

# **The Anglican Church of Luxembourg**

## **Junior Church AGM Report 2015-2016**

There have been a number of changes in Junior Church during this past year. In the summer Joanne Smith stepped down as Junior Church Co-ordinator. We would like to thank Joanne for her dedication and warmth in this role, and we would also like to thank Duncan, Kirsty and Ella for their support of Joanne. We would like to thank Esmée Chengapen for agreeing to be our Rota Organiser in addition to her valued presence as a leader. Thanks also to Lisa Dishman and Amy Cirje for creating some wonderful musical experiences for the children. These began on Music Sundays and are now contributing more generally to other Junior Church sessions and a first appearance in All Age Holy Communion services.

Our Junior Church year runs from 1 September until 31 August. Children are placed in groups according to their age on 1 September. There are three age groups: All Stars (age 3-6), Comets (6-9), and Galaxies (9-12).

All parents receive a copy of our child safe policy and on signing and returning the registration form, parents are acknowledging receipt of this. Once the registration form is returned to the church office, colour-coded name badges are printed for the child. This helps to easily identify which group the children belong to. It also alerts the leaders and helpers to any new children (as they don't have a badge), and the family can be welcomed and given the registration form and child safe policy.

Thirteen adult leaders run our activities with nine helpers. All have undergone child protection training, part of which includes a criminal record background check. Every week there is one leader and one helper with each group, with the exception of the oldest group which just has a leader but meets in the same room as the other groups.

Each Junior Church session begins in the hall with a short group worship. The theme of the day is introduced, a collection is taken and there is a short time of collective teaching and prayer. Children then move into their groups for further activities related to the teaching and the Gospel for that day.

All material is researched and prepared for each age group in advance closely following the lectionary readings. It is scanned and emailed to volunteers, and then printed and taken to church for volunteers. This is a very labour intensive task, but it releases the volunteer from this burden so they are free instead to develop an understanding of the teaching content of the material so that they can communicate it effectively to the children.

The Statement of Principles for our Work with Children and Teenagers is:

- We aim to create a secure environment of acceptance and affirmation for all.
- We work in such a way that children and young people can discover their place in the church's tradition of faith and recognise that God loves everyone, including people of other, non-Christian, faith traditions.
- We encourage questions about belief, to search for truth rather than certainty, so that they may come to see that faith and doubt are not contradictory.
- All the educational work of the church should be led by people who themselves are actively learning about faith.
- Work with children and teenagers should prepare them for engagement with the world.

*Andy Markey*