



Some snapshots from our story- October 2023

The parish's previous youth worker moved to work with The Message Trust in England in March 2021 (during the pandemic period) having served for almost 5 years in the Parish.

Our most recent youth ministry intern (through Belfast Bible College) also took up a new post with another Church of Ireland Parish.

Our parish employs a Children's and Family worker who is currently working an enhanced number of hours in order to maintain a programme for young people.

The Parish's Vision

Our vision is summarised in the simple motto "Down to Earth" against which we assess everything we do as a parish.

Down to Earth reflects the essence of incarnational theology- that Jesus came down to earth to save us- but also helps us to think of how we serve the community in which we are grounded.

The Parish Staff team is currently made up of:

Full time clergy:	Vicar	The Rev'd Canon Gareth Harron
	Curate	The Rev'd Cosmin Pascu

Retired clergy Two retired clergy serve in the parish along with other lay ministers.

Staff Team	Children's and Family Worker	Angela Megarry
	The Vicar's Secretary	Pauline Clarke
	Contemporary Worship Co-ord	Simon Burrowes
	Organist and Choirmaster	Edwin Gray

Safeguarding and the Parish Panel

Youth Ministry in Hollywood Parish happens under the Church of Ireland's Safeguarding Trust Child protection scheme.

The current youth programme is as follows.

Sunday Morning Youth Programme

This runs parallel to our 9.45am morning service

Sunday Evening Worship 7.00pm

Open to all members of the church family- but with a special aim to reach young people.

Roots/Rooted Tuesdays

Weekly discipleship groups for Year 8 up- including focussed sessions for boys and girls.

Confirmation Class Sunday Evenings

This runs at least every other year but sometimes annually when the number of candidates allows
It currently occupies a space often used for informal programme/relationship building with older youth.

GAP Fridays

This Youth Club "Gap" has not resumed since it stopped meeting due to the pandemic and because of the absence of a parish youth worker.

Choristers

In association with the parish choir- this reaches children and young people from 8-14 yrs.
The Parish Youth worker is not involved in this ministry but takes an interest in its members.

Youth Band Sunday services- morning and evening

This is led by the Contemporary Worship coordinator.

Street Puppets Outreach group

A growing community outreach which we hope will also extend outside the boundaries of the parish.
It is currently coordinated by our Children's and Family Worker

Many of our young people test the waters of leadership by helping children's ministry in Sunday school settings, community outreach through the Street Puppets team as well as taking part in the diocesan "Serve" leadership training.

Many are also involved in diocesan youth initiatives and camps and attend the Summer Madness festival and/or New Wine events.

Our parish enjoys partnership with:

- Other Holywood Churches- providing things like a light party as an alternative to 'Halloween'
- Holywood Schools- our youth workers have been involved with mentoring programmes in the local integrated Priory College
- External para-church and educational groups like Love for Life
- Exodus in international mission teams.
- Other Church of Ireland parishes- through partnerships in Kildare and Newcastle, Co. Down.

The challenges (not just specific to Holywood Parish)

Youth ministry was affected by the pandemic- but we have seen a lot of encouragement in recent months.

Increased awareness of mental health issues among young people.

Like most churches we struggle to recruit and retain youth ministry volunteers.

Drawing young people deeper into the worship life of the church.

Losing contact with young people when they go to university. However, we are now seeing more young people stay closer to home for third level study.

Feeling like one of many voices competing for the attention of young people- and the busyness of home and family life.

Our hopes

We want to see our young people (and our children and older people!) disciplined in faith, filled with God's Spirit, equipped to serve and reaching others in grace and truth.

If you have any other questions- please contact:

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