

A photograph of two young children, a boy and a girl, sitting at a desk and looking at a laptop. Both children have their mouths wide open in expressions of excitement or surprise. The boy on the left is wearing a dark blue shirt with a patterned scarf. The girl on the right is wearing a green and white striped shirt. A large white circle is superimposed over the center of the image, containing the text 'SBC KIDS'.

**SBC
KIDS**

**2020
Annual
Report**

SOUTH C**OURT**
BAPTIST CHURCH



Welcome

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Iain Nash

Children's Pastor

Welcome to our 2020/21 Annual Report.

March 2020 seems such a long time ago now doesn't it. All of a sudden all our plans for the year were thrown up in the air and we had to quickly change how the Children's work would run.

Regular events such as Messy Church and The Ark Parent and Toddler group had to stop, as well as being able to meet each Sunday for our Lifekidz groups.

We quickly learned new video editing skills in order to keep our regular content going via online platforms such as Facebook, What's App and You Tube and over time, we realised the importance of staying connected with one another through these various means.

Fast forward 12 months, and what a ride it's been. We are hopefully starting to see the gradual lifting of restrictions and hopefully the start of getting back to some normality. However, this period of time has shown me the value of reassessing what we do and looking at opportunities to potentially change things or refine things going forward.

I am immensely proud of what we have been able to do this past 12 months under the circumstances. I really feel that we tried hard to keep in contact with each other and provide space and opportunities for the children to stay connected with one another and stay connected to God. I hope and pray the children are more deep rooted in God than ever before, and have grown in their faith throughout this pandemic.

I hope this report will highlight the great things we did this year, and give you hope that God is doing some amazing things in the children's lives and will continue to bless us as we move forward into the future.

Iain

Little Lifekidz (2 to 5 years)



Michelle and the team took the Little Lifekidz sessions online via a parent's What's App group. Every Sunday, one of the team prepares a short video with an acted out story, a song and a prayer. The team really try to make sure each child on our register is mentioned by name which is a lovely touch that adds that element of personal connection.

During the year, the team have done sessions on some of the following:

- God Is...?
- Noah/Samuel/Abraham
- Christmas
- Things Jesus did
- Lazarus

Lifekidz

(5 to 10 years)

Lifekidz went online with a 30 minute magazine style session led by Iain and Helen, with contributions from various members of the Lifekidz team.

Last Easter, we looked at the Faith in Kids “Wonder of Easter” material which had a weekly podcast that the children could listen to. We then used a resource called Kids@Essence, which was was 6 sessions encouraging children to explore spirituality and the Christian faith. We rounded off the academic year looking at the various things Jesus said he was and then did some extra sessions through August called “The Big Q” where Lifekidz leaders answered some tough questions children often ask about God and the Christian faith.

Since September, we have been looking at the theme of Deep Roots and Growth in Ephesians 3: 17 and using a curriculum called “Heartshaper” which takes the group through key themes in the Bible, encouraging a life long love of scripture and helping children to see how God can grow and shape their lives. Since January, these sessions have been on Zoom because we all really missed being able to see each others faces. We had a short period where we were back in the room together, so we look forward to being able to do this again really soon.



Messy Church

The only Messy Church we were able to do was in February 2020 where we did a morning on The Prodigal Son and had 265 people come along.

We tried to do a Messy Church Online over Easter, but interest in the session was minimal for the creative effort put in. What this has shown us is that when it comes to Messy Church, people really value the physical being together and the event on the morning.

Having this time of enforced hiatus has provided time to really look at the Messy Church values and re-evaluate what it is about, why we do it and how we can walk on the journey of faith with such large numbers. Although large numbers are wonderful, often it can be impossible to be intentional with so many people and maintain strong relationships. This may be a time to change things and do something on a smaller scale, especially if we have to do things socially distant and with restrictions in place.



A young child with curly hair, wearing a red dress with a Minnie Mouse graphic, is standing in a playroom. The child is holding a colorful ring toy. The floor is covered with various toys, including a wooden train set, a yellow toy truck, and a blue elephant. The background shows a green play structure and other toys.

The Ark

Parent & Toddler Group

We had really started to see growth in this group before it had to stop because of the pandemic. We were regularly getting between 20 and 30 parents, carers and childminders with their children coming each week to spend time chatting with one another and using the time to engage in play with their children.

Over time, we had been making small tweaks to the programme and the set up - introducing singing a mix of nursery rhymes and songs from Lifekidz together with a story time from the bible each week. We also invested in some new equipment and soft foam mats and removed the charge for tea, coffee, biscuits and snacks.

During lockdown, Iain did a few singing and story times via facebook:LIVE and the SBC Kids You Tube channel to keep in contact with children and families.

Just before lockdown, I went to visit another parent and toddler group at a church in Aylesbury to gain fresh ideas and ways of running the session.

We are hopeful we will be able to start back up again and try some of these new ideas.

SPREE Central Weekend Away



Our trips to SPREE in 2018 and 2019 had been a huge success, giving children in Lifekidz and younger youth a chance to go away together on a Christian camp in preparation or an alternative to Soul Survivor.

In 2019, we had seen young people who had come along to our younger youth groups give their lives to God and our Lifekidz sharing in a tent full of children pictures given to them by God.

However, because of the pandemic, both 2020 and 2021 SPREE weekends had to be cancelled, quite understandably.

Nevertheless, we look forward in anticipation to SPREE being announced again in the future and building on the success of going to this wonderful weekend of fun and celebration.

The Treehouse Pre-School

The last 12 months saw the pre-school go through some big changes, especially with regards to staff. We said thank you and goodbye to both Sylvia and Janice who have moved on to new job opportunities and family responsibilities and we also said goodbye to Claire, our pre-school manager, after over 20 years of dedicated service and hard work at the pre-school.

While we were sad to see them go, we embraced a new chapter in the life of the pre-school as God blessed us with new staff members. We welcomed both Laura and Neelam who have settled in well and we were delighted to welcome Rachel Neal as our new pre-school lead to develop the work Claire had done. Rachel in particular comes to us with lots of experience in early years and especially excels in leadership and management after recently locating to Aylesbury with her family from Chesham. Rachel and her family worship at a church in Amersham.

Numbers of children are currently looking really healthy and God has continued to bless us with numerous grants from the local authority. We have finally managed to get the water board to do maintenance work on a collapsed drain over the road from us that has a knock on effect on our drains, and Bucks Council also agreed to fund replacement windows that had cracked. We were also pleased to be able to open during lockdown for children of key workers and we did not have to furlough any staff.

Iain continues to go into pre-school regularly with Colin the Crocodile to do singing and bible stories with the children.



Schools Work



Iain has built up fantastic relationships with Oak Green School, St. Edward's Catholic Junior School and Ashmead School by going in and doing regular school assemblies and classroom presentations about the Christian faith and important Christian artifacts that help us worship.

Sadly, due to the pandemic and with schools closing and restricting movement of people in and around their premises, I have not been able to go in.

I did however put a video together of a tour of our church building, showing some of the important things we do for the children at Oak Green School to watch in their classroom and enjoy.

Parenting for Faith

The Course

In January 2020, we launched our first ever Parenting for Faith course. Based on the book “Parenting Children for a Life of Faith”, the course was to help parents discover that they are perfectly positioned to show their children the reality of a life with God and to empower them to have their own vibrant two-way relationship with God.

We had 9 people on the course who came every week for the 8 week duration. Mum’s, Dad’s, Grandparents and Children’s Workers and also couples who were able to watch the course videos from home.

We really felt hugely encouraged to share our faith with our children and model it to them, creating windows for them into how we do faith each and every day. We also had people hearing from God for the first time and times of encouragement and prayer ministry together.



Our Volunteers

A Huge Thank You

Without the dedication, hard work and heart that our volunteers have for seeing children and their families grow in their faith and the willingness they have to walk with them on their journey of discovering God, the children's work simply would not happen.

I would particularly like to thank Michelle Geering and Helen Bithell who have been a real source of inspiration when it comes to bouncing off practical ideas, planning and praying into where God is leading the Children's work and for supporting me. I would also like to thank Bex Boughton who stepped in to help lead when we were short.

To all our leaders and volunteers - I honestly can't thank you enough.

LIFEKIDZ: Helen Bithell, David Finn, Lizzie Belson, Matilda Belson, Chris Blunden, Ashleigh Gonera, Ruth Miller, Beth Miller, Dave Newman, Katy Hudson, Claire Ramsbottom

LITTLE LIFEKIDZ: Michelle Geering, Becky Robinson, Joy Barnes, Liandra Wessels, Imogen Bithell, Simon Briars, Martin and Yusandra Manser, Janie Gadsden, Claire Belcher

MESSY CHURCH: Errrr... too many people to mention but if you have helped in any capacity, you're an amazing team and I am so blessed to work with you.

THE ARK: Tina Vaughan, Jeanette Hulcoop and Viv Cooling

PARENTING FOR FAITH: Lizzie Belson

TREEHOUSE PRE-SCHOOL: Rachel Neal, Caryn Groom, Lis Foster, Laura Burns, Neelam Ali, Carolyn Merrison, Karen Williams, Becky Robinson, Michelle Wicking, Claire and Terry Trimnell, David Finn



The Future...

Where Do We Go From Here?



One would be forgiven for thinking just getting back to normal would be a good start when thinking ahead to the future.

However, I am encouraged by what Paul wrote in Philippians (Chapter 3 versus 13 and 14) where he says “But one thing I do: forgetting what is behind and straining towards what is ahead, I press on towards the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus”.

One thing this pandemic has taught me is that anything is possible and that we should not stop dreaming dreams and finding new rhythms when it comes to the Children’s Work; I would rather run than walk once the restrictions are lifted.

I can’t wait to get things going again but feel we have an opportunity also to try new things and new ways of working that will build on the strength of what we have achieved so far.

Prayer

—Please pray for...

Prayer is so important and we are so blessed to know there are many people in our church family who regularly pray for our children and their families.

Please continue to pray for the following things in particular:

PRAY FOR OUR GROUPS

Please continue to pray for all the groups mentioned in this report and the leaders and volunteers who make these groups happen

PRAY FOR THE PRE-SCHOOL

Please pray for the Treehouse Pre-School. For Rachel as she leads with God's guidance and for the children in the local community who come to the pre-school each day. For the staff as they work closely with the children, protect their health and wellbeing.

PRAY FOR THE CHILDREN

Pray for all the children and their families who come to SBC; that they will continue to discover Jesus for themselves as they journey with him and chat to him each day and the joy of catching what he wants to say to them

PRAY FOR IAIN

Pray for Iain as he leads the Children's work. Pray for clear vision, for insight and strength to know and understand what God has in store for the future and implement it

PRAY FOR OPPORTUNITY

Pray for new ideas to be birthed and for courage to try new ideas in existing groups. Pray for new relationships with other Children's workers and leaders in Aylesbury.



sbckidsgroup



SBC Kids



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