

# Footsteps

Stowmarket URC

15<sup>th</sup> Oct. 2017

Issue 2

## Welcome

Welcome to the second edition of *Footsteps* the once a term newsletter designed to keep parents informed about all the children and youth activities at Stowmarket URC. In this edition we focus on activities of each section.

## Little Dippers

Little Dippers is a drop-in group for children 0-4 and their parent(s), grandparent(s) and carer(s).

The purpose of this group is to offer to the above, to those that are isolated and in need of a friendly place to come and meet others like themselves.

It also offers a safe space, toys and activities and other children for their children to play with.

Our aim is to help lessen social isolation, to give new people that have come to live in Stowmarket or just had a first child to have a place to come and meet others with children and to make it a fun place for the children to mix and play.

When they arrive they are offered a drink as hospitality gives a warm welcome and an opportunity to talk with them.

We are able to offer support and advice or even link them to another person who comes to the group that has a special knowledge or a similar problem. We have a lot of this between them. This way we encourage them to get to know each other (while we entertain their children) and friendships often develop. This also can give them a break to relax.

We have seen this warmth and friendliness make a real difference to both the adults and their children.

They are also open to take part in church activities at Christmas and Easter, but because of the young age of the children we keep it low key. We share our faith when asked and by example. This seems to work with this sort of group as they come back and stay until their children have to leave to go into the pre-school system.

*Linda Baxter*



We meet from 5pm to 6.45pm on the first and third Mondays in the month.

Our time starts with a welcome. After singing grace we all sit-down to a meal together, this is a very special time when we share the news of each other's day

Each week has a theme that links into a Bible Story. At our last meeting before the summer holidays we studied the feeding of the 5,000 finding the story in the bible and talked about all that happened and how the boy must have felt when Jesus asked for his packed lunch, after this we played games.

Our evening ended with us all enjoying a B.B.Q out on the church steps, we had very healthy appetites and at times it felt like Chris and Brian were cooking for the 5,000

On the first Monday of the school holidays Messy Church children, and their family's enjoyed a picnic and games day at Bacton Scout Hut. It was a very wet day but thankfully there was a hall for us to use, so everything took

place indoors, except the treasure hunt that took place out on the field and resulted in some muddy and damp children and helpers going home all saying how much fun they had

We are all looking forward to restarting on September the 18<sup>th</sup>

*Helen Freeman.*

## Junior Church



Junior church meets every Sunday during Worship in the Church.

We join the adults in Church for the first part of the Service and then we leave for our own activities.

Our activities normally follow the Bible readings that are being used in Worship for that particular morning. We use "Roots" material which is a publication for all ages from the Churches Together in England.

Some of our activities involve storytelling, drama, action songs, prayer, crafts and news of the week from the children. We then present some of our learning to the congregation at the end of Worship.

We will soon be working on our Nativity which we will then share with the

congregation on the Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December.

We are a small happy group, who always enjoy welcoming visiting children and look forward to our numbers increasing.

*Jayne E Wood* on behalf of Junior Church

## Open the Book

Open the Book is a nationwide organisation that encourages Christian groups to go into school assemblies to dramatize stories from the Bible for children in years 1 to 6. All groups use the booklets provided by Open the Book and dramatize the stories from the 'Lion' bible.

There are a number of Open the Book groups in Stowmarket, one of which is at the United Reformed Church. We have a team of 11 members and visit Chilton and Wood Ley Schools three or four times a term. We meet in advance to plan what stories we are going to do and to rehearse. We are lucky to have people who can produce costumes and props as well as being able to act.

This term we are dramatizing four stories about Moses and next term we shall move on to do stories about Jesus. In the past we have enjoyed doing stories about some of the great characters of the Old Testament – Joseph, David, Daniel, Ruth, Samuel and Elijah – as well as

stories of the miracles and parables of Jesus and the life of St Paul.

We thoroughly enjoy our school visits and the children and teachers seem to enjoy them too. We are always made very welcome.

*Mary Durrant*



## URC Pre-school

A Play group has been run at our church for many years. Originally it was set up by the mothers within the church. Later on it became an independent Play Group and was registered as a charity in 1992. More recently it had become a Pre-school for children from 2 years to 5.

We are sad to say that for a number of reasons the Pre-school has closed. We thank all who have worked with the children over the many years.

*Ann Scarff*

## 1<sup>st</sup> Mid Suffolk Boys Brigade and Girls Association



So what happens in a typical session at Boys Brigade on a Wednesday evening? There are three age groups that meet progressively throughout the evening and on arrival children register and pay their weekly subs before

assembling in squads in the hall to raise their section flag. In the summer months we will often be found on Pikes Meadow or maybe Onehouse woods and we try to have trips out whenever possible. Across all age groups we encourage young people to take responsibility for themselves and for leading activities to build confidence and independence.

Anchors (age 5 to 8 years) meet from 6 to 7 pm and enjoy playing

with the sports equipment, playing team games, table tennis, air hockey, crafts and badge work. There is usually a Bible story, a chance to talk and share and of course a drink and plenty of biscuits.

Juniors (age 8 to 11 years) meet from 6:30 to 7:45 pm and enjoy many of the same things as the Anchor Boys with the added treat of a tuck shop which they mostly run themselves.

Company/Senior Section (school year 7 upwards) meet from 7:30 to 9 pm. As well as games they enjoy catching up with friends and lots of activities that include food! Topics from the Bible are introduced and discussed and we encourage them to take the lead including sessions which are run entirely by young people.

**Martin Gray**

## Safeguarding

The United Reformed Church takes its responsibilities towards children and vulnerable people seriously and their welfare while on our premises, or in our care is very important to us.

Our Safeguarding Policy and procedures are reviewed annually and is overseen by SAFEcic which issues a certificate to confirm that we meet recommended safeguarding standards.

We provide safeguard training for all those interested and our leaders are DBS checked.

## Safeguarding Team

	<p>Mary Durrant Good Practice Safeguarding person Tel: 01449672608</p>
	<p>Ann Scarff Deputy Good Practice Safeguarding Person tel: 01449 774792</p>

### *Forthcoming Events*

18 Nov	Wide Horizons 10 am to 3 pm.	URC Church
17 Dec	Nativity play 10:25 - 11:30 am	URC Church