

Welcome, Word and Worship

In February and May 2008 Keith and I organised alternative services on a Sunday afternoon at the local primary school under the title *Welcome, Word and Worship*. We sang (new) songs, prayed, and talked about and studied the bible in an informal environment. In February we looked at Moses and in May we looked at the Holy Spirit. We started these services for two reasons. In the first place we wanted to create an informal environment to which it would be easy to invite people who are on the edge of our church communities or who do not know about church at all. In the second place we wanted to create a place for an in-depth exploration of the bible.

We had very good sessions and the feedback we received was extremely positive. Giving real opportunity for constructive feedback was worth it and valuable for all involved and something we shall do again. People appreciated the teaching, the informal environment and the nature of the music we used. However we noticed that the purposes for which we started Welcome, Word and Worship were not met in an efficient way. In some way our two purposes were mutually exclusive as people who are new to, or on the edge of Christianity would not immediately need an in-depth exploration of the bible. The time in the week was awkward for people involved in church and our outreach and mission in the partnership is not developed far enough to need an informal worship space for incomers. (If you have any suggestions on how to develop our outreach and mission further then please do share them with us). This is why we will discontinue the series we had planned for September.

Doing Welcome, Word and Worship has had many positive outcomes. One was that we noticed that the young people (I use this term loosely for all in their teens and twenties) that came (proportionally a lot more than in our traditional services) appreciated the sharing, talking and looking at the bible. Therefore we would like to try to take Welcome, Word and Worship further in a different format for young people: www.yc.community.

Underneath you will find the letter that we hope to send to all young people (15-30) in the partnership personally in the coming month. If you are, or know of somebody in that age-group that has not had the letter by the end of September, please let us know (we would need a name, phone number, email and/or home address) or give them a copy yourself with a warm invitation. Please pray for this initiative and tell us about this as this is encouraging. We will keep you updated.

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