

Youth Co-ordinator AGM Report 2009

Writing the annual report is a good opportunity to be able to pull back & see the bigger picture of all that God has been doing over the last year with our young people. From seeing individuals grow & move on in their faith, to whole groups developing their identity as part of God's Kingdom community, it's been an exciting & encouraging 12 months.

Much of my energy goes into **Aldridge Youth Fellowship**, the youth group which meets every Friday night from 8pm-10pm. With over 180 on the books, it's often a challenge to remember names, let alone get alongside the young people! However, the dedicated team of leaders & helpers ably share this responsibility, whilst the care between the young people themselves is a real feature of this unique group. For those keen to grow & find out more about God's love, we run two small groups on Sunday nights – **Junior & Senior Squash** – but more about them & AYF as a whole elsewhere...



Random is the lunchtime group for pupils at Aldridge School held at No.4 Tynings Lane. The house is a much appreciated resource that Tynings Lane Church provides us with - far better than meeting on the school site! A nice place to hang out, free lunch, video games & weekly 'Random Acts of Kindness' seem to be hitting the mark with young people. It's a great opportunity to connect with those on the fringes & encourage them along to other groups. With invaluable help from Anna (& Tighe & Ylena!), Gavin, Alex & Peter, we've recently combined our sessions to Monday lunchtimes, but the increased buzz on this day has made for a more enjoyable, fruitful time.

Pathfinders continues on Sunday mornings & a good core group have developed over the last year. Numbers fluctuate quite a lot – the register shows attendance ranges from 3-18 this year, but there's an average of 12 or so. The team of leaders – Alison, Div, Kath, Alison, Tom & Catherine – have done a great job over the year, especially as the material we have often takes some tweaking! We had a brilliant time at Pentrenant Hall in the summer, when we combined with young people from Freezer, Coolbox, the Hothouse, Tynings & St Thomas' for a sweltering weekend – back again this year with another full house!



Many of the year 6's at Cooper & Jordan School come to **G-Crew**, the Monday after school club which Sue runs & I help/distract at! Their enthusiasm is good to see, & the cross-over with Pathfinders & Coolbox is a real success story.

I've been grateful for the opportunity to be involved in other areas of our church life, highlights of which have been the monthly **Reel Faith** services, **Men of Aldridge** events, & the **Home** prayer event at Christmas. And this year I've somehow been recommended by the Church of England for training for **ordained ministry** - I'll start a 2 year course at Trinity College in Bristol in September, which means that Gemma & I will be leaving Aldridge this summer for pastures new. We've very mixed feelings about our impending move, but I'll save sharing those for another time as there's still much to be done before we go! Suffice to say it won't be easy leaving such a supportive, encouraging & loving church community, & it's been a real joy being part of all that God has been doing with our young people & the wider church over this past year. Thank you for all the prayers, support & help you've given us & all the young people over the past 12 months – please do continue to lift them & us up to God for the year ahead...

Matt Wallace
Youth Co-ordinator