



Ramseys and Upwood Churches

Children and Families Termly Newsletter



Autumn 2022

Firstly, welcome to the first Ramseys and Upwood Children and Families newsletter. Let me introduce myself, for those of you who have not yet met me. I am Hayley Challinor and I began the role of Children and Families Missioner (funded by the Changing Market Towns Initiative) in September 2022. My role is to re-establish and support all the great work that was done prior to and through COVID lockdown in church and in the local schools and to investigate 'fresh' ways of sharing the message of God within our local communities.

The team felt that it would be a good idea to share some of the great things that have been going on for children and families in our church communities this term.

HARVEST FESTIVAL

We had delightful Harvest Festivals this year, where we had lots of new families. At St Thomas a Becket, the children enjoyed taking the goods down to the altar and then got busy completing some harvest crafts in the children's corner.



We endeavour to put out relevant activities in the children's corner at every service. We also have a range of Christian books, games and activities that the children can self-select whilst in church. We have found that this helps the children and adults to enjoy the service together.

FEN CHURCH

Last month we trialled our first Fen Church – an informal service where we meet God in his creation. We had a wonderful afternoon making bug shelters and a large natural sculpture. The hot chocolate, cream and

marshmallows flowed, as the sun set. It felt quite magical.



We are planning to develop this idea further in January so look out for more information in church, on the Facebook page, on the website or in Spotted in Ramsey.

HOT CHOCOLATE AT HALLOWEEN



A small group of us took to the streets of Ramsey on the evening of Halloween to share the love of God and to provide hot chocolate,

cream and marshmallows with the trick or treaters. We also sent them safely on their way with tea lights to show Jesus as the light of the world. It was a lovely evening and we had so much positive feedback. 😊



SCHOOL OUTREACH

It has been a busy and exciting time, rebuilding our relationships with the local schools since lockdown. See below for a list of some of the events that have taken place where the church has linked with our schools in Ramsey, Upwood and Ramsey St Mary's:

- Harvest assemblies in two schools.
- Christmas activity sessions for younger children in two schools.

- Spiritual forest school in one local school.
- Christmas services in our churches for all four local primary schools.
- Open the Book assemblies in three local primary schools.
- A Christian after-school-club in one local school – with 20 children in attendance.



In the New Year, we are offering a package of assemblies across the school year, support for RE teaching in the primary schools and reading time for foundation stage children. We are currently working with Abbey College to support with careers information and interviews too.

OPEN THE BOOK

It has been delightful to see the 'Open the Book' teams taking the stories from the Bible into our primary schools. We have a strong team of 18 volunteers full of enthusiasm for sharing the Bible in school. Thank you so much to the gang. 😊

RAMSEY LIGHTS SWITCH ON



It was wonderful to be a part of the Christmas lights switch-on on 26th November. We turned the bus shelter into a stable and dressed up as Nativity characters.

Children and adults were encouraged to dress up and have photos taken. We even got the dog dressed up as a sheep! Thanks to the community for taking part.



CRAFT AND CANDLES

On 10th December we held our first ever 'Crafts and Candles' service aimed at families with younger children. It was lovely to see so many turn up to hear the story of the birth of the son of God and to take part in making lanterns to remind us that Jesus is the light of the world. Again, the hot chocolate flowed ... can you see a theme emerge?



CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

Our St Thomas a Becket Eco Group contributed a Christmas tree to the Christmas Tree Festival in St Peter's church in Upwood at the beginning of December. The tree not only looked very festive, but it also gave hints and tips about the small things we can all do to look after God's creation. Here are a few of the examples:



- Use recycled wrapping paper and twine instead of ribbon.
- Recycle Christmas jumpers by taking them to the charity shops and buying them from there.
- Use Eco-friendly cleaning products.

Wow! What a busy term it has been! Thank you to all the people who have helped to make the events so successful. If you are interested in joining our children and families team or want to know more about what we have planned, don't hesitate to contact me.

I hope you have a peaceful and joyous Christmas. Hayley Challinor and the team. Hayley@ramseysandupwood.org (07828057050)