised. It's so good to be a part of something where young people are having their faith refreshed, and others come to know Him for the first time.

The next event is taking place on 14/9/18—check out facebook Swindon Synergy Events for more info.

“This event brings together 120+ young people represented by 10+ churches, to have fun... and encounter God through testimony and worship”

In:School

We continue to be thankful for the ways in which in:School and the local Churches are partnering together and how different this looks with each church and school in Swindon we work with. We continue to create brand new partnerships with a churches and schools over in the Rodbourne area and also develops partnerships over in the Parks area. Dates are already in the diary for Assemblies focusing on Forgiveness, Trust, Perseverance and Freedom.

We remain thankful for the doors that God continues to open in the primary schools, the opportunities that we are given and entrusted with, the many ways in which sharing the good news is possible, the number of seeds sown and the ways in which we as Christians are working together to further Gods Kingdom.

Lifepath 2018

In our previous newsletter we were able to announce the exciting news of lifepath running for a fourth year. It has been really encouraging over the past few months to see schools really keen to book on earlier than previous years and also the increase in number of church volunteers keen to take part. We can now confirm that we had 14 primary schools from in and around Swindon attending the event and over 500 children from year 5 who were able to experience a fantastic RE school trip! The dates for Lifepath this year were Monday 25th, Tuesday 26th and Wednesday 27th June when the schools arrived and spent a day at Malmesbury Abbey surrounded by a whole host of Christian volunteers learning about the Christian faith.

Please do continue to pray for children that they remember about how the Christian faith has made a difference in so many individual's lives over the past few thousand years—and can make a difference in theirs today also.

“14 primary schools ...and over 500 children from year 5 who were able to experience a fantastic RE school trip!”



Good News Stories

What a secondary school Christian Union looks like? - Dave Clarke

Recently Ben and I were leading a lunch club where we talk about life issues and share the Christian faith as part of this. One lunch time we simply decided to write, "Is there a God?" on the white board and leave it. For some reason we only had one girl attend who's only singular word spoken with disgust was "No" at the direction of the white board.

Over the next 30 minutes Ben was able to explore why she held these views and why she believed in Heaven, Hell, the devil but not God. Following this, the girl spoke about her "Spiritual experiences" and stated that God couldn't exist because there were so many faiths and there couldn't simply be just one God. Ben was then able to take an opportunity to share the differences between world faiths and Christianity, and completely opened her eyes to the good news of Jesus.

With the lunch bell looming, she asked Ben, "If prayer is real, and God really uses prayer; without looking in the bible give me a reference that talks about prayer." Having recently been talking about memorising bible verses in team devotions the week previously, Ben had committed a verse about prayer to memory and therefore recited this verse to her. It was fair to say when she looked up the passage in the bible she was gobsmacked. We are so thankful for opportunities like these to share the gospel with young people and God interweaves our plans with His in marvellous ways.

"...when she looked up the passage in the bible she was gobsmacked"

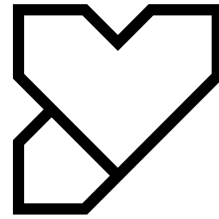
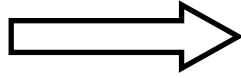
In:School - Working with girls—Abi Corry

This year, mentoring sessions started with a couple of girls from one of the local primary schools. Each session would be weekly and would last around 40 minutes. The sessions would include questions cards to get to know each other better, an interactive prop bag to encourage the girls to talk about how their week had been, some creative activities and then a focus activity on an issue they had were facing. This has been beneficial for the girls as a group but also on a personal level. The feedback from the girls is that they find the mentoring really helpful and fun. They like that they can talk about their feelings and that they are being listened to and they feel that the sessions calm them down before they go back into class. On a personal level as my heart continues to grow with compassion for these girls. It has cemented for me some of the strains and stresses that they are facing right now in 2018.

The Kindness club was launched in January 2018 as a way of supporting a school with an ethos that they wanted to strongly focus on in their school. The club was set up for a number of year 6 girls who would benefit from looking at some focused themes around friendship and consequences but also to encourage them to be positive role models in their school. It has been great meeting regularly with the girls to gain insight into the challenges they are facing. When we meet with the girls, both I and Naomi (gap year to Simon Halls @Shine Pinehurst) eat lunch, chat, have fun, listen but also challenge the girls with a Thursday thought; this might focus on empathy, judgment, the power of words etc and ultimately show kindness to them but also a big part of the club is to do random acts of kindness throughout the school. In the week leading up to Valentine's day we gave out red hearts, with words of affirmation on, to 400 children and staff members and in the week leading up to Easter the girls gave out Plastic Easter eggs with little Easter notes inside. The girls are really enjoying a place where they feel safe, listened to, get to know and spend time with girls that they might not necessarily mix with otherwise and where they can really be themselves. In addition to that, they love the opportunity they have been given to be kind to others in a practical and effective way.

"...they love the opportunity they have been given to be kind in a big, practical and effective way."

Swindon Youth for Christ gets A face lift.



Swindon
**YOUTH
FOR CHRIST**

As a national organisation, Youth for Christ is going through a change and therefore this also effects Swindon. For many years when the abbreviation YFC has been typed into the internet search bar one of the top results that appears as 'Young Farmers Club'. Now there is a big problem with this as we are certainly not farmers! We also believe that it is time for us place 'Christ' back at the centre of everything we do—which includes the symbol. Our symbol therefore holds some keys to telling our story and reason why we exist. Our symbol is made up of a heart and a 'y'. We represent God's heart, and we are about seeing young people's lives changed by Jesus. Our symbol is a visual representation of the reason we exist.

In everything we do we aim to be:

Courageous: Empowering, taking a step of faith, growth

Helpful: Reliable, supportive and nurturing

Relational: Dignity, love, compassion for individuals and groups

Innovative: Creative, pioneers and explorers

Spiritual: Committed, dependent and energetic

Together: United in our mission and value mutual partnerships

In everything we do, CHRIST needs to be at the centre of it..

So what are we doing about it?

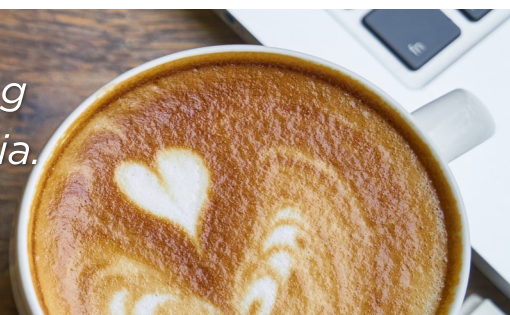
We are continuing to move to a model where EVERYTHING we do in Swindon will include the local church. Our strategy is about enabling the local church to fulfil it's mission within its local context. Were as far the church is simply unable to fulfil these desires i.e.—schools work, this is were Swindon Youth for Christ will fill in the gaps. There is an intentionality to our mission that works with the local church to build, and to seek and save the lost. We choose to work directly with churches so when young people wish to explore faith further, there are relationships and youth group structures that these individuals can easily become a part of.

*“We are about seeing
young people's lives
changed by Jesus.”*

*If you want to hear more about the changes taking
place, head over to the website or our social media.*

www.syfc.org.uk

[@swindonyfc](https://www.instagram.com/swindonyfc)



We're all about seeing
young people's lives
changed by Jesus.



Swindon
**YOUTH
FOR CHRIST**

Kick-starting the future with Sports Ministry

Over the past few years we as an organisation have been thrilled to work with literally thousands of young people through different projects. In the Autumn of 2013 SYFC launched the BIOS mobile youth club project that meant we could effectively reach those individuals who would be within the community but who wouldn't want to engage with the church; it was an incarnational ministry. Over the past 5 years the organisation and project evolved, particularly in the early days it was revolutionary winning both national and local youth work awards. With the launch of BIOS SPORTS in September 2017 - a sports-based project that aims to connect the church and the community - the mobile van is becoming less fundamental to the work as relationships are the significant factor for why the young people may meet us on the streets.



As we sought God for the future, we have started to see the increasing fruit from the sports ministry and believe that God is taking us into a new season using sport as a vehicle for faith.

We have therefore taken a huge step of faith and decided to retire the BIOS van and purchase a smaller van which aids the direction of the sports-based ministry. This new van will still have a physical presence in the community with lights and sound, however it will be a vehicle that enables this incarnational ministry to flourish further.

We would like to thank all who enabled the BIOS van to become a reality, those who volunteered upon it and those who prayed for the young people it met.

We ask that you would join with us again in prayer as we excitedly press into all that God has for us in this new sports ministry.

So what's happening to the previous van?



We have made inroads to see whether other Christian based ministries would be interested in purchasing the vehicle as a complete project. We have a few very positive leads, and therefore the van will be going on to reach thousands of other young people around the country with the gospel.

So it is with a heavy heart that we will be saying goodbye to the BIOS van, however we are excited to see how God will continue to grow more fruit from the recently launched BIOS SPORTS project.

Sports tournaments—Fraser Carter

In January and July this year, we organised some 5-a-side football tournaments as a means of marking the start to SYFC's movement for BIOS to be heading in the sports arena. We specifically invited churches to be involved in the event as an opportunity for them to invite members of their own local community. In January we were ambushed heavy rain, but thanks to Owen Green (The Stowe) and Simon Halls (SHINE Pinehurst), we were able to provide cover from the storms under some additional gazebos; however July was another story with stonking sunshine! Before the tournaments kicked off, Fraser explained to everyone who SYFC were and the purpose of the BIOS Sports project. We then prayed for the tournament as well as everyone there and then it got underway. 24 teams entered the tournaments from various age groups ranging from 7 years old up to late 50's.

The teams came from all over Swindon involving churches such as: Bible Society (who won the January tournament), Discovery Church, Holy Rood (who won the July tournament), The Stowe, Gorse Hill, Freshbrook Church, Rodbourne Cheney Baptist. This is certainly something we hope to see happen again potentially in the form of a youth residential in the future as it provided an opportunity for churches to invite their local community to.

In's and Out's... Team News

Life on the staff team is never a dull moment and when you live life in faith it also means that God can call people on at any time. It is therefore both sad but exciting about the news that we can share with you.

Welcome...

We are excited to be welcoming Nathan Nocar, and Andrew Fraser into the Swindon Youth for Christ family for the year as part of their gap year. Check out what they have to say below.

Nathan Nocar

Hello from Baltimore, Maryland, U.S.A.! My name is Nathan and I am a 20 year old guy who is looking forward to starting a year-long journey with YFC in September 2018. I have worked quite a bit with the young people in my area and at my church and can't wait to serve the youth in the United Kingdom as part of *The Year Out* program. The opportunities that I will have to connect with young people are amazing. I am excited to see their lives changed by Jesus and for others to grow in their faith as I develop my own walk with God. As someone who has spent very little time out of Baltimore, I am excited (and a little nervous) about working in the United Kingdom. I know this part of God's plan for me (Jer. 29:11), and am hoping you will support me in prayer before, during, and after this experience.



Andrew Fraser

Hi! My name is Andrew, I'm 18 years old and I'm from Prestwick - a town in Ayrshire on the southwest coast of Scotland. I'm incredibly excited (and of course a little nervous) to be coming to serve our Father, King and Rescuer in Swindon over the coming year as part of YFC's programme 'The Year Out'. I can't wait to see how God will use me as a vessel to connect with and build relationships with the young people of Swindon and through them represent to Swindon the endless, unprejudiced, limitless, unfailing love of our Father. I also hope to be sharing the good news with young people for the rest of my life and so I not only view this coming year as solely a work to be done with the young people that I'll meet in the next year but also as an investment into all of the young people that I will have the opportunity of sharing the gospel with throughout the rest of my life.



Good-bye's...

Fraser Carter

It's with a heavy heart that we say goodbye to Fraser Carter at the end of Aug 2018. Fraser is getting married in September and both he and his wife feel God's calling to be in Reading. Fraser started with Swindon Youth for Christ in Sept 2017, pioneering the BIOS SPORTS project as has helped us 'kick-off' what sports ministry could look like within Swindon. Both Fraser and Ashanti (Fraser's soon to be wife) are really excited to see how God will use them in Reading and beyond, but please pray for them as they begin their life as Mr and Mrs Carter.



Meet a team member.

Name: Chris Davison

Role: Finance Officer

What are your hobbies?: Reading, Gardening, Watching most sports



What do you do on a weekly basis

for SYFC?: I'm employed for a few hours each week to look after the day to day finance of SYFC, to record gifts, pay bills and ensure the accounts balance! I work alongside Gavin the SYFC Trustee who is the Treasurer, to produce budgets and end of year accounts

Why do you do what you do?: I am a 'behind the scenes' kind of person and have worked for SYFC since Dec 2001 in various administrative capacities. The reason I do what I do is because I am passionate about Jesus, young people and about empowering and facilitating others. So what better way to combine these passions than to use my gifts and skills working for a Christian youth charity whose creative and innovative staff and volunteers use all that God has given them to reach out to young people with the gospel.

How have you seen God move through your

role?: During my time a SYFC we have had times of plenty and times of not knowing how we were going to pay the staff at the end of the month but through it all God has been faithful and we have been blessed with many generous supporters - individuals, churches and organisations without whom the work would not be possible and I would not have a job!

Getting dirt under our finger nails

On the 13th-14th July Dave, Ben and Fraser (with the help of Ben's dad as driver) attempted and completed the national 3 peaks challenge to raise vital funds for the work of Swindon Youth for Christ. The challenge is to complete the combined walk of 23 miles on Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon (including the 460 mile drive) in 24hrs. We are proud to say they completed it in 23hrs and 50 mins. We also would like to thank you for your financial and prayerful support as they completed the challenge. You helped raised in excess of £3000 which will be poured into sharing the good news of Jesus with children and young people right across Swindon. We simply cannot thank you enough.

For more ways of how you can get involved or support the team in future events, check out the website, www.syfc.org.uk or contact the office on, office@syfc.org.uk.



We NEED your ongoing support.

The work of SYFC is **only made possible** by the amazing generosity of churches and individuals like yourselves and without it the organisation would simply not exist. Could you consider investing in the future ministry of SYFC? Perhaps you could consider becoming a monthly financial partner or send a special one-off gift to help us develop the work over the coming months. All you need to do is ask us for a Standing Order Form and return it to our PO Box address, **Or simply do it online...visit www.syfc.org.uk/donate and furthermore** if you are a tax payer we can even claim 20% of the sum donated back from HMRC.

COULD YOU OR YOUR HOMEGROUP SPONSOR A SESSION? £25 per month enables us to run...a School Lunch club, Assembly, Detached Youth work Session or RE lesson.

Every amount donated makes a significant impact to our work.....

KEEP IN TOUCH

Yes I would like to be kept informed about all the fantastic work of SYFC, please send me Newsletters, Updates and Emails.

Alternatively you can sign up online at www.syfc.org.uk



Name : _____

Address : _____

Postcode : _____

Email Address : _____

Phone Number : _____ Church Attended : _____

PLEASE SEND YOUR COMPLETED FORM TO: SYFC, PO Box 2352, Swindon, Wilts, SN2 1WE. THANKYOU.