

Children are heroes in churches' fun week

IT was a chance to act as heroes for the week – and have plenty of fun!

Fareham churches of all denominations joined forces to run a Hero Activity Week for five to 11-year-olds from the town.

Each morning 60 children gathered together for lively songs, to hear more about the story of Jesus, and to take part in fun activities.

Those activities included decorating their own hero t-shirts and frisbees, playing indoor hockey and football, relay teams on the bouncy castle and testing their skills on Scalextric.

The week was organised by Christians Together in Fareham with the help of Phil Crathorne from Kid Central.

Most of the activities and lunch were held at Fareham Methodist Church but some were at Holy Trinity Church.

Twice they took over the



church car park to go mad in go-karts, much to the amusement of passers-by.

At the 'hero school of science', they learnt how to keep water in an upturned glass simply

Above left: children join in action songs; above right: trying out the Scalextric

with a piece of paper and then how to make some 'elephant toothpaste' which was smelly and messy!

Each morning finished with some great story-telling, prizes for hero boy and girl of the day, and some healthy competition between boys and girls involving a transparent 'power tank'.

The vicar of Holy Trinity Church, Sally Davenport, said:

"The children couldn't wait to be picked to go into the tank. They had 30 seconds to collect as many slithers of shiny paper as possible which were being blown around.

"Then the children picked two adult leaders to do the same, but the adult who collected the least had to return to the tank for a power shower and the water was very cold!"

"The children were amazing: they helped and encouraged each other and grew more confident daily.

"The smile on a child's face when they'd learned to do something new was very special. The team, our volunteers and the children were all heroes in their own unique way. I can't wait for next year!"

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The power of intention

IT'S only when we focus for any length of time on the night sky that we increasingly notice the number of stars actually visible: the more we look, the more we see.

Similarly, I still remember clearly all these years later, how when I first knew I was expecting there seemed to be more and more pregnant women wherever I went. The more intentionally we seek, the more we are able to perceive.

We lament the slow decline in interest in belonging to our churches and read this as symptomatic of a wider disinterest in religion.

We fret over the anticipated decline in clergy numbers as retirements outstrip ordinations. We are depressed by the frequently low rate of personal commitment evidenced by the proportion of income many folk give toward mission and maintenance in our parishes.



the last word

by the Rev Wendy Kennedy
Diocesan Secretary

What new perspective and reality will emerge if we (yes, me and you, not they and them) always seek to notice opportunities to speak to new people of God and risk initiating that conversation? Persist in seeking new ways to meet and serve different people in our parish and try new worship options? Intentionally and habitually look for indications of vocation in others and speak about this both to encourage and challenge? Determinedly discuss not just money but what

together we might do with that in Christ's service?

Over time there is the potential for a whole different picture of reality to emerge.

Often our worldview resembles those frustrating Magic Eye puzzles where a very busy overall pattern hides pictures that amazingly emerge as you stare at the picture for many minutes.

Only intentionally seeking a hidden reality opens the potential to finding just that, and much more.