

Mission Connect Article for October 2018 Herald

Created for a purpose

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We have recently completed this year's holiday Bible club and the encouragement, enjoyment and teamwork that was evident throughout the week helps spur us on as we plan for next year. This is one of the most important weeks for the church and our theme this year was 'Maker Fun Factory', where children learned they were created by God and built for a purpose.

We are constantly amazed at how God brings so many children and leaders each year, and this year was no exception. With well over 200 children in the mornings and up to 30 teens in the evening, there is no wonder we need at least 70 leaders to help everything run smoothly. And by God's grace that's what happens every year. We are blessed to have many of the leaders come for so many years, which brings stability and experience that can't be matched. Whether they come from the USA, Dublin, Groomsport, Ballymena, Belfast, Bangor, Carryduff, or even Arklow, everyone is a servant, and each has an important part to play. We truly thank God for those who have come to serve each year and to invest in people's lives in this way.

There were five points to emphasise during the week. Each point was illustrated with stories from the Bible. The first was: 'God made you'. Young people today spend so much time on social media, comparing themselves to others. It's easy for them to feel like there's always someone who's better, smarter, more athletic, etc. However, everyone is special to God and we taught the children that they are intentionally, lovingly and carefully crafted by God.

The second point was: 'God is for you'. On days when they feel like they don't have a friend in the world or when everything seems to be against them, people can find comfort in knowing that God is on their side. Day three was the fact: 'God is always with you'. Young people today are particularly vulnerable to experiencing loneliness and social media can create a false sense of connectedness that can lead to physical isolation. People more than ever need to hear that God is with them.

On Thursday, the emphasis was: 'God will always love you'. There are many people today who have never experienced what true love is all about. Our aim was to help them see that God's powerful love is transforming because it's unfailing and undeserved. The last point was: 'God made you for a reason'. God's purpose and plans began before we were born. No child is an accident. No child is meaningless. God created each one of us intentionally. While children may not know God's plans for them yet, it's exciting to know how transforming it would be for every child to begin prayerfully seeking God's purpose for their lives, even today!

Please pray:

- Give thanks for the children and teens who came to the holiday Bible club and pray that they will seek God's purpose for their lives.
- Pray for the ongoing follow-up with children and parents.