

Diary Dates

1 st Oct	St Mary Acton 10.30am
3 rd Oct	Tiddlers Toddlers
5 th Oct	Seedlings Toddlers
5 th Oct	St Peter's Service Team meeting
6 th Oct	Minnows Toddlers
8 th Oct	St Nicholas 3pm
11 th Oct	Little Fishes Toddlers
12 th Oct	Little Tots Toddlers
13 th Oct	Playtime Toddlers
15 th Oct	St Peters 10.30am
2 nd Nov	Trustees Meeting
9 th Nov	St Peter's Service Team meeting
12 th Nov	St Nicholas 3pm
19 th Nov	St Peters 10.30am
21 st Nov	Tiddlers Toddlers
22 nd Nov	Little Fishes Toddlers
23 rd Nov	Seedlings Toddlers
24 th Nov	Playtime Toddlers
30 th Nov	Little Tots Toddlers
1 st Dec	Minnows Toddlers

Trustees farewell and future

This autumn we say thank you and good bye to Simon Sheldon, one of our Trustees who has served for 10 years. Simon has held the mantle of Treasurer and gently taken an over-watch of our finances. He spoke words of wisdom when needed and been a help in the early days of fundraising letter writing. It has been good, and we are grateful, and wish him well as he takes on more responsibility as a Licensed Lay Minister in his local church.

In January we hope to add another Trustee to the board. At Present there is no-one holding the Treasurer's role. Perhaps this might be you. We have a paid book keeper who undertakes all the day to day financial workings. The Treasurer's role is one of over sight and policy decisions. It is not a time consuming role. Someone with a head for numbers and a faith that allows for the unknown without being foolhardy, is what we need.

Could that be you?

My door is open and our Chair of Trustees would also be happy to chat. It's much better to test out the waters and then say no, than to dismiss it outright.

So come on, get on-board and marvel at what God is doing from the inside of the organisation.

A newsletter to keep supporters informed, inspired & involved.

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Trustees future thinking

In September the Trustees met without Simon! This is very good news as the Trustees are continuing to consider life after Simon. They spent an evening developing the succession planning further and considered what the next steps would be and when they need to be taken.

From the very outset of FACT, it was noted that it would be a good vehicle for the ministry that God had called me to, but it wasn't my ministry. I couldn't agree more! Graveyards are full of indispensable people and the time will come in the prevailing years when it will be good and right to step down and out, having handed over the reins to a new person. Someone who will not be me but themselves, with their own gifting, strengths and weaknesses, visions and dreams. We aim to make that a smooth transition and as things progress we will keep you updated. Once again perhaps your skill set would sit well on the board of Trustees at this time.

Just to be clear you can't get rid of me just yet so we will live in the here and now with an eye on the future and what will be next.



We are continuing to seek out a developer for our App project to deliver Time2share@home digitally. However, we have taken a step forward with finding an illustrator. We are in the early stages of discussions but are very hopeful that this person will be able to fulfil what we need with the App and possibly other images for the ministry of FACT.

I think it's worth understanding how we came across this person and I hope it will stir you, the reader, to think about how you can aid our search for a developer.

The last newsletter expressed our need for an illustrator. A reader mentioned it to someone whom they knew, that person got in touch and a conversation started which has led us to exploring the possibilities. If the reader hadn't acted that connection would never had been made.

Perhaps you could be the link in the chain to move this project forward? There are times to be passive and times to be active. What will it be for you?



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Big Societal Questions



This summer saw the release of several 'epic' films. There was a huge launch and hype around Barbie and there were rave reviews from the media in general. Having read a number of articles with a Christian bias about Barbie and the questions posed for our society, I decided to go and see it for myself. I didn't feel the need to take children as an excuse or to wear a pink hoodie. Letting the initial rush at the box office pass, I attended a screening one Wednesday afternoon where I made up one third of the audience. There were moments that made me laugh, cringe, empathise and some that challenged me to want to reach out and help.

Every day in Barbie World is just perfect, until Barbie finds herself questioning her existence. Midway through a song and dance routine she causes everyone to stop as she asks, '**Do you ever think about dying?**' These thoughts come from the 'Real World' where girls play with Barbies and aspire to be like them, to break through the glass ceiling in commerce, business and all areas of life, but one woman has been thinking about making Barbies more true to reality, including having cellulite!

Men do not fair well in this film. Ken exists for Barbie. His world is only complete when Barbie notices him. Ken has no depth or ability to understand and reason things. In Barbie World it is the Barbies that rule and have the authority. Kens are 'unimportant'.

When Barbie and Ken travel to the 'Real World' to try and put things right and get everything back to normal they start to question their own way of living. The idea of emancipation is a theme but only as a superficial subplot compared to the huge questions that unfold. Ken finally realises that, 'Ken is Ken', someone in his own right and Barbie isn't there to be perfect for others, she can be who she wants to be. For Barbie, there are growing questions that are best voiced through the final song of the film sung by Billie Eilish - **What was I made for?** The lyrics include this stanza:

**Takin' a drive, I was an ideal
Looked so alive, turns out I'm not real
Just something you paid for
What was I made for?**

The inventor of the Barbie, Ruth Handler (played by Rhea Perlman) meets Barbie. Barbie assumes that she needs her creator's permission to become human. Ruth tells Barbie, "You don't need my permission. I can't control you any more than I could control my own daughter." This is not a powerless creator, but one who has allowed freedom to choose. Barbie desires to become human and be able to feel. In doing so, she has to face all the big questions of existence; **Where do I come from? Why am I here? Where am I going to?**

In a society that is asking such deep questions do we, as Christians, have any answers to offer or will we leave it to Barbie?

FACT enabling children and households to reflect on the Christian Gospel

Time2Worship Together

July saw the delivery of the first Intergenerational Communion Service. This had been carefully put together to retain both the necessary, and desired liturgical elements while continuing the established tabletop activities and approaches to prayer, readings, songs, and a short talk.

At its heart, all were welcome to fully partake at every level. There were some truly special moments of encountering God. These are exciting times.

Inevitably, there was much to learn and adapt. All that thinking has informed the services for the autumn where we will continue to move forward with developing teams and supporting them as they take 'ownership' of what is being offered.



August is a good point in the year to take a break and enjoy some down time from work and ministry. I was very happy to do that, but around the breaks there was lots to do to make ready for the coming year.

Having considered and developed the yearly circle of themes as shown in the last newsletter, August was a time to drill down into creating and preparing individual monthly services and then adapt them to the specific needs of individual churches.

September was a wonderful start, working with 2 churches and delivering an intergenerational service for both. The theme of forgiveness based upon the parable of the unforgiving servant was used. At one church the young people narrated the PowerPoint slide show of the Gospel reading, while others lead other parts of the service.

The table top activity included an opportunity to forgive and a reminder of what Scripture says about forgiveness.



October will pick up where September left off. The theme is 'Belonging to God' continuing with another parable from Matthew's Gospel of the wedding banquet where the wrong clothes had catastrophic consequences!

We'll be thinking about the need for clean clothes to be a part of that great feast.



On the 1st October I will be at St Mary, Acton for the first time, but hopefully not the last. I'll try and behave myself but I make no promises! It will be good to be working with Revd. Preb. Joseph Fernandes who has recently taken up this post having served at St Hilda's in Ashford.

Once again I'll be using a parable from Matthew's Gospel. The story of the 2 sons who were asked to work for their father in the vineyard. The first said no but then went and did it, the second said yes but didn't go and do it.

A takeaway activity to be done on their return home by all those in a household will be offered based around Psalm 19:14

Intergenerational Training

I'm finding more and more that casual conversations with clergy and church leaders lead to a genuine curiosity about what Intergenerational Worship is (and is not). This has made me wonder if there's benefit in offering some training for leaders and other interested parties in churches on this topic. Perhaps a little knowledge and understanding might help some more churches step forward with this new way of worshipping that will be far more user-friendly with the fringe of the fringe of church goers. Intergenerational Worship has obvious missional values but as importantly, it also has discipleship values for a high proportion of current attenders who come for a vast variety of reasons.

The core values of Intergenerational Worship include the expectation that as we gather we will encounter God through a plethora of media and styles. In recent years there has been a growing desire to acknowledge and label different forms of intelligence.

This is nothing to do with AI, Artificial Intelligence. There are currently 9 acknowledged types, and Intergenerational Worship engages with at least 7 of them. This is not by accident but by design. Some church services arguably use as few as 3! I would suggest that Intergenerational Worship is not a fad but a reaction to the society we live within. It's a tool to aid and encourage spiritual engagement and offers opportunities for Godly encounters that could occur through any of the different types of intelligence.

Why would we want to restrict those opportunities?



Toddlers

As you read this I will be starting my visits to six toddler groups in this half-term. The theme is, 'Thank you' based around Harvest. I look forward to seeing returning households, and for some this will be their last year before their child starts school, and they will only ever have known a visit from me each half-term. There will be new households of little people and their carers who will hear a Christian story for the first time. Toddler groups are often the first point of contact with the 97% of people who do not attend church. Churches should invest more in them. More time and training, more personnel, more finance and place a higher value on all they do. Get in touch if you would like some help and support in this area.



Christmas offer

In the last newsletter I mentioned that we wouldn't be offering an Intergenerational Sunday Service in December but would be pleased to come and fit within a church's Christmas programme on the Friday, Saturday or Sunday before Christmas. It might be in place of the usual Crib service or a brand new venture aimed at households who only come at Christmas or to Intergenerational events. It might seem like it's too early to be talking about Christmas but time is running short and I would encourage you to get in touch and get the ball rolling.

The Nativity story is being lost (arguably it has been lost) to this generation and too many additional bits that have been added have taken prominence to the detriment of the most wonderful reality that God was born as Man. God the Creator entered His creation out of love for us. Emmanuel - God with us.

**Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable to you,
O Lord, my rock and my redeemer. Psalm 19:14**