

Learning about Easter through magic and ventriloquism for Ripley children



All Saints Church, Ripley has hosted an Easter theme day with a difference, which including a storytelling workshop, using ventriloquism and magic, to explore the meaning of the Easter story.

Children from Burnt Yates and Ripley Church of England Primary Schools joined together for a variety of activities exploring the Easter events including craft workshops (making simple wooden crosses and Easter bunting), a music workshop teaching lively Easter songs, and a drama workshop bringing the Easter story to life.

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Split into groups named after the fruits of the Spirit, the children made their way around eight different activity stations in different parts of the church, staffed by volunteers from the parish, and surrounding areas. Among those leading workshops was the Revd. Darryl Hall from Pateley Bridge who was accompanied by Gary the Gorilla.

With a teaching workshop on 'the meaning of the cross, children also helped build an Easter Garden and took part in a prayer workshop, drawing simple shapes representing prayer in chalk on the chancel floor (spirals for 'sorry', question marks for 'please', stick person for 'someone else', world for 'a place', smiley face for 'thank you').



At the end of the day, prayers written by the children, the drama, and songs that had been learned were used in an act of Collective Worship for all the gathered children, and many parents who came to share in the service.

Vicar, Revd Paul Harford explained, "The idea was that all the workshops would produce something that would outlast the day - the children would take away the learning about Easter, but leave the church with some gifts in exchange - the wooden crosses will all be hung together as a giant mobile over the font at the front at the back of church from Easter day; the bunting will be taken up to decorate the railings outside St. Andrew's church, Burnt Yates; the Easter garden will stay in the churchyard over the Easter the season; and the chalk prayers were all drawn outside a cross shape, leaving an art installation in the chancel of prayer gathering around the cross, with the empty space representing either the shadow of the cross over Passiontide, or representing the empty cross and tomb of Easter."

He added, "It was also great to have people drawn together from across our Benefice, and outside it, to help run the day, and a fine example of how the collaboration between the two schools can deliver excellent experiences for the children."



(Above- Gary the Gorilla meets some young fans)