

# Vital Signs

Bethel Christian Fellowship - October 2016

## New Day Youth Edition

*Rise Up, Take Courage and Do It'*

Ezra 10:4





## NewDay - an Introduction

**NEWDAY 2016**

After months of fundraising for the youth to go to the NewDay Christian Festival for one week in August - was it worth it? And what is it? Read on to find out!

NewDay started in 2004 at Newark Showground with a vision to help young people find their purpose in God and become an integral part of something bigger. NewDay believe that our nation is in desperate need of Jesus and that reaching young people, who have the potential to change the future, is one amazing way to change everyone's world for the better.

Now based at the Norfolk Showground, more than 6000 young people congregate to learn about and worship God, camp out together and soak up the summer festival feeling while hopefully moving further along in their relationship with Jesus, wherever that may be.

This issue of *Vital Signs* celebrates what the youth of Bethel's Fever group got out of the week, and what they would like to share with you as an expression of their gratitude for all your support and prayers throughout this experience.

## Smart phones and smart relationships

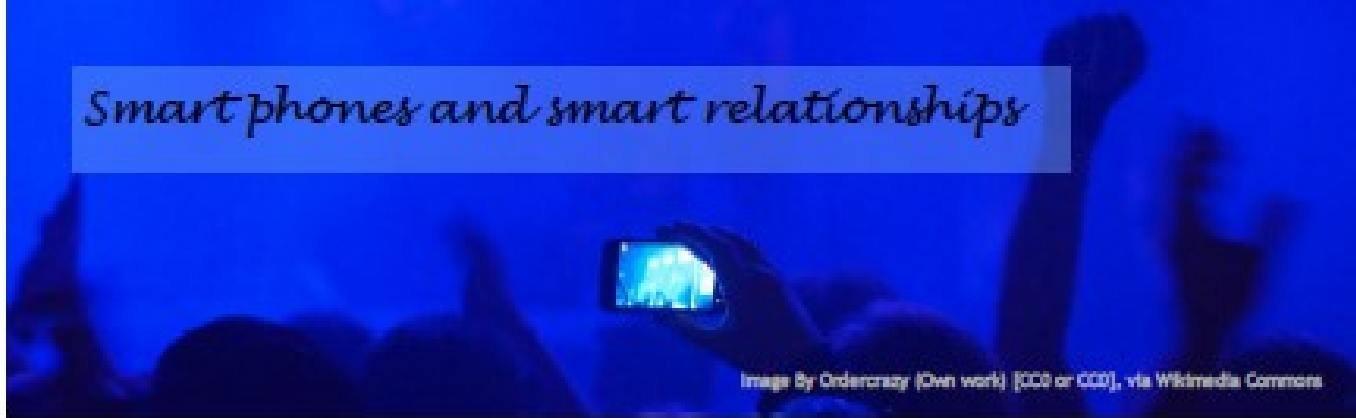


Image By Ordercrazy (Own work) [CC0 or CC0], via Wikimedia Commons

Those of us who are old enough to remember red telephone boxes with buttons - Button A and Button B, if I recall correctly, will probably sometimes look with wonder on the modern generation of smart phones and our children and grand children who use them.

I saw recently results of a study on mobile phone use amongst students at University - I thought the conclusions were worth repeating. The researchers stated that mobile phones do improve the maintenance of personal relationships within the student population, but only if the person has enough contacts. The extent of the phone use was irrelevant, but the students felt more social support if they had more contacts. The number of contacts also impacted positively on the number of calls and texts received and texts sent.

More texts were sent than calls, and amongst the more socially outgoing students these were intended to show affection and to enhance social contact. Sadly however, amongst the lonelier students, the calls and texts were fewer and the contacts less meaningful. The final conclusion was quite an eye catching statement:

*"It seems then that just as guns don't kill people (people kill people), mobile phones neither ruin nor improve relationships on their own - this is achieved just fine by the people on either end."*

At the heart of the Christian faith is a relationship. As a disciple of Christ, I have a deeply heartfelt relationship with God, through the forgiveness of Jesus. Through being born again, I become a child of God. Moving forward, by growing in the knowledge of Jesus, I become a mature son or daughter of the Living God. Talking to God in prayer often feels so much richer than just talking into a smart phone - even if the reply is less immediate.

This heavenly relationship forms a pattern - whatever the tools we use, whether text, face to face or by making a call, let's use our smart phones to the Glory of God. I can use my words to reflect the love that I have through Jesus. What a benefit it is to show our love for each other, and just as Jesus has forgiven us, to forgive one another too.

*Gordon*



## What the 15-19 year olds thought...

Against all hope, Abraham in hope believed. Romans 4:18.

**Harry Pudney:**

My favourite part of NewDay was the LZ7 performance. When I look back I think of the great football team and how we had great banter with neighbouring churches.

**Joe Brett:**

My favourite part of NewDay was the teaching, the seminars really stand out for me.

**Lilly Brett:**

NewDay gave me a realisation that I am not as good a Christian as I thought I was! I feel like I respond to people differently since I came home.

**Matt Goodfellow:**

My favourite part of NewDay was the social aspect and banter.

**Luke Taylor:**

I was really happy while there but did feel overwhelmed at times. I was surprised by how the Holy Spirit was able to break out and allow built up emotions to be released. I had a deepened closeness to God. I felt that Simon Brading's worship helped me to engage better with the music. Since being at home I have felt a strong desire to become a worship leader and will be obedient in baptism. I have also started to pray more.

**Sophie Carey:**

I felt a bit nervous because I had never been to NewDay before, but once we got there and as the week went on I felt less anxious. Suzy really made a deep impression on me following a good one to one talk one evening out of the Big Top.

**Abigail Lottering:**

While there I felt a hunger for God and I became closer to Him. I felt a connection with the teaching and I enjoyed having the time with friends. Now at home I feel like I may want to share more with Fever, and maybe look to God for some words and pictures.





**Stephen Lottering:**

I felt I got to know God better at NewDay, a privilege so many other people don't have, and to know the youth group better too. The healing night stands out the most to me from the week - you could actually see healings happening! Since being home I feel my Bible readings are being applied more effectively, and I am planning on making it part of my daily routine.

**Chrissy Moon:**

Coming home from NewDay I felt energised and that things were going to be different. How amazing it'll be to see all the baptisms! I've been worrying less about control, realising that we can do nothing without God, and trusting in Him to transform me along the way. I feel able to talk to my family more about my faith. I'm a little bolder and more open. I'd like to see a new Alpha course starting at my 6th Form - with me running it!

**Georgia Cameron:**

I was raring to go to NewDay! And once I was there I loved it! I especially enjoyed taking part in the Battle of the Bands (semi-finalists!). I was surprised to see how connected the youth ALL became to God. How the worship drew people in to God and to getting to know Him more really stands out for me. Now I'm home I would like to become closer to God, try to do His will and follow my calling to baptism.

**Izzy Cameron:**

In my excitement to be there I was ready to feel the Spirit of God. I became happier as the week went on although maybe because I'd adjusted to less sleep! My favourite part was the songs, the fast songs were exciting and the slow songs drew me closer to God. I felt that the worship was different this year. It helped me draw inwards and closer to God for a deeper, different experience of Him. I want to be baptised now I'm home.

**Alex Waring:**

Although I've been to NewDay a good few times before, I always look forward to it and watching what God will do. During the week I was having a few problems with my knee, so I decided to pray for healing. I was expectant I think for God to do wonders, and as people went up to

share their healings, I was left getting more and more angry at how unfair it seemed. In the end my knee is healing (if slowly) and I learnt that God doesn't always work like that, and you need to have faith that He knows what He is doing more than you! An aim of mine now is to have more faith in healing in the future.





## *What the Leaders thought...*

2016 was the fifth year that David and I went to NewDay and our fourth year as group coordinators. We had our largest group to look after, 21 youth in all. We were blessed to share responsibility with Chris and Suzy Taylor, and Andy and Jean Brett. We were also really blessed to know that the whole church had got behind our youth again, both in raising funds towards the costs and also in prayer for them whilst they were at the event.

At the end of NewDay this year Gary said "They've obviously had a great time, I hope you got something out of it too, Mel!" I would be lying if I told you that the run up to, the week of, and the week after NewDay weren't enormously hard work. Anyone who has taken a group of children or young people away will know the planning and preparation that goes on before hand, the setting up of camp, the constantly being on duty and hard work whilst you are there, not to mention the general lack of sleep. And yet, because God is so generous and gracious to us, when we are about His work His blessings always seem to far outweigh our effort. NewDay is actually something we really love serving at!

NewDay is a real highlight for the youth. But it's not just a one off, stand alone, event. NewDay really helps the youth team because it builds on the good relationships that have

already been formed throughout the year and builds on the teaching and experiences provided under the leadership of Suzy Taylor. It's so exciting, and a real privilege, to see young people make a commitment to Christ at NewDay, or to experience the Holy Spirit for the first time, or to receive healing, or to hear God calling them to something. Then we come back to our home church and encourage the youth to put it into practise and work through some of the things that they have learnt and experienced at NewDay.

The teaching at NewDay is always excellent. Morning meetings and seminars are split between the 12-14s and 15-19s. Teaching is always challenging and the seminars really varied. You can find all this year's talks on <https://soundcloud.com/newdayevent>. I can recommend some for you if you'd like! And of course, the worship is also fabulous. There is something amazing about being in a group of 7000 young people expressing their love and thanks to God. Different people lead each evening worship, so there is a slightly different flavour to each meeting. One evening this year they experimented for the first time with a full strings section - the result was fantastic!

For me one of the most amazing things about NewDay is always the sense of community and fellowship. In the days of the very early church it says in Acts 2 vs 42 :

*<sup>42</sup> All the believers devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching, and to fellowship, and to sharing in meals (including the Lord's Supper<sup>43</sup>), and to prayer. <sup>43</sup> A deep sense of awe came over them all, and the apostles performed many miraculous signs and wonders. <sup>44</sup> And all the believers met together in one place and shared every*



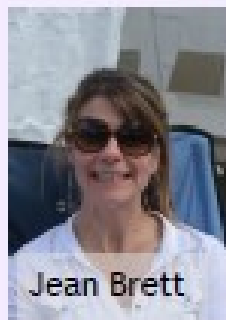
thing they had. <sup>45</sup> They sold their property and possessions and shared the money with those in need. <sup>46</sup> They worshipped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord's Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity<sup>[2]</sup>— <sup>47</sup> all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.

That's a bit like a week at NewDay; teaching, fellowship, sharing meals, worshipping, miracles, praising God, giving and prayer. Doing life together is what God intended for us which is probably why it feels so right and is such a massive blessing at NewDay, even if we're in tents!

Some of the best and deepest conversations at NewDay happen in the queue for the shower or during washing up duties. Being church family is not all about formal meetings. Honestly sharing in the very ordinary things of our lives brings real blessings too.

We're already thinking ahead to NewDay 2017 and wondering how big our group will be by next year, and what God will do with our youth at Bethel in the meantime!

Melanie Cameron



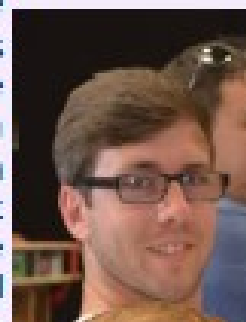
Jean Brett

NewDay for me is about seeing the young people step into having a real faith of their own. The worship, speakers and invitations to prayer are so relevant. I can almost see the young people letting go of the faith they've inherited and stepping into faith in Jesus for themselves. They see how it applies to their own life, right where they are in school, study and friendships. NewDay isn't afraid of difficult topics and I think they find a lot of understanding and freedom. Standing up and being a Christian becomes exciting.

When I was at NewDay I was wondering what God's plan would be for the week, and for the future, what were His plans? And what would come out of it? I found time to really connect in the quiet moments, one to one with God. I really felt a strengthening in faith and that my growth in God is stronger.

I felt a real sense of freedom seeing how the youth worshipped and did wish it was like that at Bethel too - although the youth band does help with this. When I came home I was worried that things would go back to how they were. But I have a real passion in my heart to embrace the changes that God has brought. I feel I have new goals to follow. I'm seeking God's direction and feel it's right to get more involved in the youth programme and develop my relationships within it. I also want to commit to an adult housegroup and make deeper connections there with God and with the members of the group. I feel that I am beginning to see changes in these areas already.

Adam Kingsford



## Suzy & Chris.....

Before I went to NewDay I was very excited in anticipation of how God would move amongst our youth, and once I was there I was pumped! It was good to see the youth engaging. Being on site before their arrival really gives a true perspective. Seeing their faces light up on arrival and watching them getting more and more involved with God.

A guy preached on the Friday night from a very large church in Nairobi (Kenya) who made a deep impression on me. The man was so on fire and quite humbling. He made me change my walk and trust God more. Being at NewDay has changed how I trust God over the financial things. I'm realising He's in control of all.

I have so many favourite moments from NewDay, but the last night was quite epic especially seeing youth go forward for the first time who we had been praying for. I would definitely recommend NewDay to Christian and non-Christian friends. I just wish it was open to adults as well. We could all benefit from this!

Chris Taylor

Before I went to NewDay I felt excited. Expectant even. I knew God would show up and work in these young lives, and mine! I felt nervous that all would be ok, especially as I was feeling so ill, but once we were there I had a great time. It's really important for me to let the church know that I felt safe,

<sup>8</sup> looked after even, by the youth. They

were so kind and caring.

My favourite part of NewDay was seeing the bonding and sharing, and watching the connections and growth in God. There was a great atmosphere on camp and in the Big Top. I loved the music and the worship was amazing. It's given me a different outlook on reflective worship, that there is a place for it as much as upbeat music.

Adam Kingsford (one of Bethel's youth leaders) impressed me so much over the week, he is stepping up and making changes in his life. Generally each of the youth showed a very good level of commitment to God as part of the spiritual journey. I was very touched by the emotions that were shared. It was especially lovely to see Luke connecting to the Holy Spirit.

What I remember most when I look back on the week is the sense of unity and genuine love amongst the Fever group. I think it's visible to see in church too and by the growing size of the group. It's a very special bunch.

For me, I feel God is healing my heart and my own insecurities, making me a better youth leader as I gain confidence in God. I feel that I have more trust in Him. I'm finding things less stressful, I'm less reactive. I am relying less on me and more on God.

I would definitely go again, I will treasure this experience for the rest of my life. It's truly a privilege to be able to serve, support and love these guys at this fantastic yearly event.

Suzy Taylor





## What the 12-14 year olds thought...

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16



Abby Campbell

Before going to NewDay I felt nervous but buzzing, and once I was there I didn't want it to end! What stands out to me is how you knew when you were in the Big Top that you were there for God and that He was there with us all. My favourite speaker was Joe MacNamara (from King's Church, London). The week reminded me that we need God everyday and not just on a Sunday, and that God isn't only a prayer-answering God, but he's there all of the time. I feel sad that it's over but closer to God. I want to try and stay closer to God now I'm home.

The LORD your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing. Zeph 3:17

I was nervous and excited before going to NewDay but looking forward to getting in touch with God more. Once I was there it lived up to my expectations. My favourite part was when I got prayer on the first night. Now I'm home I'm not afraid to worship more freely at church and I want to ensure I continue to build my relationship with God all of the time. The week made me realise you need to put God into all areas of your life. What stands out about the week for me was that by the way people looked you wouldn't necessarily know they were Christians, so now I look at people differently. I feel changed in the way I look at and treat people after the things I have seen.



Poppy Fisher

Being at NewDay made me feel happy, the opening and closing meetings really stood out for me. I really liked the song 'I am blessed - never let my heart forget' and 'the Lion and the Lamb'. Now I'm home I'm trying to make better choices daily. I really enjoyed hearing the testimony of Lindz West of LZ7 (Christian Rap and Dance group from Manchester).



Arran Taylor

## *A prayer partner's thoughts...*

I was happy to be one of the Prayer Partners assigned a member of the youth going to NewDay. It was the first time we've been given the opportunity to pray for one person who went rather than the group overall. The card I sent said who I was and that I was delighted he was going to camp, and that Dave & Mel had asked me to pray for him. I wrote that I sincerely hoped and prayed that he would enjoy the week, take part in the activities, make new friends, listen to the talks, and ask questions. I sent him every blessing and a verse of scripture.

Although I have had no contact with my partner, I continue to pray for him. One would hope that these partnerships will bear fruit and perhaps build bridges twixt the old and young in our Fellowship.

John Appleton

## *Answered Prayers*

Iris Dowers' sister Sylvia had a major operation in September for cancer. We were asked to pray for a speedy recovery and that chemotherapy would not be needed. The operation went well and the doctors are now very hopeful that anything cancerous has been removed and Iris reports that Sylvia is looking really well in herself.

In August, 5 year old Rory Bowerman broke his arm and needed surgery and possible pinning to straighten it, which would result in future surgery. We were asked to pray that Rory remained calm throughout the hospital visits, for a quick and successful surgery and no need for pins. His mum, Carol, reported back that Rory had been remarkably calm throughout the whole hospital experience. The surgery was a success and no pins or further operations were needed. Rory was also completely pain-free once out of theatre - a 'total

On the 10th September we were blessed to be able to hold a Baptismal Service for a number of the youth that attended NewDay and who felt led to take this important step in their spiritual life. Praise the Lord!



answer to prayer'. Praise God!

Phil was taken into hospital in July with a colon infection. He had been very unwell and his situation was worsening. His doctor said he needed to be in hospital for at least four to five days. Phil requested we pray that his treatment was effective and that he recovered quickly. After just two days Phil reported back: I just want to thank you all for the prayers. I am being released from hospital today! God is good! We serve a great God! God bless.

Juan asked us to pray for him in September as he was feeling really ill because of something he had eaten and he needed to recover quickly. Juan reports he has recovered well and is on good form! Thank you.

*If standing in a field with 6000 teenagers doesn't say 'renewal' to you, Anna has an alternative...*

This summer, just before the school holidays, I reached a point where I felt 'frozen' spiritually (ironically, I would also have said it felt like a desert place, but you get the picture). As a mum you put everyone's needs before your own and no matter how much you know you need input too, it can get exceptionally hard to organise it (on top of everything else you need to organise). I'd been giving out and giving out, and finally felt I didn't have much left. My regular reading of lift-the-flap Bible stories with my daughters were good, but just not cutting it! It was while I was writing some poetry, at a poetry group I go to, that God really moved me to book a weekend away at somewhere which has become very spiritually significant to me. The poetry teacher had asked us to think about our favourite place, and write about why it was so special. Instantly I knew where mine was.

There is a community of believers in Hampshire, who live in an old manor house in a tiny village called Greatham, not far from Petersfield and Liss. I first came across it - L'Abri Fellowship, as it's called, as a post-graduate, and have been phenomenally blessed there. God has always met me at L'Abri in the ways I most needed, in a very 'me' environment. L'Abri (which means shelter in French) was originally started in Switzerland in the 1950s by Francis Schaeffer and his family. His daughter, who was a student at a Swiss University, was regularly bringing friends home to their chalet in the holidays who ended up staying up late, and over meals and coffee, discussing the meaning of life, and in particular the Christian approach to big issues. Schaeffer knew this was something special, and felt that with the right approach, this could be extended and more people accommodated. They started to add chalets and it soon became a community which people travelled from all over the world to go to.

Now there are L'Abri's in several countries, all replicating this philosophy: That if God exists and he is Truth, then people should come to his word, the Bible, with their questions, which can stand up to rigorous

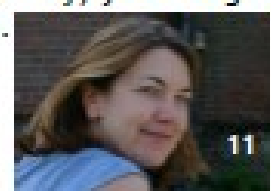
investigation. People should not be afraid to ask the questions which trouble them and there will always be good and sufficient answers available for those who seek with an open heart and mind.

I love this approach! I am not comfortable with Christians who urge others to overcome their doubts and worries by "just believing". If God made us to be as intricate as we are, he did that on purpose, and approves of our searching minds and need to really 'know' truth - intellectually as well as in our hearts. Indeed the two should be linked. There is always likely (in my experience anyway) to be aspects of our faith which we know and cannot properly explain. But this shouldn't stop us from trying. Especially if certain things trouble us, or if we expect others to respect Christianity intellectually and not just brush it off as a simpleton's 'comfort blanket' or 'crutch'.

To me, the atmosphere of L'Abri is a thinker's paradise. People of all ages who go there always get a warm welcome, and there is always something going on, but its focus on community life and on studying the word and Christian issues means the corridors are generally quiet and the debate respectful. Meal times are times to be together, to talk to people you don't know, and might be a different nationality from, but who you share an interest in spiritual issues with. Some people who come to L'Abri are just searching, they're not believers and wouldn't identify as such, but they are very welcome there. All denominations are respected. And I always meet complete strangers who I end up having deep discussions with. It's brilliant!

If you have the inclination, I would really urge you to check L'Abri out. It's not a retreat. You can't hide away there, but you can be yourself and be received as you are. And by getting stuck in, by rubbing shoulders with others seeking God's truth, and by being open and friendly, you can get so much blessing in return.

Anna Faro  
See [www.labri.org](http://www.labri.org)



## *Sermons to come*

Listen again at [www.bethel-witham.co.uk/index.php/sermons](http://www.bethel-witham.co.uk/index.php/sermons)

- 16 Oct - Gordon/Phil Lottering: The Tabernacle #3 -The Holy of Holies
- 23 Oct - Gary Fisher: The Triplets' Dedication Service
- 30 Oct - Speaker tbc: Worship & Being Filled with the Spirit
- 6 Nov - Gordon Crick: The Gifts of the Spirit in Worship #1
- 13 Nov - Cafe Church: Chris Taylor
- 20 Nov - Gary Fisher: Desiring the Gifts
- 27 Nov - Speaker tbc
- 4 Dec - Gordon Crick: The Gifts of the Spirit in Worship #2
- 11 Dec - Cafe Church: Chris Taylor
- 18 Dec - 4pm Carol Service
- 25 Dec - Christmas Day worship at the Bethel building
- 1 Jan - New Years Day worship and Communion

Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old they will not turn from it. Proverbs 22:6

## *BCF Leadership Team*

Gordon Crick (Leading),  
Gary Fisher, David Cameron,  
Chris Taylor.

## *Bethel Website*

The Bethel Website is up and running again! Thank you for bearing with us whilst we sorted out the various problems we were encountering!

## *Big Church Live*

We are going on 16 November.  
See Suzy if you'd like to come!

## *Communion Services*

Sunday 6 Nov  
Sunday 4 Dec  
Sunday 1 Jan

## *Bread Club*

There will be no Bread Club now until January 2017. Anyone interested in helping out when we start again, please talk to Amanda Harrision.

## *Regular Weekly Activities*

Sundays - 10.30am family worship @ Maltings Academy, afternoon small group (fortnightly), fortnightly evening meet ups for Fever youth group

Tuesdays - Evening small groups

Wednesdays - 9.30am Little Friends Toddler Group @ Bethel Building, Church Street

Thursdays - Evening small groups, Fever small group

The Well Coffee Shop, Guithavon Street, is open Monday - Saturday, 10am-2pm, for coffee, snacks and conversation.

Image By Jean-Pol GRANDMONT - Own work, CC BY 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=3111695>

## *Bethel Christian Fellowship meets:*

*at 9.30am on the second Sunday of the month for a cafe service  
and at 10.30am on all other Sundays at  
Maltings Academy, Spinks Lane, Witham.*

*[www.bethel-witham.co.uk](http://www.bethel-witham.co.uk) [bethelwitham@googlemail.com](mailto:bethelwitham@googlemail.com)*

*01376 520705*