



WEST CAMBRIDGE **CHRISTIAN** YOUTH MINISTRIES

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# ANNUAL REPORT

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**21/22**  
EDITION



# WELCOME

**WCCYM** is a partnership of churches in villages to the west of Cambridge, working together for young people in a manner that they could not do individually.

**WCCYM's** key values are:

To work in **partnership**

Build **trust**

Show **respect**

Bring **hope**

To be **Christ-centred**.

## WELCOME

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Thank you for picking up this report and for your interest in the work of WCCYM.

The 2021-22 year has been both exciting and challenging, as we have gradually moved from a Covid-impacted programme to a fuller range of in-person events, including a weekend residential and a summer festival. The grant we received from the Henry Smith Charity enabled us to develop our staff team, leading to an increased range of activities and an expansion of social media engagement.

Given the lack of paid youth workers in local churches over the past year, the monthly WCCYM Thirst services and regular discipleship and study groups continue to be vital as we encourage and challenge young people with the good news of Jesus, as well as providing opportunities for leadership and growth.

The development of our chaplaincy work at Comberton Village College and Sixth Form and the recognition of its value within the school community for both students and staff has also been a great encouragement this year.

We are deeply grateful for the support we receive from churches, schools and individuals. Your practical, prayerful and financial support are greatly appreciated as WCCYM moves into its 30th anniversary year.

Please read on, give thanks, be encouraged and consider how you could be involved.

**Nigel Taylor**

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On behalf of the WCCYM Management Team

# A NOTE FROM THE TEAM

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We hope you will enjoy reading about WCCYM's work in the academic year 2021-2022. We have found it helpful to continue to use the terms from Scripture Union's 'Revealing Jesus' framework for our work across churches. It continues to help us focus on the different ways in which we can reach and support young people.

**Susie Thomson**

On behalf of the WCCYM Team

## CONNECT

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**to feel connected to a supportive community**

### **Sports and Games Social**

Our first social event of the year was a sports and games night held at Cambourne Village College. Although only a small group of young people attended it was a lot of fun, with some competitive moments mainly between siblings in the group!

### **Ten Pin Bowling**

We had a great opportunity to gather people bowling in January, and was something we'd definitely like to do again!



### **Social Media and our digital connections**

Over the year, we have managed to increase our social media presence allowing us to connect with more young people in the digital sphere. This has seen us create posts, share stories and develop reels (short videos). Some of these posts have had promotional purposes, others a faith based element and some are just fun and entertaining.



One great story showing how these connections bring together young people in different ways is that at one Thirst youth service a young person took a selfie with their friends and shared it as a story on their Instagram. They tag us in it. A friend sees it, and is interested in who this @WCCYM is, so clicks on the tag. The first thing they saw on our profile was a reel of a different friend taking part in one of our activities. This mutual friend then went and asked the second young person about who we are.

### **Kintsugi Hope Group for years 9 to 11**

WCCYM ran a Kintsugi Hope group this year for Yr 9-11 young people. We had a few committed young people take part, and being part of a smaller group allowed for some great discussion on topics such as anxiety, perfectionism and anger. It was such a privilege to be part of these discussions on difficult issues.

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## Our annual Punting trip returns

It was brilliant to be able to return to the annual punting and BBQ social again after the break for the last two years. It was great to have a good number of Yr 6s join us as one of their first WCCYM activities.



# EXPLORE

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## to explore the Christian faith and learn about Jesus

### Christmas Party

The WCCYM Christmas Party was a brilliant time to gather together a larger group, which felt fairly significant coming out of the Covid restrictions. We were still being wary, and deliberately planned some activities outside, but we had a great night where 32 young people joined together for games, craft, food, fire pits, hot chocolate, and an opportunity to prepare gifts to give to Addenbrookes hospital. Mark Watson from Cambridge and District Youth for Christ came to explain his reflections about the true meaning of Christmas. All in all, a brilliant night!



### Easter Games Cafe

We had 27 young people come along to our Easter games café on Sunday 3rd April. We had the option of different activities for young people to get involved with, including active games, board games, craft and the very popular toasties and ice cream! We had a panel of people answering questions about the Christian faith, including one of the young people themselves. We also had a short talk by Adrian Semerene, explaining the relevance of Easter.



### Summer Party

The main event we organised at the end of the academic year was the WCCYM Summer Party! Over 25 young people joined us at Hardwick Primary School on one of the hottest days we had had so far! A brilliant team of volunteers helped to put up tents to provide some shade, and ran games, Zorb ball activities, crafts, supervise the inflatable, and provide a brilliant BBQ. We had Zac Britton (from SSYI / Romsey Mill) come and speak to us, and he did a fantastic job at communicating how we are designed to have God at the centre of our lives, and how much better life is when that is the case.



# RESPOND

## opportunities to respond to the Good News of Jesus

We are making an effort to provide opportunities for young people to respond to the invitation to have a relationship with God. At a few of the events throughout the year, we gave young people a chance to commit to Jesus, but also to those who wanted to recommit their lives to Him, which some young people chose to do. We want to ensure that there are opportunities to encourage the young people to take the next stage of their journey of the Christian faith, and were delighted to be involved in the baptism of one of the young people from a local church.

# GROW

## to grow as a disciple who disciples others



### Thirst

We were greatly encouraged to get back to a full year of meeting in person for our Thirst youth service. Numbers increased again, and we were encouraged to have young people starting to be involved in leading Thirst again, particularly by taking the hosting role for the evening, and a couple of musicians being involved in the sung worship. Speakers for the year included Nick Slater, Robbie Thomson, Steve Gaze,

Susie Thomson, Jonathan Buwert, Tim Williamson, Ruth Hunt and Miriam Haslauer. We followed the themes from the book 'We are Satellites' (in preparation for taking a group to the new Satellites festival). There were two occasions when we didn't have a meal (due to a rise in Covid cases at the time), but other than that, we enjoyed meeting together to eat, and are very grateful to the partner churches for providing delicious meals each month.

### Deeper

Deeper, our discipleship group for those of Sixth Form age, continued to be a brilliant group meeting together for Bible study, discussion and support. We had a small but close group of seven young people involved throughout the year, with both Cherie and Nick taking a lead at different points, and Miriam and Nathan helping at the sessions. These were monthly meetings involving a meal, and a longer time for discussion. Again a big thanks goes to those who provided meals for this group - we are very thankful for your generosity.



## Small Groups

In the last academic year we ran some small groups as an opportunity for young people to gather together and explore Christianity in a number of different ways. These groups included ones based around craft, board games, online gaming, and one focused on social media. This one included looking at issues surrounding social media, how it related to the Christian faith, and creating some content for WCCYM's Instagram account.



## WCCYM Weekend

It was brilliant to finally be able to run a residential again, and WCCYM weekend returned from 18th to 20th March 2022. We had a few set-backs including our speakers unfortunately needing to leave due to illness, and a surprise early-morning fire alarm after a pillow fight in one of the rooms! But overall it was a great weekend, and we were pleased to have 19 young people join us. Some of the Deeper group prepared a prayer room with a variety of activities, which was a welcome addition.



## Satellites

In the summer we took a group to Satellites, the new youth festival organised by Youthscape. Again it was fantastic to get away for another residential, and to return to taking a group to a much larger event, with excellent talks, encouraging times of sung worship, and a variety of activities. The young people enjoyed the freedom of being able to choose different venues and cafes, and it was helpfully held in Peterborough making it easy for us to get to! We were joined by a couple of other groups who camped with us, and the young people built up some good friendships across the groups. We were very grateful to volunteers Ken and Simon for keeping us fed with delicious meals for the 5 days we were there!



# WCCYM IN SCHOOLS

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Despite all the restrictions and changes over the past two years, we have continued to be passionate about supporting schools in a holistic way through the provision of pastoral and spiritual support as well as to enhance wellbeing and personal development within the student and staff population. We continue to work in Comberton Village College, Cambourne Village College and Comberton Sixth Form College and have even been able to share our experience of schools work with youth workers from across the area.

## PASTORAL SUPPORT

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**encourage to flourish**

### **One-to-One**

Cherie and Susie were involved in one-to-one pastoral support in school throughout the year. We have a service level agreement with Comberton Village College (including the Sixth Form) to provide some financial support in this way, so some of it has been covered through that, and some given free-of-charge by WCCYM. At Cambourne Village College Susie also worked with some students to provide one-to-one support as part of WCCYM's giving to the school. Referrals are done through the colleges, through tutors, heads of year and other staff members. The usual pattern is to meet with a student for half a lesson each week or fortnight, for a series of sessions, depending on the need. Student needs have included anxiety, stress, bereavement, family complications, and also some work with Young Carers. One highlight was when we were able to arrange for a beautician to come into college to treat a couple of the Young Carers we were working with, and give them a chance to receive some extra care and support.

### **Group Work**

Some of our work in college is also to work with small groups. We looked at friendship issues, self-esteem & confidence, and managing emotions. We ran groups in both Comberton and Cambourne Village Colleges last year, with help from Miriam and Jason (Melbourn Baptist Church). We have used a variety of resources for these groups, including some material from Acet UK, and Kintsugi Hope.



## Sixth Form Hot Chocolates

We have very much enjoyed giving out the Hot Chocolates to Sixth Form students on a Friday lunchtime. This has ranged from anything between 35 and 55 hot drinks a week, while having a chat with students, either about the mundane and everyday, or the more significant. It's a privilege to be able to provide this for students at the end of their week.



## PSHE & PD Topic Delivery

We continued our annual Yr 12 Personal Development session for 240 Sixth Form students in September on Healthy Relationships, but ran out of time for all the content, so went in to do a joint session with a staff member around our digital footprint in January. We also did an E-safety PSHE lesson for Yr 8, repeated ten times so that every class was covered. These lessons are a great opportunity to look at important issues in an interactive way.



## Year 6/7 Transitions

At the end of the academic year, WCCYM again supported the local churches to run a series of 'It's Your Move' sessions for Yr 6s in primary schools, focusing on moving on to secondary school. This included doing the session in a school we had not worked in before, which was encouraging. We were also able to meet up with some Yr 7s who we had worked with at Gamlingay Village Primary when they were in Yr 6, and see how they were settling in.

## Beaumanor Year 7 Residential

Susie was able to go to help for 2 days of the Yr 7 activities week at Beaumanor with Comberton Village College. We had Adam, a work experience student, with us that week as well, so they were both able to go

and help with a group for the two days, getting involved in the different activities. It's a great opportunity to support the school, get to know students, but also get to know staff too. Unfortunately Susie was ill when she was intending to go with Cambourne Village College Yr 7s, but maybe next year!

# SPIRITUAL SUPPORT

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## explore spiritual development

### Christian Union Groups

We have enjoyed returning to running the different CU groups at Comberton and Cambourne Village Colleges, and Comberton Sixth Form. It has been a challenge to build the groups up again, but there have been encouraging times throughout the year. Closer to the end of the year, we tried running a 'Big Questions' group in each school, which brought a couple of different people to one of the groups. We have been very grateful to staff members in the colleges for giving up their valuable lunchtimes to help out.

### Assemblies

We took a number of assemblies throughout the year, in Comberton and Cambourne Village Colleges. Themes included Advent, Hopes and Dreams, and the Power of words. We find that assemblies are a good way for a larger number of students to be aware of WCCYM, and also our assemblies have a Christian message, that we ensure is also relevant to those of any, or no, faith.

### RPE Days

The last year was a busy one for us with Religion, Philosophy and Ethics lessons, taking part in seven separate RPE days! This was partly due to a bit of catch up from some that had not been done due to Covid, so we saw Yr 10s and Yr 11s at Comberton Village College, and Yr 10s at Cambourne Village College. Subjects included the Environment, War and Peace, Medical Ethics and Social Justice. We appreciated the help from local churches who had church leaders and other volunteers come and help with these lessons.



# CHAPLAINCY

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## additional support offered to all

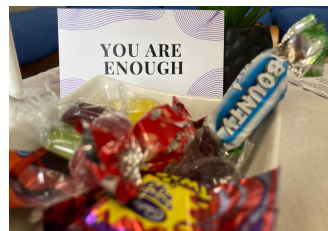
We have been very pleased with the pilot year of the Chaplaincy Project at Comberton Village College. Some of what it involves, has already been described in the previous parts of this report, with an increased amount of pastoral and spiritual support for students. It has been helpful to have it all under the heading of Chaplaincy work, although for students, they will still know us more as youth workers in the college, involved in different aspects of college life. A more obvious development is the support for staff which we have been more involved in. We had already been meeting with Christian staff once or twice a term (and also in Cambourne Village College), but we have now been providing some wider support for other staff members in college. At the start of the year it was more of a challenge, due to some Covid restrictions still being in place. But once the staff room had re-opened, and 'Cake Friday'

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started up, this provided many more opportunities. 'Cake Friday' is the college providing cakes once a month for staff, and we found this a great opportunity to make our presence known more. Every month we brought tablecloths, flowers and plants, hot drinks, sweets and chocolates, and also a card with a reflection, that we placed on the tables. It was a great opportunity to chat to staff, give them a well-needed drink to accompany their cake, and show that we were around to serve them and support them. They seemed to appreciate this, and we arranged some additional times of doing tea and coffee in the staff room after school. We have also wanted to bless the college as a whole, and have given out chocolates to every department to encourage them.

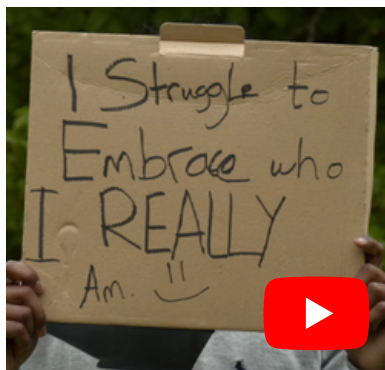
### **Staff Support**

Cherie has been heading up the chaplaincy team, and as part of it has provided one-to-one support sessions for staff who have wanted someone to talk to. This has been taken up by a small number of staff, who met with Cherie for an hour either weekly or fortnightly. During the summer term, the college then included some of this staff support in our service level agreement, contributing financially to a portion of the work, which is a great recognition by the school of the value of our support for staff.



### **Mental Health Awareness Week**

We were very pleased to be involved in an initiative at Comberton Village College for Mental Health Awareness Week, which happened in May. This was partly due to a conversation with a student during a pastoral support session, as he spoke of wanting to raise more awareness about mental health issues in school, so we worked with him and developed an idea of making a video highlighting some of the struggles of students in the school, and giving information about where to access support. Nick did all the hard work of putting the video together that could then be shown to students. You can find the video on our YouTube channel. During Mental Health Awareness Week itself, the head prefects did some assemblies, and we set up a stand for them for lunchtimes with information about support, encouragement cards, stickers and a sign-up list to pledge how to support people's mental health.



### **Additional Support after Mental Health Awareness Week**

For the two weeks straight after this, we ran a drop-in / reflective space for Yr 11s, focussed on exams and the idea of relieving some of the stress that some of them were experiencing. We had lots of creative, reflective ideas, although they were not really used! Some students came for hot chocolates, but it was not quite the quiet environment we had thought it might be! So if we are to do this again, we will consider the best way to do this!

# CHURCHES & VOLUNTEERS

**Working in partnership with local churches**

## **Local Churches**

We continue to work closely with our partner churches, and are fortunate to have such good relationships with church leaders, youth volunteers, and the wider church communities. We are so grateful for the volunteers from the churches who not only give their time to serving youth in their churches, but also with WCCYM. We really could not do this ministry without you! This has been particularly important at a time when there have been a lack of youth workers employed by the local churches, and our overall core WCCYM team has been smaller than usual. It has been brilliant to have Miriam, a Year Out student with Youth for Christ, who was placed with Cambourne Church and WCCYM. She played a key part in so many of our activities throughout the year, and we were incredibly fortunate to have someone so gifted and competent, and keen to get involved! She very quickly was leading activities and we tried our hardest to persuade her to stay! We have ensured that the links with churches are good, and Susie has visited Deanery Synod to give updates on WCCYM's work for the Anglican churches, and made a visit to Comberton Baptist Church in the summer term too. Others to follow!

## **Training and Support for Youth Workers and Volunteers**

We were grateful to have a number of training and support opportunities for youth workers and youth volunteers during the year. As a core WCCYM team, we met fortnightly to plan and pray together. Cambridge Youthwork Collective termly gatherings provided an opportunity for networking and training at a wider level, and Susie co-led this gathering with Jon Sanders from Romsey Mill, with a whole session focused on schoolwork, involving some input from Cherie too. We helped to organise a First Aid course in September for a group of local youth workers and volunteers. We attended the National Youth Ministry Weekend run by Youthscape in November, which was a great time to be equipped and inspired, and it was brilliant being able to take a couple of local church volunteers with us too. We also ran our first youth volunteers training under the 'Neos' banner (run jointly with Clare Cronin from St Andrew's Histon and Daniel Beckett from Godmanchester Baptist), and had a group of volunteers come to an evening about building relationships with young people.



# MANAGEMENT

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WCCYM has a management committee made up of representatives from Cambourne Church, Comberton Baptist Church, Hardwick Evangelical Church, and the Lordsbridge team of Anglican Churches. This committee usually meets 4 times a year to oversee the work of WCCYM. Susie Thomson reports to the management committee, on behalf of the WCCYM team of youth workers. We are very grateful to those on the WCCYM management committee, for giving their time, experience and expertise.

For the academic year 2021/22, the management team has included:

**Nigel Taylor** - Cambourne Church (T) – chair

**Alison Myers** - Lordsbridge Team (T) – until September 2021

**Bill Miller** - Cambourne Church (T)

**Kate Gaze** - Hardwick Evangelical Church

**Keith Tarring** - Comberton Baptist Church (T)

**Sarah Rittman** - Lordsbridge Team – from January 2022

**Sue Chase** - Treasurer

**Ruth Gildersleve** - Secretary to the Management Team

**Susie Thomson** - WCCYM Team Leader

T signifies Trustees of WCCYM

# GIVING TO WCCYM

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If you would like to give towards the work of WCCYM, please go to [www.give.net/20029793](http://www.give.net/20029793) or contact: **Sue Chase (WCCYM Treasurer), c/o Manor Farm, 14 Alms Hill, Bourn, CB23 2SH.**

Please email [info@wccym.org](mailto:info@wccym.org) to find out more.

We need to think creatively about fundraising for WCCYM, so look out for future activities and events. If you are aware of any grants or trust funds that we can apply to, please let us know, as we are always needing to look ahead at how to fund our work in addition to churches and individuals giving financially. We are continually grateful to all those who give to our work.

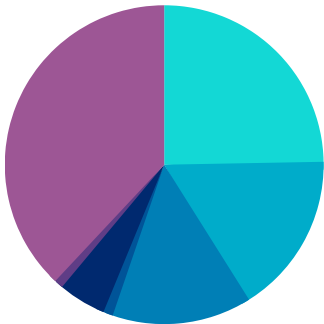


# THE FIGURES

Funding for WCCYM comes from local churches who believe in the work that we do and also from individuals in the west Cambridge area who share our values. Our sincere thanks go to those who give financially to support the valuable work that WCCYM does.

Our planning during the previous year came to fruition at the start of the Autumn Term when we received a Grant from the Henry Smith Charity that enabled us to take on a third person to increase our work with young people. As you can see from the figures, the bulk of our income is invested in the people that we employ so that we can continue to provide a full and varied programme for the young people that we serve.

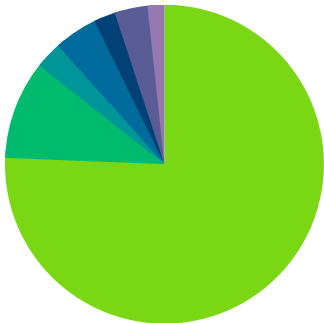
Our relationship with Comberton Village College continues to grow and they continue to contribute financially to the pastoral work that we provide.



<b>Income</b>	
Churches	£13777
Gifts & Donations	£9118
Pastoral Support	£7905
Other Income	£549
Events & Activities	£2706
Fundraising	£500
Henry Smith Grant	£21200
<b>Total</b>	<b>£55755</b>

As always, our gratitude goes out to all those churches and individuals who are supporting WCCYM financially and enabling us to carry out the plans and ideas we have for the young people in our area.

<b>Expenditure</b>	
Staff/Workers	£42221
Events & Activities	£5575
Overheads	£1526
Staff Training & Resources	£2465
Bookkeeping	£1215
Travel	£1870
Safeguarding & Insurance	£953
<b>Total</b>	<b>£55825</b>



# TEAM

## the faces of WCCYM



**Susie Thomson** is WCCYM's Team Leader, and is employed for 20 hours per week. She links with the local churches, youth workers and volunteers. She is involved in all areas of WCCYM's work including pastoral support work at Comberton Village College, and is the main contact at Cambourne Village College for WCCYM.



**Cherie Williamson** works for WCCYM for 18 hours a week. She currently heads up our Chaplaincy Team work at Comberton Village College, supporting both students and staff pastorally and spiritually. She takes the lead on liaising with school staff around topics we are invited to share on and prepares the lesson plans for the rest of the team.



**Lydia Sings** has now moved on from her role as Youth Worker at Comberton Baptist Church. She had a very constructive time away on her discipleship programme and felt that it was now time to step away from CBC and WCCYM. It is sad to see her go, but we pray that she continues to seek God and serve Him wherever she feels led.



**Nick Slater** works 20 hours a week, with a focus on discipleship, outreach and digital communication, including WCCYM's social media presence. Nick had fun running all of our interest based small groups (especially board games) over the past year and has taken on leading Deeper, our discipleship group for sixth form age young people



**Miriam Haslauer** was an exceptional part of the team for the previous year. She came to us from Austria as part of The Year Out run by Youth for Christ. She spent half her week with Cambridge & District Youth for Christ and the other half getting involved in everything we were doing, both in and out of schools. Miriam will be missed by all of us.





WEST CAMBRIDGE **CHRISTIAN** YOUTH MINISTRIES



@wccym