

So What is a Pioneer Families Worker Then?

I was delighted when Joe asked me if I could contribute to the newsletter this week, as I thought it may give me an opportunity to briefly introduce myself, and more importantly to explain my vision for family work within our cluster. I have been asked the above question rather a lot...so here I go....

As many of you already know, I am a mother of two girls, Ruby (2) and Elsie (6). We worship at St Mary's in Callington, and particularly enjoy doing anything that is crafty/messy or lego related! From a career perspective, I worked as a secondary RE teacher at St Cuthbert Mayne in Torquay, and was also a Head of Year there before moving on to work with The Diocese of Exeter as a Mission Resources Adviser. I have also worked with SEN students at Saltash College before it was unfortunately closed.

When the Family Worker post was in vacancy, I began to run both Friday Frogs and what was originally called JAMM (and how now been renamed as Sampson's Supertots to ensure a connection with the church community). This was a wonderful privilege, and it really made me think about how important these groups are for building important relationships with local families and young people.

Essentially, the remit of the role of a Pioneer Families Worker, is to engage families with the church in a less traditional sense. I see it as an opportunity to meet people where they are, and to offer support and kindness in a way that doesn't try to pretend it isn't Christian, but that is also able to look beyond the church walls and into the heart of community life. Where is the need? What can we do to support families in a way that is not overtly 'preachy,' but that allows people to come as they are, and inspires a new perspective?

My vision for the role is one of unity and inclusion. Each church has something unique that it can offer to families, and I admire the tenacity and dedication of all of the volunteers who are already providing experiences for families. Messy Church, Forest Church, WOW Wednesday, Open the Book, The Christmas Experience....the list is wonderfully long! Thank you. I feel that God is perhaps calling us to build upon these beautiful relationships that are already blooming with our families, and to continue to welcome them without judgement. Sometimes, that may involve doing things quite differently, and I was both nervous, and excited to be interviewed on Radio Cornwall in the build up to Christmas to advertise The Nativity Escape Room at St Mary's Church. This was well attended, and encouraged families to see come together for a unique experience that hopefully inspired them in a new way.

Cosy Club Wednesday 3 - 4pm

- A new after school club for years 2 and 3
- Hot chocolate and cakes
- Mindful colouring, jigsaws, games and Lego
- Music, chat and time to reflect
- A safe warm space to relax and spend time with friends
- Story telling
- Bring your onesie☺



Run by Katie Stevenson, our local Pioneer Family Worker
(on behalf of the Church Community).

I am also very keen to build strong links with the local schools. This week, I am due to start the Cosy Club at Stoke Climsland. As a parent myself, I can empathise with the need for after school provision, and also sense that there is a need for children to be supported in promoting their own well-being in a safe, warm environment. The cost of living is putting so

much pressure on families, and the vision for this group was to provide a metaphorical 'warm hug' (quoting my favourite Disney character....Olaf). The Cosy Club concept is being trialled at Stoke Climsland, and Callington Primary are due to come on board in the spring term.

Since I have been in post, I have also made links with the comprehensive school (who visited St Mary's before Christmas), and I am working with a local youth leader to provide provision for teenagers in the area.

Friday Frogs baby and Toddler group is now thriving with over 20 children attending. I am hoping to use this group as a springboard for recruiting new families to attend St Mary's on a Sunday by launching and promoting 'Create and Celebrate.' I



**CREATE
AND
CELEBRATE!**

Free soft play, toys, crafts, story time and refreshments for kids!
All run by our Pioneer Family Worker, Katie Stevenson

Café, music and reflection for adults

New for 2023! Free family fun @ St Mary's Church, Callington. 1st Sunday of the month-11am

am hoping that this will feel like an extension of the toddler group, but with an opportunity for parents/carers to explore their own thoughts and emotions regarding faith.

Finally, I would like to thank all those who pray for family work in our cluster. I really do feel that Jesus is propelling us forward with this pioneering work. I would ask that you continue to pray for inspiration, and a willingness to break through barriers of convention in our mission and outreach. I

would also ask you to please talk to me about any ideas you may have.

On a more practical level, I am in need to some volunteers to support me with the St Sampson's Supertots group on a Monday @Golberden Village Hall please! We have 24 children on average each week, and I'm struggling to cover all bases! If you enjoy crafts, it would be great if you could come and lead a craft activity at the group. Also, it would be wonderful if our local bakers could support me in providing cakes for the Cosy Club at Stoke Climsland School. I think it would add to the homely feel, and again, provide a link with the church community. Finally....I am going to be producing some 'new mum' boxes for expectant mothers who attend the toddler groups. If you are a keen knitter please get in touch!

Thank you for this wonderful opportunity to work with each church as it endeavours to welcome more families into the family of Christ with joy and kindness. Please feel free to contact me with any ideas you may have or any offers to support me with this pioneering mission work.



Many blessings,

Katie Stevenson

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