



Oswestry Rural Youth Church

INTERIM REPORT

October 2019

Laying Our Foundations

Plant, Create, Nurture

PREPARED BY
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YOUTH MINISTER'S REPORT

Matthew (Matt) Barkley has been the full time Pioneer Youth Minister for Oswestry Rural Youth Church since September 2018

Turning ideas into a reality.

That is the task I took on when I joined the Oswestry Rural Youth Church (ORYC) team as the Pioneer Youth Minister in September 2018.

Turning the dream of two clergy members for the provision of a church for the young people in the rural villages surrounding Oswestry, into something real. Twelve months ago a rural youth church was still a blurry dream held by a dedicated group. Blurry because although everyone knew that a rural youth church was needed, nobody knew how it would look. We believe that we are creating a youth church that is heading in the direction of fulfilling our vision, which was agreed at a management committee training day in January 2019.

"We are Planting, Creating, Nurturing a network of church communities for young people across Oswestry Deanery"

Since that training day ORYC have in partnership with local churches planted two regular small gatherings called Ichthus Youth. We have also held a number of different stand alone events including a bushcraft evening and a wide game social evening. Alongside them we have also been involved in creating a group at a local college and in sharing our work at a number of local village fetes as well as the Oswestry Agricultural Show.

You will notice as you continue reading that each gathering and event that we have hosted has a very different style, but with one common thread. To introduce ORYC and a Christian presence to the young people of Oswestry.

Matthew Barkley - Pioneer Youth Minister (Full Time)

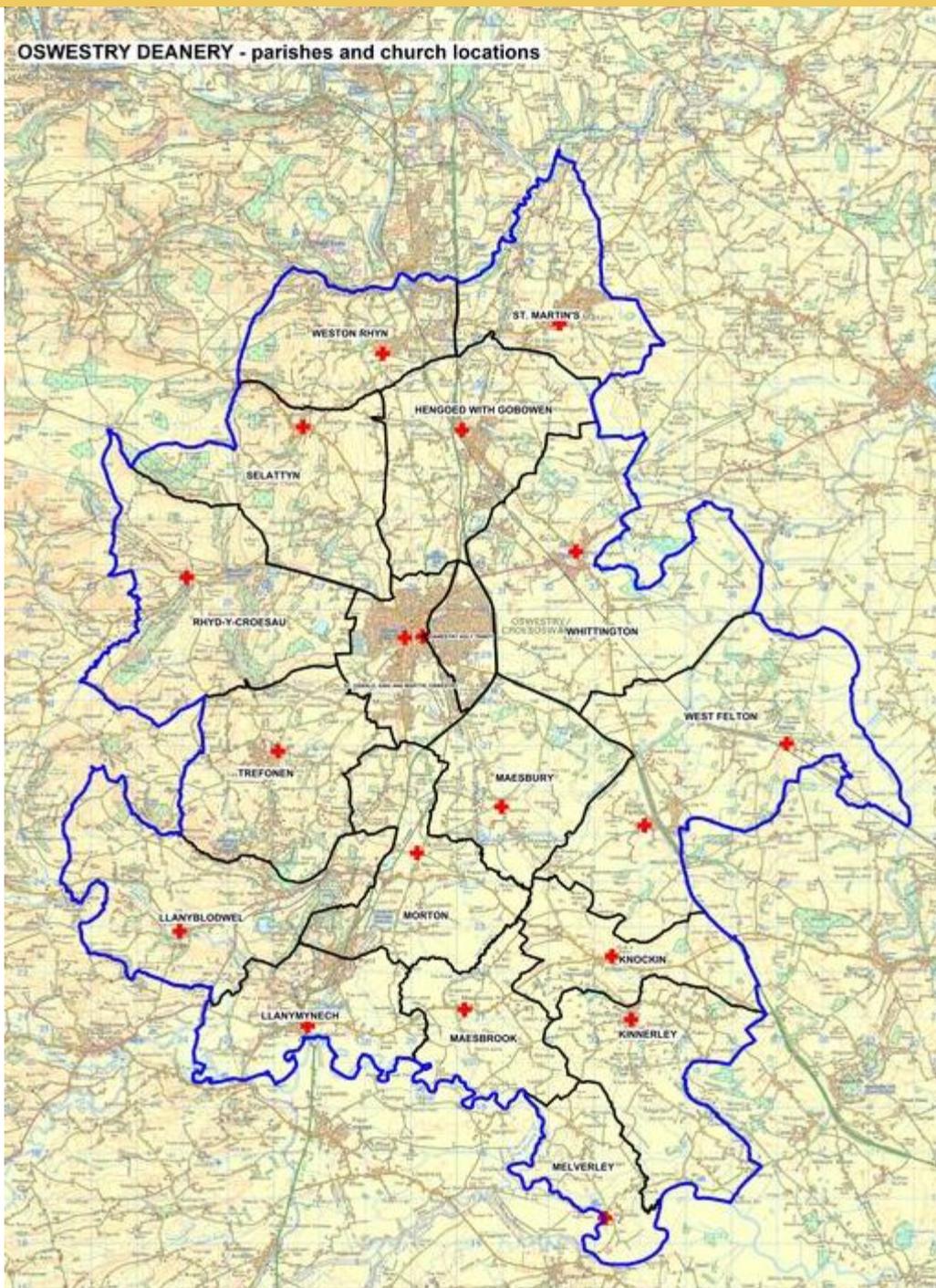
FINANCIAL REPORT

James Hay is the Treasurer for Oswestry Rural Youth Church.

| Oswestry RYC Project | | INCOME & EXPENDITURE for | | | BALANCE SHEET as at | |
|--|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------|--------------------|--|-------------------|
| | Period to 4th September 2019 | Unrestricted | Restricted | Total | Period to 4th September 2019 | |
| External Income | £1,102.31 | | | £1,102.31 | Fixed Assets | |
| External Grants | | | | £0.00 | Current Assets | |
| Gift Aid | £652.50 | | | £652.50 | Debtors | |
| Dioesan Grants | £7,500.00 | | | £7,500.00 | Cash at Bank | £24,862.15 |
| Total Income | £9,254.81 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £9,254.81 | Total Current Assets | £24,862.15 |
| Staff Costs | | | | | Current Liabilities | £0.00 |
| Salaries | £19,970.00 | | | £19,970.00 | | £0.00 |
| Employer's NI Contributions | £1,975.03 | | | £1,975.03 | Net Current Assets | £24,862.15 |
| Pension Contributions (if applicable) | £418.02 | | | £418.02 | | |
| Programme Costs (costs directly related to programme activities) | | | | £0.00 | Total Assets less Current Liabilities | £24,862.15 |
| Office and Admin Costs | | | | | Funds | |
| Accommodation | | | | £0.00 | Unrestricted | £24,862.15 |
| Professional Fees | | | | £0.00 | Restricted | £0.00 |
| Other (T&S, facilities, IT, etc) | £2,348.15 | | | £2,348.15 | Total Funds | £24,862.15 |
| Total Expenditure | £24,711.20 | £0.00 | £0.00 | £24,711.20 | | |
| Net deficit/surplus to date | -£15,456.39 | £0.00 | £0.00 | -£15,456.39 | | check24,862.15 |
| Balance b/f at | 1st January 2019 | £40,318.54 | £0.00 | £40,318.54 | | |
| Balance c/f at | 4th September 2019 | £24,862.15 | £0.00 | £24,862.15 | | |

THE OSWESTRY DEANERY

Below is a map showing the full area of Oswestry including the rural parishes that ORYC works alongside.



WHY

Why do the rural areas of Oswestry Deanery need a Youth church?

Rural Churches in Oswestry have an ageing congregation with many having very little regular contact with children and young families, and even less regular contact with young people. However a lot of these churches have young people who are known to the church. Whether it is because they are a grandchild of a church member, or they used to attend the church's toddler/children's/messy church activities, or maybe they used to attend the church linked primary school. ORYC is working alongside these local churches to:

Prevent isolation

Build a
safe space

Create a community

Break the
stigma
surrounding
church

Reconnect the
church and the
young people

PREVENT ISOLATION

The young people who already attend church within the rural areas of Oswestry are spread thinly with the closest person in age to themselves often being their parents. Through the regular small gatherings and the bigger one off activities that we host, the young people are able to spend time exploring their faith with other young people.



CREATE A COMMUNITY



Being part of a church is not just about learning more about Jesus but also looking out for each other. It is great to see the young people support each other both during ORYC activities and outside them. It is also good to witness the friendships that are forming within the young people regardless of age and background. The support and laughter that is being shared as they grow together in their faith, affirms that bringing the young people together will help them all on their personal journey with God.

BUILD A SAFE SPACE

Every activity that ORYC offers the young people is a judgement free safe space for them to explore and grow. This means that everyone in attendance knows that they will not be laughed at for asking a simple/obvious/stupid question but instead will be supported as they explore the answer.



RECONNECT THE CHURCH AND THE YOUNG PEOPLE



I have always said that ORYC should work in collaboration with the local churches rather than in competition or instead of. Thanks to this ORYC has always approached the local church when exploring creating a youth activity in that area. Only with their support and advice can something happen within that area. We have been able to host a variety of activities (including confirmation classes, small groups, drop in sessions, and family activity sessions) in five Church congregations and they would not have been possible without the local church taking on this venture with us.

BREAK THE STIGMA SURROUNDING CHURCH

If you ask a young person who has none or little connection with church, "What is church?", the likelihood is the answer will be something like, old fashioned, boring hymns, cold buildings, people standing on high streets/knocking on doors, stuck in their ways. ORYC aims to break this stigma in everything we do. In August 2019 we joined the Schools Christian Worker Project and created an activity to take to the local agricultural show as part of the Churches Together in Oswestry District stand. We created a frog flinging game alongside bookmarks asking if those who played would Fully Rely On God? During the course of the day we had over 300 people ranging from 2 to 82+ come and have a go and talk to us about what we are doing. Towards the end of the day we had a group of young adults (early 20's) come to have a go and when given a bookmark one said that it would become his 'bible bookmark' which was amazing to hear and reassured us all that by doing something so different to the stereotype of church was the right thing to connect with so many people.



YOUNG PEOPLE REACHED

Oswestry Rural Youth Church have had contact with over 150 young people through the activities mentioned below. This figure does not include Oswestry community events as during these event ORYC have reached over 300 people.

Groups and Events

Over 60 young people have attended either our regular Ichthus small groups or our less regular events

Oswestry Rugby Club

Matt has been appointed chaplain to the local rugby club including supporting the junior and youth teams. The club sees over 200 children and young people attend sessions each week.

College

ORYC have partnered with the Schools Christian Worker Project in providing a Christian presence at North Shropshire College, Oswestry Campus.

ORYC has also visited two primary schools and is in conversation with a secondary school, regarding a Christian union.

Churches

Matt now has regular contact with the five Messy churches and regularly supports them. He has also been able to visit the majority of the rural churches during their Sunday services.

Confirmation Classes

Matt has supported two churches in their confirmation classes for young people. Seeing thirteen young people confirm their faith.

Oswestry community events

Matt has attended a number of local fetes meeting a number of young people and families. ORYC has also had a presence at the Oswestry Agricultural Show where over 300 people were spoken to about ORYC, God, and Oswestry

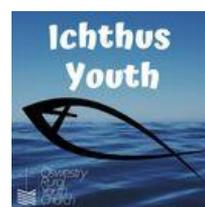
THE FUTURE

This will be illustrated further in the Annual Report due January 2020

The next steps for ORYC are to:

Establish Ichthus

We are striving to make the two already created Ichthus groups sustainable for the future as well as exploring the possibility of planting two more groups across the Deanery.



Support Messy Church

Local Messy Churches are a brilliant way to connect with older children and young people and ORYC is looking to support them in creating activities that will attract those older children and young people.



Continue to work in Collaboration

ORYC will continue to work with local youth workers in creating not only more opportunities for the young people to explore, but in also creating a regular youth church for all young people across Oswestry to come and worship together in a more relaxed and modern style.

Training

Without a team of volunteers the work that ORYC does would not be possible. We would like to support our volunteers by training them in areas that they may feel less confident in, whether this is safeguarding, first aid, or resource gathering.

We will also be hosting a minimum of two young leader training session for all young people over 14 who would like to explore leadership.

THE MANAGEMENT OF ORYC

Although Matt is the Pioneer Youth Minister is the face of Oswestry Rural Youth Church, we have and are continuing to develop a fantastic team of volunteers who give their time and expertise in serving on the management committee. In addition there are a number of churches whose members have given up their time to support Matt as he works towards our vision

The Management Committee

- Graeme Ross - Chairman and Safeguarding
- James Hay - Treasurer
- Margaret Funnell - Secretary
- Reverend Sarah Burton - PYM's Line Manager (In post until December 2019)
- Tudor Humphreys - Practice support to PYM and Grant Fundraiser
- Di Woolridge - Diocese of Lichfield Representative (non voting)
- Matthew Barkley - Pioneer Youth Minister (non voting & full time)
- Reverend Chris Precious
- Reverend Harvey Gibbons

Volunteer Teams

ORYC has been supported by volunteers from the following benefices:

- The benefice of Kinnerley, Knockin, Meverley, Maesbrook, and Maesbury
- The Borders Benefice, consisting of four churches
- Weston Rhyn and St Martins
- Whittington and West Felton