

# Network News

*for SU groups*



**Edition 8 – January 2011**

“He is the image of the invisible God.” (Colossians 1:15, NASB)

“The Son is the radiance of God’s glory and the exact representation of his being, sustaining all things by his powerful word.” (Hebrews 1:3, NIV)

We have just celebrated the birth of our Lord and Saviour, and we have been awestruck again that Jesus “made himself nothing” (Philippians 2:7) and came to us humbly as a baby boy. We ponder with amazement his incredible sacrifice, that he was obedient to death on a cross so that, raised in glory, he could send his Holy Spirit to live inside us, not only transforming our deficient characters but also reaching out to the lost, through us.

That’s why our first priority as disciples is to spend time in his presence, so that he really is enthroned in our hearts and others see Jesus when they look at us, and they hear Jesus when we share the Word together.

So, as you start a new term with your SU group, don’t be so anxious about the games, songs and programme that you neglect to spend time in the presence of the Lord, soaking in his Spirit. As the Word dwells in you richly, your words will be full of life and truth when you teach and interact with your kids — despite your own insecurities.



Be encouraged by the articles in this issue, with group leaders sharing their experiences; be inspired as you look at resources which may be new to you, and be alert to whatever God is saying to you. And when you lead your groups, have fun. It’s contagious.

Michele Morrison

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Gregor Innes helps to run an SU group called 3:16 at Stewart's Melville College, a secondary-aged independent boys' school in Edinburgh. We asked him a few questions.

**SU: Why 3:16?**

Gregor: We needed something that stood out from the other 70 clubs and societies in school. Having a number as the name means we are top of the list! We've found it also initiates conversation, giving pupils the opportunity to explain the meaning of John 3:16, or invite others along to talk about God and the 'big' questions.

**SU: How far in advance do you plan for the next term/year?**

Gregor: The four of us leaders, all teachers, discuss ideas with the pupils and then meet in June to focus on the next session's overall programme. We plan blocks of topics (sometimes interrupting a long theme with a short break covering something completely different). Planning and assigning topics to various people before summer inspires our prayers for the group, and also means one less item to deal with in the busy start-of-term schedule.

**SU: What topics have you covered?**

Gregor: We have looked at parables, the Trinity, prayer, daily devotions, how to read the Bible, and also the ten commandments and their relevance today. We've run *Christianity Explored*, *Discipleship Explored* (Philippians), *New Term*, *New Start* (SUS resource), and did a good interactive series on the fruit of the Spirit using the *Lifebuilder* Bible study book. We got the boys to identify the weekly theme by matching it to a flavour, then made posters, ate fresh fruit salad and even planted two apple trees in the school grounds. Finally, we held a 'Grill-a-Christian' panel, ran a monthly meeting to tackle big issues and participated in the *Operation Christmas Child* Shoebox Appeal, which involved others in the school as well.

**SU: What resources have worked best?**

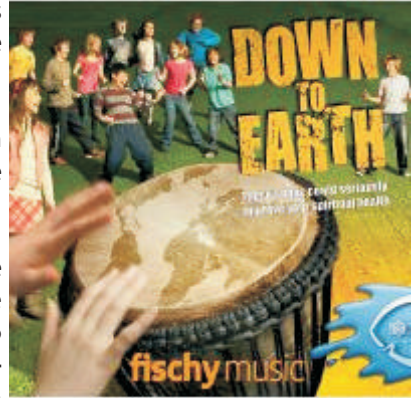
Gregor: *Christianity Explored* course notes and some DVD episodes; *Discipleship Explored*; *Creative Bible Lessons on the Prophets* by Crystal Kirgiss; *Creative Christian Ideas for Youth Groups* by Ken Mosser; *Close Encounters – Unforgettable Meetings with Jesus* by Melvin Tinker; *The Hitch-Hiker's Guide to the Bible* by Colin Sinclair; and *Ten* by J John.

**SU: What encouragement would you give a new or struggling group leader?**

Gregor: Ask your church to pray for the group and for a second person to help you. Contact your local SU worker. Make sure your group is registered with SU and has a firm basis of faith, and everyone knows what it's about. Pray for your school and register with *Pray for Schools Scotland* ([www.prayforschoolsscotland.org.uk](http://www.prayforschoolsscotland.org.uk) — formerly SPN). If there's a local SU Group Leaders' meeting, go along! There will be tried and tested resources to hear about and an opportunity to network with others. Finally, plan in advance — don't leave your prep until the night before!

Lots of primary children love to sing, others like actions and some can even manage both, but where are the good songs and how do we get a hold of them?

Featured below are some ideas to get you started on how you can use music with the young people you are working with.



- Christian Bookshops will have some kids' praise CDs on the shelves. You can also use the Scripture Union Mail Order service by phoning 08450 706 006, or visiting their website at <http://bit.ly/su-shop>. You can also try Faith Mission Bookshops in Edinburgh on 0131 672 2152 or in their other stores across Scotland.
- Stephen Fischbacher's songs ([www.fischy.com](http://www.fischy.com)) are well used in primary schools. Songs are available on CDs and as individual MP3 downloads from his own site or from Amazon. Most CDs come with resource packs or pdfs of music. His album *Down to Earth* has more Christian themes.
- Doug Horley ([www.duggiedugdug.org](http://www.duggiedugdug.org)) has written *Great Great Brill Brill*, *Whoopah Wahey*, *Lovely Jubbly*, *Oi Oi*, *King of Love*, *Put your hands in the Sky* and many, many more. All his songs are on CD, DVD and are available in music books.
- Nigel & Jo Hemming wrote *Our God is a Great Big God* and the three CDs in that series include work by others, too. Samples are available on their site, as are free music pdfs and some action videos for the songs — go to [www.greatbiggod.com](http://www.greatbiggod.com).
- John Hardwick ([www.johnhardwick.org.uk](http://www.johnhardwick.org.uk)) has gone a few steps further with songs and words/music on his site to download, CDs and DVDs to buy, a channel on YouTube to view actions and a free song each month if you're on his mailing list. John's work includes *Nobody's a Nobody*, *Jesus never, never turned anyone away* and *For God so loved the world*.

Make sure you include all songs used on your annual CCLI copyright return so that writers get their share of royalties.

If you want more links, ideas and resources, go to the Network News page on the SU Scotland website where there are many more available to use: [www.suscotland.org.uk/networknews](http://www.suscotland.org.uk/networknews).



Several groups across Scotland are run by senior pupils, whose remarkable commitment and willingness to witness, in what can be a hostile environment, are commendable. Juggling preparation time with homework for Highers and Advanced Highers is not easy either. Here we have interviews with three of these outstanding young people from Edinburgh.

Meet Karl Dickson, senior pupil at Craigmount High:

**SU: How long has the SU group at Craigmount been running?**

Karl: It's been up and running for almost a year now.

**SU: What made you want to be involved?**

Karl: I was inspired to re-start the SU group by a number of things: going to an SU camp, being involved in an SU group outside of school, and by going to church.

**SU: What's your prayer request for this group?**

Karl: That everything continues as well as it is going now with a good number of kids coming, and also for my co-leaders and all the work they put into it.

**SU: How have you seen God at work in your group?**

Karl: When I or another leader teaches a session, God gives us confidence to speak his Word, and he speaks through the pupils who come along.

**SU: Any advice to other pupils thinking of launching a group?**

Karl: Think and pray things through. If you're offered help, take it! At the end of the day, that shows God is working with you, saying 'OK, you want to start something? Let me help you!'

Meet Jenny Isles, senior pupil at Trinity Academy:

**SU: How long has Trinity's SU group been going?**

Jenny: Many years – maybe even a decade! Definitely the whole time I've been there.

**SU: Who led before you and what made you want to take over the leadership?**

Jenny: Jo Black (es-team worker for East Edinburgh) was leading it before she went on maternity leave. I had helped her and wanted to lead when she left.

**SU: Your prayer request for the group?**

Jenny: That everyone would be there, and more pupils would come along.

**SU: How have you seen God at work in Trinity?**

Jenny: Last year there was rapid growth in the number of pupils coming, and amongst my friends, I have been given opportunities to speak about God.

**SU: Any advice to other pupils considering leading a group?**

Jenny: Make sure you're able to set aside time to prepare, and feel free to use lots of resources, adjusting for your own style and group. Also, always get in contact with an SU worker, as it's great to have their encouragement, ideas and prayers!

Meet Bethany Lloyd, S6 pupil, who, with Amy Hume, leads the group at St. George's School for Girls:

**SU: How did you get involved in running your SU group?**

Bethany: When Mrs McGreehin, the teacher who used to run it, went on maternity leave, we struggled to find another teacher to take the group on. Having been a member of the group for a while, I volunteered to run it, and we were able to find a very generous teacher who agreed to stay after school to be the member of staff.

**SU: How long have you been running it?**

Bethany: I've been running it for a year, with much appreciated help from Amy Hume.

**SU: How do you find time to prepare for each week's meeting?**

Bethany: In an ideal world, I would always have hours to prepare, but in reality, with Highers and Advanced Highers, this isn't the case. It has been amazing to see how through the year, each week has come together, either with someone offering to cover it, or with extra time suddenly coming up.

**SU: How would you describe your group?**

Bethany: In many ways our SU group is not "the norm". We run after school, since everyone has to have school lunches, and it is student-led. For us, this works well, and since last January, we have seen the group grow lots. It's a really fun group — we always have baking and a game — and I look forward to seeing how it will continue to grow and change in the future!

## COMMISSION

SU's COMMISSION programme aims to give Christian young people aged 16 or over a vision for the needs of Scotland's children, to equip them to help meet those needs, and to involve them in our ministry in residential events, missions and schools. The programme includes our *Basecamp* and *Lead Up* training events in February and June, placements in SU teams, the Review weekend in August, and discipleship events later in the year. Those involved will be encouraged to help with school SU groups and weekend events during the school year and continue their leadership development in future years. Please encourage suitable people who are 16–25 or older to go to [www.suscotland.org.uk/commission](http://www.suscotland.org.uk/commission) to find out more.

The logo for COMMISSION features the word 'COMMISSION' in a bold, sans-serif font. The 'CO' is in a light green color, while the rest of the letters are black. The 'M' is stylized with a small 'm' inside it.

SU England & Wales has just published volume eight in the *Substance* series of materials for groups of 14–18 year olds (£9.99). It contains ten Bible-based resources, grouped into two modules.

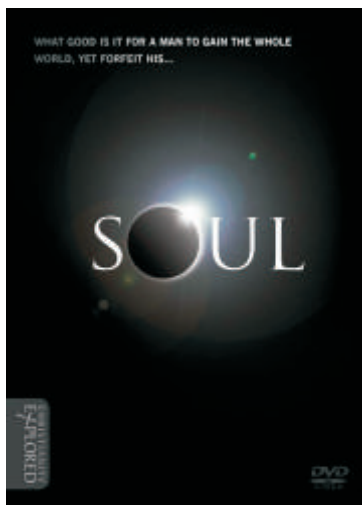


The first module is called *You Meets World* and examines social and political issues that young people face. Covering such subjects as war and conflict, globalisation, politics and poverty, young people are challenged to discover what God has to say and reflect on what difference that should make in their lives now.

The second module focuses on the early life of David — and where would SU be without David? Each session is made up of an introduction for leaders, introductory activities, Bible exploration and response opportunities.

Other volumes in the series cover topics such as Ecclesiastes, creation, the Kingdom of God and God's grumpy messenger, Jonah. View them in Christian bookshops or the sample pages on the shop pages of the SU website, which you can find at <http://bit.ly/su-shop>.

The Good Book Company has reworked the youth resources for Christianity Explored — called *CY* — including a copy of Mark's Gospel and a seven-part DVD called *Soul*, designed to bring the gospel to a new generation of teenagers and young adults.



*CY Nano* is for 11–14 year olds and could be used with or without the DVD. Look for sample trailers and resources on [www.thegoodbook.co.uk/soul](http://www.thegoodbook.co.uk/soul).

Youthwork magazine's resource section gives up to four outlines for teaching programmes each month, and some discussion starters, including those inspired by video clips or intended to help young leaders.

You can pick up copies of the magazine at Christian bookshops for £3, or subscribe for £29 per annum and you get all sorts of other news and thought-provoking articles as well as the resources. You can also visit their website at [www.youthwork.co.uk](http://www.youthwork.co.uk).

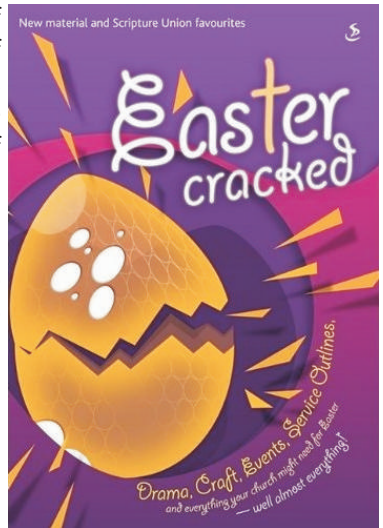
We've looked at Easter resources on a number of occasions in Network News, but then it is the highlight of the Christian year, so it should be high on our agenda. Have a look at back issues (still available on the SU website at [www.suscotland.org.uk/networknews](http://www.suscotland.org.uk/networknews)) for some of those ideas for a whole school involvement. Here are some ideas to use just with your group.

Chris Curtis worked with secondary pupils in Luton to produce a series of posters helping young people to reflect on the themes of Easter. You can find these on the Schoolswork.co.uk website ([www.schoolswork.co.uk](http://www.schoolswork.co.uk)) with ideas on how to use them.

Some of our most interesting discussions in classes during Christian Focus Weeks have been raised by giving pupils a series of images of Jesus and inviting them to share their responses. This is not just an Easter activity, but many pictures focus on this. Try it with a group of any age and church background; either search online for images, or use books, or the PowerPoint available for download on the Network News web page.

Lent starts on Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> March, so Shrove Tuesday ("Pancake Day") is the day before. Would this be the day for the SU Group to sell pancakes (see page ten) in the school? Perhaps you could link the 40 days of Lent (did you realise that you get Sundays off?) with a project related to *BibleFresh* ([www.biblefresh.com](http://www.biblefresh.com)) which uses the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Authorised (King James) Version of the Bible to encourage and help Christians in the UK to get really stuck into the Word of God. Why not choose seven verses (one per week) to discuss and learn?

Passover starts on Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> April, giving the context for Easter both chronologically and theologically. There's a full Passover meal idea in the A4 book published by SU called *Easter Cracked*, as well as many other activities and ideas.



**biblefresh**  
It could change your world

Holding the kids' interest over the summer holidays and attracting newly-qualified members to primary groups both pose challenges. Food, fun and familiarity are common threads in the following suggestions:

- "We relaunched after summer with a karaoke party. It was a good way of establishing the fun we wanted to have as a group. We finished by asking the kids where they thought Jesus would have been at the party, which provoked some thoughtful discussion and set the scene for what we would be exploring as an SU group."
- "We have a taster session about two weeks before the end of summer term for next year's P6s and P7s. We distribute our leaflet to these kids at the beginning of the taster week. We're usually mobbed, and even if some kids never return, at least they've had one session hearing the Good News."
- "We get the P6 and P7 teachers to plug the club's starting-up date and time, and hang posters on the P7 notice board and door to the senior area."
- "Posters and a prayer lunch — or anything that has food on offer!"
- "Give out individual invitations to the target group, hang posters and put it in the daily bulletin. We laminate name badges for every child in the target age group and put them out every week. Many are never used but the children who come get the message that we're there for everyone, and kids who join later in the year see that we've been waiting for them."
- "We have a meeting in school during class time where we do a short quiz, play some loud music and have an informal chat about SU."
- "We put up some posters with a manga Jesus drawing and details of our meeting time and place."

## Strictly Come Praying 2011

*Strictly Come Praying* is running again this year with the theme "Dare To Ask". It is taking place at the Inchyra Grange Hotel in Grangemouth on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> March and at The Link in Dundee on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> March. You should have received a flyer about the event with this copy of Network News.

Why not consider bringing along people from your church or SU group to the event? If you need more flyers, or to book, please

email Elizabeth McDowall at [Elizabeth.McDowall@suscotland.org.uk](mailto:Elizabeth.McDowall@suscotland.org.uk).



It is notoriously difficult to hang on to children as they move from primary to secondary schools. Here are a few ideas for helping young people retain their connection with SU:

- Get leaders and a few pupils from secondary to visit the associated primaries and talk about the group. Inspire them to make a short video of their group and show it, so the new S1s know a few faces and feel invited.
- Hold a joint evening or Saturday event (e.g. swimming and pizza, or a games afternoon) for the secondary group and all feeder primaries.
- Issue personal invitations early in the new term.
- If there's an "It's your Move" presentation being made in a primary school, mention the SU group.
- Hold a Friday night end-of-term pizza party or BBQ, involving the secondary group and all associated primaries, at which an invitation is given.
- Encourage chaplains to host an event for all S1s during the first week of term, e.g. a BBQ, and invite SU group leaders to assist.
- Ask the primary school group leaders to attend the secondary group for a few weeks at the start of term, since children have formed the relationship with the leaders rather than with SU.

It's probably good to take initiatives both at the end of summer term and the beginning of autumn term, bridging the holiday gap and holding the young people's interest.

## Missions Training Day



*Let's Get Going* is a training event for SU missions and people involved with holiday clubs in their own church. It takes place on Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> May at Davidson's Mains Parish Church (1 Quality Street, Edinburgh, EH4 5BB), running 9.45am – 4.30pm.

More details are available by contacting the Edinburgh office on 0131 445 4125, or by looking on the SU Scotland website at [www.suscotland.org.uk/missions](http://www.suscotland.org.uk/missions).

Did you know that SU is active in over 130 countries around the world? As one of the wealthier regions, the SU British and Irish region supports work in Former Soviet Republics (FSR), offering financial support and linking with the work in the FSR in other ways too.

In 2011, for example, the SU Holidays' international project will be to support SU Ukraine as they work in the Crimea region. This will involve developing their campsite and residential ministry. More details can be found below.

Young people of all ages like to participate in practical projects which help the less advantaged. Notice Gregor's article on page two, where he mentions the *Operation Christmas Child* shoebox appeal which his group spearheaded in their school. Similarly, the new SU Group at St Mungo's RC High School in Falkirk collected on behalf of the *Blythswood* shoebox appeal in one of the school's six houses this autumn, with a view to expanding next year.

At Grove Academy, the SU group sold pancakes for Pakistan in the school to raise money to help victims of the recent terrible floods in the country.

Looking outwards and taking action to help others can be an effective way of attracting otherwise un-churched young folk into regular participation in an SU group. Why not give it a try?



## Ukraine 2011

Perhaps there are young people in your group, over the age of 16, who would like to combine leadership training, in-depth Bible teaching and personal and spiritual development with a fulfilling cross-cultural experience.

From 8–23 July 2011, SU International's Leadership Training participants will spend a week at SU Ukraine's campsite in Vorzel for training, discipleship and team-building, before spending a second week doing hands on mission and leadership in Ukrainian holiday clubs and other projects.



If you would like further information about this opportunity, please email Gail McLay at [gail.mclay@suscotland.org.uk](mailto:gail.mclay@suscotland.org.uk), or go to the Ukraine 2011 page on the SU Scotland website at [www.suscotland.org.uk/ukraine](http://www.suscotland.org.uk/ukraine).

# What's Your Story?

Interactive training for those with a heart to see the lives of vulnerable children and young people transformed.

**Glasgow**  
Sat 26th Feb 2011

**Dundee**  
Sat 12th Mar 2011

[www.suscotland.org.uk/beautyforashes](http://www.suscotland.org.uk/beautyforashes)

Beauty  
for Ashes  
2011

## SU Holidays 2011

**SU<sup>11</sup>** HOLIDAYS  
Adventure Holidays in Scotland for 11-16



WISH YOU WERE...  
**HERE!**

 **Scripture  
union  
scotland**  
Right to live by



**BOOKING NOW OPEN FOR 2011**

Find out more at [www.suholidays.org.uk](http://www.suholidays.org.uk)

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We're looking for team members,  
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Call 0141 352 7613  
for further  
details.

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For further details and downloads for each regional area, please visit the regional pages at  
[www.suscotland.org.uk/regional](http://www.suscotland.org.uk/regional)

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