



**SBC
YOUTH**

**2020
Annual
Report**



God centered • Purpose focused • People releasing



Welcome



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James Henson
Youth Pastor

Hi There,

Welcome to our 2020 annual report.

What a strange and challenging year this has been for us all hasn't it? Up and down the country churches and youth ministries have worked so hard to continue to get alongside young people in many new ways, whether its zoom hangouts, YouTube talks, livestreams and even some youth events being able to be in person!

However even through the online challenges, isolation, social distancing, face masks and so much more, God has shown us time and again that he is so much bigger than all of that and he will still meet us in our time of need.

Back in March when the first lockdown was announced we moved as much of our youth ministry as possible online, with the help of our amazing teams we were able to still provide content for young people to stay connected, supported and keep their faith fresh. Sadly however, there have been some key parts of our youth ministry that haven't been able to run due to the virus.

It has been a far from normal year for everyone with SBC Youth but one thing that hasn't changed is God goodness, his grace and his presence with us. We are so grateful to God for all that he has been doing in and through the youth ministry during the pandemic, some stories of which we are going to share with you in this report.

Thank you for all your continued support and prayers, standing by us and journeying with us as we seek to serve young people and share Gods love with them.

We are SBC Youth, and we are passionate about seeing young people come to know God and his love for them.

Ignite



For the last few years our midweek youth groups have been split into two groups: 'Edge' & 'Ignite'. These groups have been a key part of the week for many of our young people and we have had lots of great moments at these groups. However, we believe that now is the time for a change.

You may remember that early in 2020 we brought to your attention the plans for 'Central Cell' – A weekly event for all young people and youth groups across the churches in Aylesbury. Therefore, in September we decided to make a big change for our youthwork going forward to combine both our youth groups into one to join in with other youth groups in Aylesbury at Central Cell.

Since March we moved our youthwork online and a key staple of this online youth ministry has been Ignite, meeting each week for games, catch up and discussions about faith.

We asked some of the young people to give us their experience from Lockdown and what having Ignite meant to them.

“Thankfully, the first lockdown for me wasn’t too difficult, I didn’t do my GCSEs which was hard to process at first, but I was very grateful for the months off that I had and thankfully they all went well in the end. I found a lot of free time and spent a lot of it reading and learning the guitar.

I was struggling with my relationship with God at first, but then I found that one of the best things about lockdown was spending a lot more time worshipping and reading the Bible and reconnecting with God.

I struggled a lot with not seeing people, but having Ignite each week was a huge help and made me feel not so isolated and kept everyone connected.”

One positive learning point I would take from lockdown is that God is always there for us, I just wasn’t making the time for him, so being given a lot of time I realised this and realised how important my faith really is to me.”



Central Cell

You may remember at the start of 2020 we shared with the churches a vision from the CYLN (Christian Youth Leaders Network) for a combined youth event for all young people from the churches in Aylesbury. Our vision was to see young people come together each week, hanging out beyond the walls of our own churches and seeking to grow a Christian youth sub-culture in Aylesbury.





Central Cell Online



Alesbury Vale
**YOUTH
FOR CHRIST**

Each week we will meet together to hang out, open the Bible together, discuss questions and pray for one another. Sadly however, with the pandemic this vision is put on hold until meeting together as one group physically can be a reality.

We are excited to announce however that we will be launching in January 2021 'Central Cell Online'. Thanks to YouTube we can host a livestream each week to open the Bible, discuss questions and hang out together. The beautiful thing about the livestream is we can either meet in smaller, safer bubbles in our own churches in person or online together. So far this has been online over zoom but we look forward to the day we can be in the same room soon!

We are so excited about the possibilities of this new adventure together until we can all be in the same space as one community of young people from the churches in Aylesbury.

If you're a young person and would be interested in taking part in some of the questions on the livestream we would love to hear from you!

Youth Café



This last year has not been an easy one for the Youth Café. Sadly, since the start of the pandemic we have not been able to run Youth Café. Due to the open nature of Youth café and the use of shared equipment it has not yet been possible to make Youth Café Covid safe, but we are working on making it safe.

You may remember from last year that we were really excited about the possibility of a junior volunteer programme this year. The vision is for a team of junior volunteers to make Youth Café special, young people working together to make a safe and welcoming space for other young people. Sadly, due to the shutdown of Youth Café with the virus we haven't managed to move this any further, although we do have some of our regular attenders excited about the possibility of being a junior volunteer in the future.

We cannot wait to see what 2021 has in store for Youth Café, we hope we can get back up and running soon as the local situation with the pandemic settles. Until then however, we are waiting and ready to be there for people when restrictions allow.

Open House

For the past couple of years we have been thinking of what a Young Adult programme/ministry at SBC would look like. This would fill the void between teenagers being involved in the very structured youth activities, and joining the more general adult congregation. In September 2019 we launched 'Open House', a life group aimed at young adults (6th form age and above).

Open House is a peer-led group, so the young adults take it in turns to plan and lead a weekly discussion. Initially it was meeting weekly at the home of various volunteers from SBC, with these volunteers being known as 'hosts'.

Each week a couple of hosts open-up their home to the group and join in with their discussions for the evening. Following a 'leadership training' evening and up until COVID-19 struck the group was really enjoying the meetings and were benefitting from the input and views offered by the hosts each week. Unfortunately, once COVID restrictions came into place the meetings went online and the group decided to meet independently each week without any host involvement.

Online meetings proved to be difficult for the group with discussions not being as successful as they were pre-lockdown. We are hopeful that when the restrictions allow we can meet face-to-face again as often as host availability makes possible.

Looking to the future, once COVID restrictions are completely removed we are planning on organising an initial one-off service organised by the young adults, for young adults. The idea is for this to be a different sort of church service moulded to fit the needs of the young adults, featuring worship and a talk/discussion time.

Timeframes for this are unclear at the moment, but if successful it might be something that is held sporadically throughout the year to coincide with university holidays.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands holding an open Bible. The person's left hand is resting on the page, and their right hand is also visible. The Bible is open to a page with text, and some words are highlighted in green. The background is dark and out of focus, showing what appears to be a person's legs and feet in red and white sneakers.

Sunday Youth

I've always wondered what it would be like to be a YouTuber, making a living from producing online content for people to watch, enjoy and make a difference in people's lives.

Well, I never dreamed that 2020 would give me a window into what that life is like. You'll be pleased to hear that I much prefer running youth groups in person with real people!

Since the introduction of lockdown in March and churches moving online, we moved our Sunday Youth groups onto the platform of YouTube. 'Sunday Youth at Home' brought the games, fun and faith content straight to young people at home each Sunday.

Over the course of lockdown, we had covered multiple books of the Bible together each week, first with James, then Ephesians, and then Jonah each week we looked through the books one chapter at a time. Along with our 'Game Time', 'Shuffle Challenges' and home recorded 'Lockdown Worship' we gathered together virtually each week.

"Sunday live streams were also good to keep with the usual routine of having church on Sunday mornings and I liked that we could incorporate some of our own ideas, with challenges and games, as well as helping with worship and listening to the talks. I liked that the talks were given by different leaders as it would be on a normal Sunday."
(Miranda)

In September we re-branded our existing youth groups on a Sunday morning from Edge and Ignite, to 'Younger Youth' & 'Older Youth'. We wanted to make the different groups clear and easy to understand in line with the changes made to the midweek youth groups. We can't wait to be meeting together in person again regularly each week sharing food together, having a laugh and discussing questions and difficult topics about our faith.



Summer Festivals

Like many youth groups we were excited to be going to the first of the new festivals by Limitless. Sadly however because of the pandemic, the Limitless organisers had to make the wise and safe decision to cancel the August 2020 festival and postpone the date to August 2021.

I'm sure many of us have special memories from summer festivals with the youth group we were part of.

We love gathering together each year to go away for a week camping together, spending lots of time worshipping God and drinking hot chocolate mountains late at night playing cards but sadly like many things, this will have to wait.





Sadly we have now made the decision to cancel our booking for Limitless 2021 and will be looking at doing somethings smaller ourselves this summer.

Fear not everyone, before we know it, we will be back together in a soggy field, in broken tents in the pouring rain again. (Remind me why we like camping again?)

Seriously though we cannot wait to go away again to worship God with thousands of others, cementing friendships and making memories that will last a lifetime.

Introducing...

A photograph of a man with short dark hair, smiling, wearing a white t-shirt and a black backpack. He is standing in a canyon with large rock formations and a valley in the background. The image is partially obscured by a dark blue semi-transparent box containing text.

We're super excited to let you know that Matt, a long serving member of our Youth team, is taking on a new role!

Matt is taking on the role of Assistant Youth Leader with us.

Matt has been involved with the youth ministry here at SBC for 5 years now, helping to lead groups on a Sunday morning, our weekly Ignite group and has now taken on the responsibility for the vision of our Young Adults ministry.

We are really excited for what Matt brings to the team, his enthusiasm, experience and passion for seeing young people and young adults come to know Jesus and live a life-long relationship with God.

We know that Matt has some great plans and visions for how we as a church can help to fill the void between the end of the youth ministry and adulthood.

Please pray for Matt and for the new role he is taking on and also for the future of the young adults ministry too.

2021

Coming Soon...

I know it has certainly been a strange year for all of us and we are all looking forward to a time when things are much more back to normal.

Nobody knows what we will be able to do in the coming year with restrictions still in place but we are hopeful that we can find a new rhythm with groups for 2021.

Here are some of the exciting things on our hearts for 2021:

Central Cell online: We're really excited what this new venture will bring and are hopeful and expectant for God to do great things as we meet together each week.

Youth Café Junior Volunteers: As we didn't get a chance to make this happen fully last year we are hopeful that we can make this a reality in 2021.

Young Adults Ministry: This is still work in progress but as Matt has already mentioned we are hopeful to launch a service planned by young adults for young adults. We'll let you know how this goes.

Thank You

I would like to say a massive thank you to all our amazing volunteers who help to make SBC Youth the best that it can be!

Without dedicated people serving regularly each week and month we just could not do what we do.

I would like to say a special big thank you on behalf of the whole SBC Youth to some of our team who have stepped down or moved on this last year:

Howard James: who stepped down this year. Howard has been a long serving member of the Edge team both on a Sunday morning and during the week.

Rachel Hulcoop: a long serving member of Sunday Ignite stepped down this last summer. Thank you so much Rachel for all your years of support.

Ellie Groom: one of our Edge volunteers left last year to do a worship internship with Bethel in America, she has since gone back for a second year and we wish Ellie all the best.

We also wish the best for **Beth Miller** who left the team in December 2020 to pursue a career as outdoor activities instructor, we wish Beth all the best and hope to hear how things are going in the future.

Thank you so much to everyone who serves on our teams. The next time you see one of the SBC Youth team, make sure to tell them they're amazing!

Ignite

Matt Burridge
Angel Parr
Lis Foster
Ed Warner

Youth Café

Tina Vaughan
Viv Bailleux

Younger Youth

Mark Boughton
Oisín Foot
Ben Foster
Zak Griffith
Angel Parr

Older Youth

Lis Foster
Nick Geering
Christine Spriggs
Matt Burridge
Paul Turner

Final Word

This year has been difficult for so many of us, whether its been isolation, mental health struggles, loosing close friends and family or the complete disruption of life as we know it.

One thing we can depend on however is that God is always good and he will be with us in whatever we go through. Now more than ever as a community and as a Church we can hold onto that truth that God is with us and that he works to bring good things out of bad situations.

This year has completely changed the landscape of Youth Ministry, we've all had to learn new ways of engaging with young people, to keep building relationships and sharing the message of Gods love.

I am so grateful to everyone who supports us as a ministry and may I ask that you continue to pray for us as we find a path forward into the future.

Thank you for taking the time to read this report, I hope the stories and updates have left you feeling as encouraged and inspired as I am for what God is doing and will do in the future here for young people at SBC.

We are SBC Youth and we are about seeing young people come to know God and his love for them!



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