

Ministry Trainee Scheme

Jonathan Wong



^Returner's Retreat in the Peak District

We had a blast at our Returners Retreat mid-September. We stayed at a girl guiding centre in the Peak District and it was good to reconnect with students after the summer break. While the accommodation was very modest, the company made the week. Our morning sessions took us through the book of Numbers with a sweeping view of our grumblings and unbelief against the God who deals perfectly with his people in faithfulness. In our afternoons we read a book about the messiness of relationships as a church and how to go about them in honesty and wisdom and with gospel-shaped vision.

Come and see...

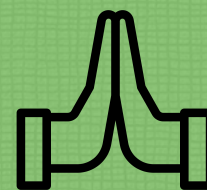
"[T]he Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory, glory as of the only Son from the Father. – John 1:14

The first few weeks of the autumn term are some of the busiest in student ministry. It's exciting to walk alongside fresher students and watch them find their feet. Our events work to encourage Christian freshers to get settled into a church, find Christian mates who will keep them encouraged, and praying that their love for Jesus might grow and spill over to others during their time at university.



Give thanks...

- Returner's Retreat and a good time studying Numbers and getting into gear for the year ahead together.
- For freshers who are planning on sticking around and serving in church.
- Our gracious God who calls us to a blessed life in trusting him and his ways.



Pray for...

Freshers, that they would hit the ground running in living for Jesus during their time at university.

Yr 10 boys Small Group. For them to living out authentic faith and grow in character and knowledge of God.

Deeper humility in knowing my unbelief and turning to Jesus to keep changing me.

Outside of Sunday meetings, we love spending time with our students on Tuesdays where we share a meal together and dive deep into God's word. This year, we're looking at the gospel of John and studying the tremendous claim that John has seen Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and wants to pass it on to us to see him for ourselves. It's amazing when you think about it. A reliable message passed on for millennia from martyred apostles. A history filled with Christians turned right side up through believing in the gospel. And the most persuasive thing of all: coming and seeing the person Jesus for ourselves in the gospel. That's what we're praying students do this year, whether for the first time, or towards deeper belief in knowing Jesus.

Want to live with God?

"Blessed is the one you choose and bring near, to dwell in your courts! We shall be satisfied with the goodness of your house, the holiness of your temple!

– Psalm 65:4

One of the ways we can view the bible's over-arching story is seeing it as searching for a home. For most people, life involves settling down in houses as we know it, for Abraham, it was going on a life-time camping trip as he had it, but how about this for a lodging? Dwelling with God. Wouldn't that be wonderful? Not a place of bricks of course. But to dwell with God! A place incredibly clean, sinless, full of faithfulness. And it's the direction of travel for every Christian who God has brought to himself.

I meet with a group of Yr 10 lads on a Monday evening to study the bible together. We've been reflecting on what it means to dwell with God and the Christian life's journey to be in his place, with his people and in his blessing. And along the way, we're grasping the patterns of our sin and unbelief, met by the gracious God of promise-keeping faithfulness. I'm learning lots from our younger brothers and being reminded how growing up as a Christian can be really tough, both in dealing with personal failure, but also facing worldly pressures to turn away from God. But what a privilege for those who God has chosen to bring near, and chooses to presently dwell with by his Spirit, and with assurance to bring us home. It keeps us walking the line of faith.

It is right to know we're never beyond unbelief, we're too fickle in faith. But the gospel is bright against the backdrop of unbelief, and it transforms us day by day to greater understanding, deeper praise, and more steady faithfulness to Jesus. Please pray for our youth as they grow up learning to walk the Christian life, and for all of us as we grow in our faith.

Upcoming...

Tuesdays
7pm

STUDENT SMALL GROUPS

Pray for our time together on Tuesday evenings, being fed from the gospel of John and for belief in Jesus that leads to loving him and one another.

24
Oct

SUNDAY YOUTH TALK

The 14-18yrs meet Sunday in the afternoon. Please pray for preparation and talk on John 3 and for all of us in taking Jesus at his word.

06
Nov

STUDENT CONFERENCE DAY

Pray for our Saturday together looking at 'Spirit and the Word' and knowing how God works powerfully and wonderfully by his word.