

Building a community

At Bents Green we aim to be a community church sharing the love of Jesus. We believe that love can enrich and strengthen the whole community, not just the church. So we try to build links with different aspects of the community around us. We work with all ages, but a priority for us is to work with families and young people. Covid has presented new challenges, but we have managed to keep our activities going. This issue of Hilltop shows what we are doing now.

Pages 1-3 illustrate the work of the Bents Green Pre-school, a separate organisation but one which has worked closely with the church for several decades. Generations of children have enjoyed their time in Pre-school and some are now sending their own children. Times and circumstances have changed greatly over the years, and the Pre-school faces new challenges. It is a valuable part of the local community, and we want to do all we can to ensure it continues.

We also run regular weekly activities, such as Sunbeams for toddlers, Lighthouse for junior age children, Lampstand for teenagers, Girls Brigade, plus Junior Church on Sunday mornings. Pages 4&5 gives the details, which you can also find on our website.

Pages 6&7 capture some of the highlights of our annual panto, which took place over three evenings at February half term. The panto has been an annual event since before most of us can remember, and we hope to involve more families to ensure that it continues.

All these different activities can be improved by working with members of the community, and the community itself can be strengthened, to the benefit of all. Would you like to join in? Together we can make everything even better in future.



Nurturing our Community since the 1960s

Generations of children have passed through the doors of Bents Green Pre-School over the last 5 decades. This special edition of Hilltop focusing on children and young people, takes a look at the past present and future of this much loved setting.





Bents Green Pre-School is a wonderful place for children aged 2-4 to develop and grow and also meet children in their school catchment areas. Originally set up by parents as a playgroup in the 1960s Bents Green Pre-School sprang out of a desire for child centered care within the community, a place to nurture and for parents and carers to meet, find fellowship and support.

What our children say they like ...

"playing with my friends and dancing"



"my friends"



"playing outside"



"Let's go on an adventure!"
Problem solving

"playing in the water and the sand"



Role Play

"I'm a hungry Tiger, please can I come to tea?"



Fun activities

"I love all the different shapes and colours!"



"playing with the castle"

"playing with my friends, because sometimes we get everything we're hoping to do"



"dancing and playing with the babies and dinosaurs"



Climbing

"I'm the king of the castle!"

"the trampoline, the red thing you sit in and spin around and go all dizzy and my friend"

One child also said "I love it because it's brilliant"

Pre-School is a registered charity, run by a committee of parent volunteers ensuring the best interests of the parents, carers and children are put first. Committee organise fundraising activities and events through the year to boost finances, to spread the word and to meet families. The Christmas Fayre is always a big success and Santa always turns up to join in the fun!



The Pre-School Nativity is always a highlight of the year, countless numbers of Mary and Joseph's have set the scene for singing Pre-School Christmas favourites like 'Christmas pudding', 'When Santa got Stuck up the Chimney' and 'When the Robots came to Dinner.' Many people's favourite memories have been of past Nativities watching with delight some children's cute and cheeky performances!



The World is seeing unprecedented challenges and Pre-School has had its fair share of these. Funding, staffing and finding committee members has become increasingly difficult in these times and we have also seen pupil numbers drop. Everyone involved with Pre-School had been working hard to keep our lovely setting going.

Please spread the word, places are available now and for September. We would love to continue to offer children in our community a safe and nurturing place to explore, grow and have adventures, for a long time to come.

Early Learning Funding, tax free and government funding vouchers are accepted and we are a very flexible setting.

CHERISHED MEMORIES

Every past generation has their favourite Pre-School staff member, their fondest memories and maybe even still in touch with life long school friends they first made there.

60s Jane remembers going to the group as a toddler when it first started, playing in the sandpit and on the trundle trucks.

70s In the 70s she remembers helping out there, her favourite memory was reading a book called 'Robert the Racehorse' the front cover was on upside down so it always made the children laugh!

80s Laura says "My Mum says they had mini cereal boxes which my Brother and his friend used to hide under the table to eat! I have a photo of me and my friend standing very proudly next to a sunflower which looks as big as us! I met with that friend only last week for a coffee and an ice cream over 30 years later!"

90s Phil went to Pre-School in the 90s, he remembers the paint pots, easels and the popoids! He also used to borrow the same video from their library and he asked to keep it when they got rid of them in later years, he still has it today! 'The staff were all so loving, friendly and caring' he said.

00s Jude says "I have lots of happy memories of Bents Green Pre School. I loved playing outside on the bikes and climbing frames. All the teachers were very nice, my favourite memory was pirate day."

10s Sam loved making a 'triple' on the computer game, and the construction blocks. Lois loved playing outside in the mud kitchen. Lois also loved story time and the trampoline. N.W liked the fact they got to choose a different activity every day and K.K. loved the outdoor play.

20s Joel, now enjoying his first year at school loved playing with the train track, painting and going outside. He loved playing with his friends too. 'I miss Pre-School because it was my favourite place to go!' he says.

Hazel Wassell and Brenda Bell were the founders in 1968/9 joined by Edna Clayton, Margaret Cole, Nancy Rust, and Margaret Startup among others. It started as some simple childcare whilst the ladies met for 'Young Wives club' on a Monday afternoon, later when their children went to school the ladies met in the evening, which was the beginning of the long running 'Mondays/Ladies at 8' group. We believe Hazel and others set up morning groups for the next lot of new parents in the community and over time it blossomed into longer sessions through the week, becoming a daily morning playgroup. It became supported by the Teaching and Learning Alliance and then in order to take advantage of Government vouchers, it officially became an Ofsted registered Pre-School in 2000.

There have been a handful of much loved Play-group/Pre-School managers over the years, including Kath Iveson, Alison Donaldson and Stella Pilkington, supported by a wonderful team of deputies and practitioners, all having lasting affects on the children they cared for over the years.

Kath shares a favourite memory:

"We were doing our nativity play in church and the angel came in to give the baby to Mary who said 'I don't want it!' I whispered to her 'Take the baby and put it in the manger!' She looked straight at me and said 'I DON'T WANT IT!' I said to Joseph 'Take the baby and put it in the manger!' he said 'I don't want it either!' At which point the Little donkey shouted 'I'll have it!' The audience were all in stitches!

Yet another highlight was the fundraising Bents Green Pre School Cookbook around 2006/7. Famous faces like Gordon Ramsey, Nora Sands and the Duchess of Devonshire even got involved!

As well as having a recipe appearing alongside Gordon Ramsey, Alison has so many happy memories 'I loved working with that age group - such a rewarding job - watching them grow in confidence and ability for the next stage.'

We are adding an 'Our Story' page to our website <https://www.bentsgreenpreschool.co.uk/> Stella will be adding her favourite memories and we would love to add yours, if you can fill in any gaps, have any further information or memories you would like to share we would be delighted to receive them. Please email emma.s.wassell@gmail.com

Please visit our website for current opening hours, to explore our story further and to apply for a place for your child.

Website <https://www.bentsgreenpreschool.co.uk/> e-mail bentsgreenpreschool@hotmail.co.uk Phone 07714502472

Other activities for young people

Lighthouse is an after school club which runs on Wednesdays in term time from 3:30-5:30pm designed for children aged 5-11 years old. The cost is £1.50 per child, per session and this includes a drink, snacks and craft materials. Each half term we look at different bible stories and themes. Each week we offer a different bible story, craft, snack, drama, games and activities. This half term we are looking at the Easter story and will be making lots of Easter themed crafts.

Fireworks is a group for Secondary aged children who meet every Sunday morning at 10.30am. We provide a safe place to explore faith and life together, finding support from the Bible, prayer, videos, discussions, games and chat. The last couple of years have shown us how important it is to feel supported and we have maintained our relationships with each other and reached out to older generations in our community.

Recently we have been raising money and working for causes which are close to our hearts like Crisis, the Archer Project and for improving the environment. We are currently collecting foil lined crisp packets and recycling them into bivvy bags for the homeless. We also hope to run a charity bun sale and quiz night in the coming months.

Lampstand is a youth club for young people aged 11-17 which runs on Friday evenings from 8-10pm and is £2 per person, per session. At the youth club we have an array of activities available including; Nintendo switch, Wii, pool table, board games, cards, weekly films on the 3 big screens, dodgeball and much more. The youth club also has tuck shop which offers a wide range of sweets, chocolate, snacks and drinks. We also run regular trips at the end of term to Laser quest, mini-golf, bowling and bounce. There is also an online youth club which runs on a Tuesday evening where we socialise and play games over Zoom. If you would like to know more or join then please contact Cherry.

This summer there is a residential planned to take place at Marrick Priory for school years 6-9 and 10-13.

**Cherry Mair - Youth & Children's
Minister- 07853278612 -**

cherry_ade86@hotmail.co.uk

Cherry's update

As the restrictions have eased it has allowed the youth and children's activities at church to get back into full swing. I'm happy to say that we have grown in numbers at both Lighthouse and Lampstand. We also beginning to add back some of the trips and are planning a busy summer programme for teenagers. Another positive is that I am now working back in our local schools. During my time at the schools, I will be building new relationships and helping to lead groups within the school. It has been a tough couple of years and not knowing what to expect and if I would be able to get back in to schools but I have been blown away by the welcome I have received and look forward to planning more work with our local schools.



Volunteer Readers required

Both our local primary schools are looking for people who could give some time to regularly listen to children read. If you would like to volunteer or know more then please see Cherry.

Thursday evening at Bents Green Church it's GB (Girls' Brigade)

We meet from 6.30pm to 8pm during school term time. Our GB community group is a uniformed youth group for girls and young women from all backgrounds. It's a safe environment where members can relate to one another, have fun, learn new skills, make a difference in their community, and discover more about the Christian faith. We are part of Bents Green Church's outreach into the community.

We have 4 groups n'vestigate for 5 – 7s; n'gage for 8 – 11s; n'counta for 11 – 14s and n'spire for 14 – 18s. The leaders are trained volunteers motivated by their faith and they provide our GB structured programme of activities.

Members earn programme awards as well as taking part in additional activities. N'vestigate Group are learning about Spring. The first session was all about St David, then Lent (we cooked pancakes), followed by the wonder of God's Creation and how flowers grow (we sowed seeds in the Church garden and planted bulbs to take home). The final weeks are about Mothering Sunday and creation in Springtime about birds and their nests. N'Gage group are studying 'Inner Beauty' – there is a lovely display on the Pre-School room noticeboard. N'Counta/ N'Spire group are working on their Hostess badge and also ironing crisp packets to make blankets.

Additional activities have included a 'Night Walk' for Children in Need, a coffee morning for Christian Aid and next week is our fundraiser for Comic Relief.

For more information please contact Marian Haley 01142361316 or Annie Russell 07739468826 or Cherry Mair 07853278612. We have room for new members.

Other regular church activities

For the young at heart

Games, Chat, Crafts

Wednesdays 12.30—3.00pm in the church. Indoor bowls, scrabble, chess, dominoes, jigsaws and cards, knitting and crafts

Contact Ruth: 01142686507

Tea Toast & Time 4 Thinking

Thursday at 10.30, upstairs in the church lounge.

A time to reflect on what following Jesus is all about. A place for those seeking answers.

Contact Sue: 0114 2307556

Harbour Coffee

On Wednesdays in term time from 3.30—5.30pm in the music room.

Friendship Club—Fortnightly

Tuesdays at 2.00pm in the church hall. A programme of speakers on a variety of subjects.

CHARLIE

AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY

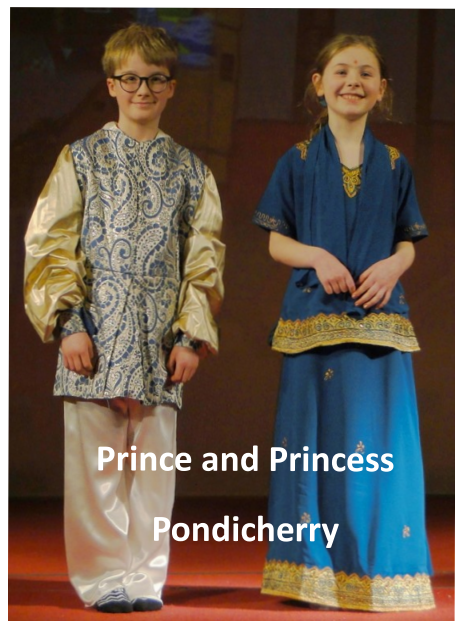
In the February half-term holiday over 70 children and young people came together to bring Roald Dahl's famous story to life in our annual pantomime. Over 300 people of all ages were thrilled to meet the 42 Oompa-Loompas, Mr Wonka's fiendish dentist parents and 2 unfortunate patients, and the 5 families who found a Golden Ticket and came to Sheffield to enter Mr and Mrs Wonka's amazing factory. We watched the gluttonous Gloops disappear into the chocolate river and shoot up through the roof to end up in fudge. The Salt sisters were grabbed by our 13 lovely young squirrels and pushed down long chutes to the council tip. The rude and ignorant Beauregarde twins ended up as giant blueberries, while the equally rude and ignorant Teevee twins were shrunk into tiny dolls, all before our astonished eyes. That left the impecunious Bucket family, with the bed-ridden grandparents having discovered that getting out was much more fun. Charlie and his twin brother Karl were chosen by Mr and Mrs Wonka to inherit the factory, but only after a holiday for all the family on Prince and Princess Pondicherry's tropical island paradise.

We all enjoyed the dances and songs (even the audience's efforts), the hilarious jokes (2% of the total but worth waiting for), the amazing costumes, and the happiness on the children's and even the teenagers' faces. And I am sure that we all realised (without being told) that the story was a perfect example of what Jesus said in Matthew 13 verses 45-46, with paradise being our reward.

Thank you to all the children and young people involved, and to the team of amazing adult and teenage helpers. We break with tradition to mention one by name: Philip Hall, who added Willy Wonka to his long list of characters who have entertained us gloriously over 20 years (Buzz Lightyear, Caractacus Pott, Friar Tuck, Gaston and various Dames come to mind). Philip has decided to take early retirement, but we hope to coax him back in cameo roles.



Mr & Mrs Wonka



Prince and Princess
Pondicherry



The Gloop family



The Bucket family



The Oompa-loompas



The Salt family



The Beauregarde family



The Teavee family



At the Dentist's



The Squirrels

SERVICES AT

THE CHURCH AT BENTS GREEN

All are welcome at these services.

Sunday morning at 10.30 am. During morning service there is a creche for little ones, Sparklers and Sparks clubs for younger children and Fireworks and Sunday Club for older children and young people.

Sunday evenings at 6.30 pm. An informal service often including tea, coffee and time to chat about the Christian faith.

Café Worship at 10.30 am on the first Sunday in the month. This is a more informal service where you can make yourself feel at home with drinks available at any time during the service.

Wednesdays at 10.00 am. Midweek service followed by coffee.

Easter 2022 events

Messy Easter - Sunday 3rd April 2022
from 2pm until 4pm A family friendly afternoon of crafts. All are welcome, especially young children.

Maundy Thursday Service - 14th April 2022 at 7pm A special evening service taking place at Bents Green with friends from Banner Cross.

Good Friday Cross Walk - 15th April 2022
at 9:30am We have a short service at Bents Green starting at 9:30am and then walk down Ringinglow Road, carrying the cross.

Easter Sunday morning Service - 17th April 2022 at 10:30am A service of celebration, at our usual time of 10:30am.

CONTACT US

Minister: Rev Tim Crome, Tel - 0114 4389012

Youth Minister: Cherry Mair- 07853 278612

Church website: www.bentsgreenmethodist.org.uk

By email If you would like to contact us by email you can do so by completing the form on our website at www.bentsgreenmethodist.org.uk

Facebook You can also send us a message via our Church facebook page and 'like' @BentsGreenChurch on facebook for information on special events and other updates.

By phone The Church office telephone number is (0114) 2361912 but this is not manned. Answerphone messages are checked periodically but we would recommend one of the other methods above for getting in touch with us if possible.

Room booking enquiries The church has a number of rooms available for hire of varying sizes and shapes. Details of the room facilities are available on the church website. For room booking enquiries you should contact Peter on 0114 2686507.