

PARACHURCH NETWORK

REPORTING BACK



WHY ARE WE MEETING?

Colleagues have asked for a network which provides the following:

- Knowledge – help to develop a secure understanding of Growing Faith
- Research – opportunities to engage in research together and discuss it in the light of our work
- Sharing – opportunities to connect and share between parachurch organisations
- Diocesan links – access to dioceses and key stakeholders in the Church of England
- Critical reflection and challenge – opportunities to work together, to collaborate and to shape each other's work.



Wayne Dixon (Christian Connections in Schools) led us in prayer, thanking God for the opportunities we have to connect and serve together, and for the gift of collaboration. Wayne is a member of the network, and is involved in the emerging work around Serving The Local School.

"FOR JUST AS EACH OF US HAS ONE BODY WITH MANY MEMBERS, AND THESE MEMBERS DO NOT ALL HAVE THE SAME FUNCTION, SO IN CHRIST WE, THOUGH MANY, FORM ONE BODY, AND EACH MEMBER BELONGS TO ALL THE OTHERS. WE HAVE DIFFERENT GIFTS, ACCORDING TO THE GRACE GIVEN TO EACH OF US. IF YOUR GIFT IS PROPHEYSYING, THEN PROPHESEY IN ACCORDANCE WITH YOUR FAITH; IF IT IS SERVING, THEN SERVE; IF IT IS TEACHING, THEN TEACH; IF IT IS TO ENCOURAGE, THEN GIVE ENCOURAGEMENT; IF IT IS GIVING, THEN GIVE GENEROUSLY; IF IT IS TO LEAD, DO IT DILIGENTLY; IF IT IS TO SHOW MERCY, DO IT CHEERFULLY". (ROMANS 12)

We spent time in breakout rooms at the beginning of our session, catching up with each other, getting to know new people and improving our knowledge of each others' work. Feedback was that this informal time was really appreciated, and we noted as a group that the network has a really lovely, supportive atmosphere!

SINCE LAST TIME..

PARACHURCH DIRECTORY

The first edition of the GF Parachurch Network Directory is ready! Thanks to everyone who sent in a contribution. It comprises an Excel doc overview of contacts in the network, and a larger PDF file of further details including links to resources for each organisation. Please request access to these files by emailing hannah.persaud@churchpfengland.org.

TO NOTE: The directory will be updated again in April. If you have not submitted info to the directory, please do so here in order to be included in the next update.

DIOCESAN ADVISORS - CONTACT LIST

The children and youth advisors from each diocese have kindly given consent to a document sharing their contact details. Colleagues are reminded that it's for specific contact only, and not for mailing lists! Please request access to this document by emailing hannah.persaud@churchofengland.org



BOOK GROUP

Book group is happening on Thursday 2nd Feb 8:15-8:45am. We will be discussing **We need to talk about race** by Ben Lindsay. This is an informal meeting - if you need to come late/leave early/eat your breakfast/get our children ready for school in the background etc, please do! All welcome, whether or not you have read the book. Please email hannah.persaud@churchofengland.org for the Zoom code.

Starting Point

This group is a formation of thinking around engagement with young people who have yet to explore a faith in Christ.

We are seeking to:

Build a learning community for people called to be those who GO into the spaces and places young people connect.

To collate a support network and resources for those who do or would like to reach young people who are outside of a church context.

Relationally share ideas and experiences on what has worked in meaningfully approaching young people new to faith and church.

To join us please contact pkershaw@urbansaints.org

NEW SUB-GROUPS FROM THE NETWORK...

Exciting new work has started as colleagues in the network have begun collaborating. We heard about the following three emerging sub-groups. Please use the contact details below to find out more and join in!

Starting Point (Working with YP who have yet to explore faith)	Supporting small schools and small churches	Serving the local school
Aims: -to connect those who are in this field -learn and celebrate what work is going on -learn from one another what's working -identify gaps -consider if collaboration is possible with the potential of a one day conference or regional gatherings.	- Focus on resources which equip smaller contexts - Specialising in the particular needs, challenges and opportunities of these communities - Rural - Small estates	- Peer support network for people who are working (or would like to work) in their local school. - "How to serve your local school" resource for churches
Contact Pam Kershaw - pkershaw@urbansaints.org	Contact Becky May - becky@theresourcescupboard.co.uk	Contact Hannah.persaud@churchofengland.org to be put in touch with the right person!

INTRODUCTIONS



We met **Becky May** from The Resources Cupboard. Based in Bedfordshire, this organisation is on a mission to resource churches around the UK. Becky is a member of the Parachurch network and is leading the new group working on supporting small schools and churches. You can contact Becky for more info at becky@theresourcescupboard.co.uk



We also met **Dom Conidi** who is a Mission Team Leader at Scripture Union. Dom has been a headteacher for many years, living out Growing Faith in his local community, and is passionate about people, evangelism, discipleship, learning, and teaching. Dom is part of the 'Supporting the Local School' group in our network. You can contact him at DomC@scriptureunion.org.uk

WHAT IS THE PLACE OF FAMILIES IN CHURCH POST-COVID?

Perspectives of children, parents and church leaders in the UK



RESEARCH CORNER...

Together as a network we discussed Dr Sarah Holmes' latest paper *"What is the places of families in church post-Covid?"*. Colleagues in the network who specialise in parenting and faith had an open conversation about the research and gave some really helpful insights. Following some further discussion in breakout rooms, Dr Sarah took questions and we had some helpful discussions about how this research might shape the work of our organisations and the collaborative efforts of our network as a whole.

RESEARCH UNPACKED



Ed Drew
(Faith in Kids))



Claire Burton
(Kitchen Table Project)



Clare Walker
(Home for Good)



Anna Hawken
(Parenting for Faith)



Andy Frost
(Share Jesus)

"Parents and churches believe there should be a partnership - this is a positive thing!"

"This research highlights a disconnect between parents and church leaders which is stronger than we are comfortable with."

"Expectations around Sundays and behaviour come through...this is something which needs culture change".

"Parents and carers are the resource! We need to invest in them!"

"Worksheets were a great way to facilitate doorstep contact during the pandemic, which was important - parents clearly appreciate relationship above all else. But in and of themselves, they did not come out as useful. How might our resources support parents in their role?"

"Relationship is so key when thinking about children who have experienced trauma. These children may not remember the detail of what they're taught in church, but they will definitely remember how they are made to feel, and this will affect whether or not they return."

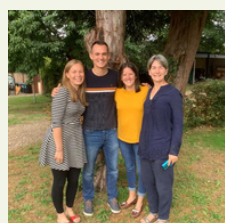
"What's the shared vision? How do we release kids into faith? What structure do we have that enables? How do we create a culture where faith can flourish?"

We need to look afresh at what we do and why."

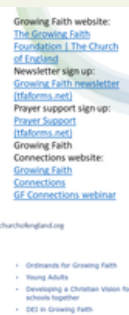
"Based on this research we reframed one of our resources to be more about the community and conversation and less about the content"
Anna Hawken - Parenting for Faith

"How do we change church culture to ensure that without feeling judged, families are encouraged to make firm commitments to meeting together with other Christians. Surely investing in our church family is one of the most important things families can do to ensure that children feel invested in and connected to their brothers and sisters in Christ and responsibility towards one another."
Lizzie Harewood - ACT

NEWS FROM THE GROWING FAITH FOUNDATION...



There is loads of news this month, with hubs, programmes and new networks all up and running. This slide (right) will be sent out in the post-meeting network. You can also request a copy by emailing hannah.persaud@churchofengland.org - and do contact me if you'd like more info on anything mentioned!



GET IN TOUCH!



Hannah is the Networks Lead at the Growing Faith Foundation. She would love to hear from you!

Is there something you'd like to collaborate on? Did someone or something resonate with you in the breakout room? **Please email hannah.persaud@churchofengland.org to be connected with colleagues who share an interest in these, or other ideas.**