

Junior Church Camp at Kearsney – 23rd to 30th July 2016



Painting made during a workshop with individual camper's fingerprints

The theme for this year's Camp was "Golden", reflecting the fact that it was the 50th anniversary of the first one in 1966. Each day we took a different decade, starting with the sixties on Sunday, and used it as a basis for our morning and afternoon worship sessions, to look at the life, ministry, death and resurrection of Jesus. It was, of course, also a "golden" opportunity to dress up in the style of each decade, which many people eagerly grabbed with both hands...



Dressing for the nineties!

On Sunday we had 79 guests on site to help us celebrate our 50th anniversary. The weather was glorious, and many people who hadn't seen each other for years were able to renew old friendships. There was a bouncy castle, an inflatable "gladiator" arena and a bungee run, as well as an African drumming workshop.



Sunday's Celebration day

A buffet lunch and evening barbecue were enjoyed by all, while the afternoon worship session was a wonderful celebration of our 50 years, with people taking part saying how important Camp had been in their lives, and included an explanation of how to make a sleeping bag from blankets by Heather Jamieson, an original camper from 1966. The prayers were written by Fiona Dibble, a member of Camp staff for many years, who now lives in Michigan.

Other activities during the week included bivouac making, archery, a water slide, campfire sing-along, and a fun packed day out by coach at Betteshanger Country Park, where a climbing wall and assault course were enjoyed by everyone.

The 34th annual Egg Race was held in nearby Russell Gardens, amidst much excitement....



Fun at Betteshanger Country Park

This year the total on site was 107, of whom 30 were in the age range 8 to 15 years old, for whom Camp is intended. We had 12 children under Camp age (Campers of the future!) with their parents, and 13 in the 16 to 17 age range, who are expected to start taking more of a leadership role as they approach adulthood. A number of the 8 to 15 year olds came as a result of our challenge to last year's Campers to bring a friend for £50 as first timers. Many of these have already expressed the wish to come back next year, which bodes well for the future. We continue to attract children who have no church connection other than Camp, as well as those from churches, both URC and others.

We are committed to a re-connection with our roots in the URC, and have met several times with Cathy Glazier, the new Southern Synod CYDO. Our leader also attends the Synod Children's and Youth work Committee. We are working towards bringing in a constitution for Camp in the near future, and have been greatly supported in this by Lisa-Maria Browning, from the East Kent Synod Area Pastoral Committee. We have also received a huge amount of friendship, support, encouragement and advocacy on our behalf from Rev David Bedford, the EKSA leader. We give him our heartfelt thanks for this, and pray for him and Lorna to receive God's blessing as they shortly move to pastures new, still within Southern Synod, in Surrey.



Andy Russell
On behalf of the Core Leadership Team