



Ruth Sayers

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Location: Britain



What I do: Church worker showing Christ in the community through helping people get back into work, assisting with Bible studies, pastoral care and more.

Dear friends,

I am writing this in the middle of a programme of summer activities for children. As part of a local initiative, Feast of Fun takes place in churches and halls in Plymouth city and the surrounding areas. St Aubyn's Church, Devonport is hosting the opportunity for children to have a sandwich lunch followed by craft activities and games. The parents can supervise their children alongside our team of helpers and enjoy playing and creating together. Some of you may remember that I spoke about this last year and due to its success, we are once more running this on Mondays during the holidays. After last summer, we decided to include Mondays in half terms and the main holidays of Christmas and Easter. It has been an opportunity for the churches in Devonport to work together and helpers have been recruited from the Anglican churches and the local Baptist church. We have learned that working together means we can do more to serve the families of Devonport.



Feast of Fun

The summer began for me with the CMS conference at All Nations College. A good week enjoying the company of other mission partners and staff alongside attending Bible studies and sessions given by MPs about their work and ministry. This was the first time for me since COVID and it was so good to be back.

Thinking back to July, school finished well. We had Ofsted which resulted in a "good" grade. There was relief all round but also a sense of achievement for a school that is situated in a very deprived area of Plymouth and struggles with maintaining standards and attendance in difficult circumstances. The children reacted well to visitors onsite and the staff were observed teaching to the high standards for which Riverside School has become known. In the last year we have reviewed the role of the governing body and will be continuing to develop governance in the coming year. Like many schools we struggle to appoint governors, especially parent governors. The role of the school governor requires commitment and time and a certain amount of experience. Not something to be taken on lightly.

During last year we were able to start an after-school club called Target Challenge. With the encouragement of the new head teacher and the designated RE lead, it was held on Mondays for about 20

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very eager children. As a team of two members of a local church plus two governors and the local RE teacher, we were able to offer a programme of activities and teaching using the Scripture Union materials. The trial term became two terms and was well attended. It was encouraging to see the children engage with the stories from the Bible and at the end of the summer term, 11 children took a Bible home. It has been agreed that we will continue into the coming academic year.

Food Club continues to expand. Despite a slight slowdown during these summer weeks, there are still families who come and use our services. These families often come to the Feast of Fun days and it has been good to develop relationships with them in both contexts. Our local Community Baptist Church has a community garden that has been very fruitful this year. Some of the vegetables have been brought to the Food Club to add to our supply for our members.

Some news hot off the press!!! After a meeting for the management team of Work Club, it has been decided that due to reduced need and response that the Work Club will close in the

next two months. The work situation has much improved in the area and the Job Centre provides more services to support those looking for work. As with all projects, there is a time to finish. This venture has been a great success and the support and encouragement offered to those seeking work has met our aims and targets. I hope to give you more information in the next link letter. Please continue to pray for those who have benefitted from all that we have offered and that we acknowledge that this is the right time to stop.

Ruth



Photos: Trusted helpers from the summer activities; produce from the community garden



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