

# SUMT Summer Newsletter 2021

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# WHICHEVER WAY YOU THROW US, WE WILL STAND

Putting aside the age-old question of how the three-legged shape might land if thrown like a Frisbee... I have always loved this feisty expression of Manx resilience.

Resilience is a word that has come up again and again this year, more than any before. I doubt that there is anyone in our Island's community whose resilience has not been put to the test in some way; whether financially, mentally, relationally or otherwise.

As we have shared with hundreds of teenagers in our secondary school assemblies, 'resilience is something developed through difficulties that makes us stronger for the next time we face a similar challenge'. And we have seen this first-hand, in our churches, our schools and the teams that we work in.

I was particularly inspired by the response of one young person, when we announced that our February residential was being cut-short based on Government advice and they all had to pack their bags:

"We know how to do this now," was their immediate answer.

We know how to do this.

We know how to completely change our way of life at the drop of a hat, from five days a week at school or work, to seven days a week at home.

And back. From enforced time with the same few people, or alone, to wider social pressures and expectations.

And we know how to go about our lives in the knowledge that it could all change completely at a moment's notice.

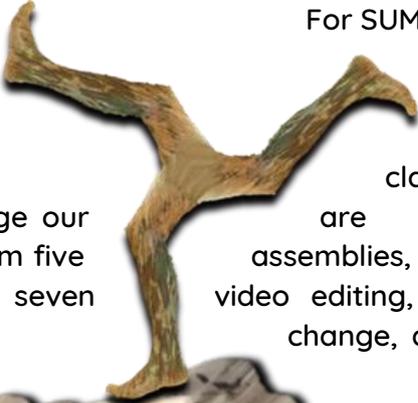
Whichever way you throw us, we will stand.

In the throes of a crisis, it is often hard to see our own resilience, and it is easy to feel worn down by the constant changes and allow insecurity to creep in.

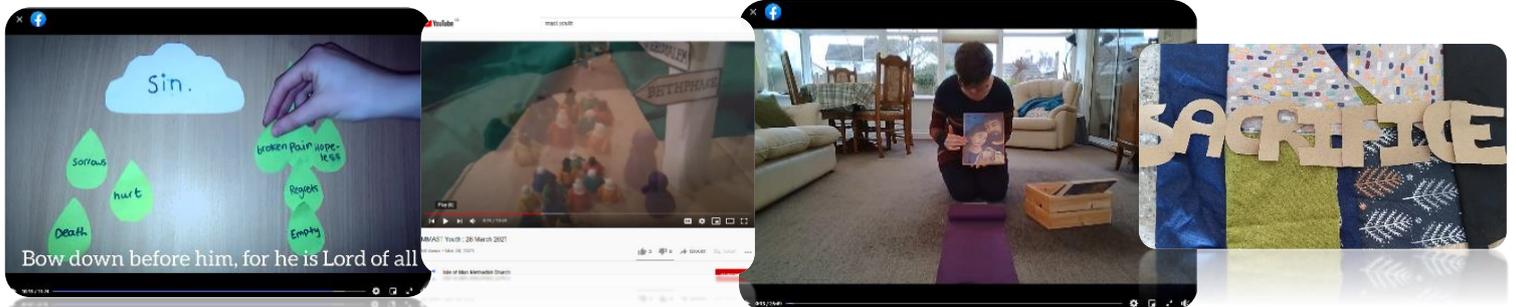
But now life has changed again - Manx lockdowns are a thing of the past and there are joyful reunions on the horizon for people who have been separated for much too long. And as we look forward to the great things ahead, we can also look back and see just how resilient we were and what it was that sustained us on the way.

Ephesians 6:10 encourages us to '...be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.'

For SUMT, as a charity built on faith, it has certainly been a comfort to know that, whether we find ourselves talking to young people in a classroom, or on Zoom, whether we are planning interactive school assemblies, or quickly mastering the basics of video editing, God's mighty power does not change, and it is in Him that we find our strength.



**BE STRONG IN THE LORD  
AND IN HIS MIGHTY POWER.  
EPHESIANS 6:10**



# The Year Easter came TWICE

From the waving of coats and palm branches to the declaration that 'He is risen!' and everything in between, the events of Holy week are central to our Christian faith. This year, we had the joy of celebrating Easter TWICE.

Once virtually, through a series of videos on our Facebook page and on the Methodist YouTube channel, and then again, just for good measure, at the Year 6-9 Residential after restrictions lifted.

Trying to engage young people through video, without any interaction was certainly a creative challenge for our team, which we used everything at our disposal to accomplish in our own homes, (from stop-motion animation, to Godly Play stories, to textiles, to music... very much learning on the job!)

I don't think any of us particularly dream of YouTube stardom and it was perhaps not the type of ministry we ever envisioned ourselves in, but producing a new video each day throughout Holy Week brought the story home to us in a new way. It is hard not to give three

times the thought to a story when you experience it first through script-writing, then filming and again, many times over, in the editing stage! We will treasure these strange memories, stored forever in the mysterious world of memes and influencers, maybe even bringing faith within reach of someone out there we will never know about...

But nonetheless, when the time came to meet in person again, it was delightful to do Easter AGAIN. We wore a lot of literal and figurative hats over the weekend, as we viewed the story from different characters' perspectives.

When asked what they had learned from the weekend, here were a few of the responses given by attendees:

"Different beliefs"

"The other perspectives of people in the Bible"

"The extent of Jesus' death"

"That nothing happened on the Saturday"

"That Jesus was full God and full human"

And, importantly, "That Jesus ate breakfast".



# Do you remember moving to secondary school?

If it was anything like my experience, you turned up on the first day of the new term in September with all the other new pupils that day. You went into the hall, got put into your form groups and then lessons began.

## How things have changed and rightly so!

**TRANSITION** now takes place over more than a year, beginning with visits to open evenings, then sometimes a few lessons happen in secondary school. Teachers from the secondary school visit the primary schools, half or full day taster days are organised, meeting their form teachers and getting to meet everyone who is in their forms/tutor group all happen prior to breaking up in July when as a year 6 they leave their primary school days behind.

This period of transition from primary to secondary school is so important for a number of reasons. It is a major milestone in a child's education and a positive transition into their new school is more likely to make them feel more comfortable, relaxed and valued. They are also likely to feel more excited and motivated to learn as well have good relationships with others. This transition can affect children's attainment and wellbeing in the longer term. They need to feel safe and secure as they go through this major change in their life.

During the last two academic years the Year 6 pupils have not been able to have some of the transition sessions they would normally have in their primary school and so the transition work done with the children has been even more vital than ever. Some children haven't been able to access some of their lessons online, so their academic levels may not be where they were hoped to be. The uncertainty of what was happening around them has made their general well-being suffer and leave some feel quite insecure and nervous about what lies ahead.

## So, what is SUMT doing to help with Transition?

We are going into many of the year 6 classrooms on the Island delivering a lesson called 'It's Your Move'. We talk about **changes**, **challenges** and **choices**.

For **changes**, we highlight everyone's individuality and the things that make us different and that they are to be celebrated and not lost. There is no reason moving to secondary school should change who we are as a person but there will be some changes as to what happens. We do this by showing pictures of celebrities as children and they have to guess who they are. It's proved to be a lot of fun!

For **challenges** the children have a card challenge 'game', where they have to put different activities where they want to put them, ranging from very exciting to very scary. After this is completed we talk about where different activities have been put. Here the children can talk about their fears, worries and excitement regarding moving to secondary school. We talk about those worries are very normal, but it's good to talk about them. Both children and staff find this very helpful.

In the **choices** section the children get to discuss 'choices' scenarios. We then talk about the fact that we all have choices to make each day of our lives, and that it is important to make good choices.

We finish by saying that, when dealing with changes, challenges and choices, Christians read stories from the Bible as they feel they help them. We also talk about Christians praying to God, asking for help.

The children are then given the opportunity to ask questions about moving to secondary school.

In the summer term our termly residential at Mallmore is open to pupils in years 6 -9. This is so that the year 6s can meet other young people that are Christians and go to Church and maybe attend their future school. They are in a safe and secure environment to learn more about God and themselves as they prepare for this big change in their life.

It is a real privilege to be part of this important part a child's life and we are very thankful to schools for allowing us to be part of it.

# Summer is here!

What are the team up to during the long school holidays?!

We are so thankful that we are able to be involved in the running of Port St Mary Beach Mission this year. In 2020 most of PSM beach mission was online, with a few in person get-togethers, however this year we will be back in Port St Mary for one week (August 1st - 8th) with groups for different ages across the day. The plan, at the time of writing, though this is subject to change, is for four age groups to run each day (preschool, KS1, KS2, KS3+) with a beach service in the morning followed by time in groups, age groups in the afternoons and an extra session for the oldest group in an evening.

Across each day the children and young people who attend get the opportunity to learn about and to meet with God through games, drama, craft, songs and small groups as well as being able to spend time with the Christian team members who share their own experiences of their walk with God.

We are very much hoping that some of the team who live in the UK, will be able to make it across for beach mission this year. But as we cannot be sure of this until very close to beach mission starting we are very much reliant on the Island's volunteers, long-term and new, to ensure that beach mission can happen this year. There is an opportunity for the team to live in Mallmore, and the Gansey Charitable Trust have taken the opportunity since SUMT moved out to do some work on the house which should make beach mission run even more smoothly than normal.



If you are interested in helping, or signing your child or young person up for the week, please visit <https://psmbmnetlify.app>

*Firestarter is back in full force this year, with ACTUAL camping AND a 24-hr Café, (both of which were nostalgically missed at last year's non-residential event.)*

*Firestarter is a summer camp with a lot of heart. The crew connect authentically with young people, most of whom are not church attenders, through adventurous outdoor experiences and games.*

*We couldn't be more excited to spend some quality time getting to know the young people in the Café, whilst drawing on them in henna and drinking Pepsi, (but never Coke).*

*Each day the café will have a theme for decor and craft activities. And there will be an opportunity for a team member to share a bedtime story, with those who are interested, explaining what the chosen 'verse of the day' means to them.*

*This year the festival will be taking place for the first time at Silly Moos campsite, moving from its home of many years at Ard Whallain.*



Firestarter takes place on the 28<sup>th</sup>-31<sup>st</sup> July.

To book visit:

[www.firestarter.im](http://www.firestarter.im)



**After two years as an SUMT 'gapper',  
we say goodbye to Lexi Brockbank.  
Here is what she has to say about it:**

**Where are you off to?**

I am off to Royal Holloway University (University of London) in September. I am doing a Psychology degree which specialises in Developmental psychology and developmental disorders.

**What is your favourite gap-year memory you will take with you?**

I have been helping Manor Park with their swimming lessons this year and my favourite moment from this gap year was teaching a young person from Manor Park how to swim. It was such a beautiful moment to see him going from not wanting to get in the water to swimming like a little fish! 🐟

**What have you learnt about God?**

I've learnt that God is a bit like a diamond.

He has many facets and as you get older and experience more of life, you begin to discover new facets, new sides to God that you haven't met before, each as beautiful and awesome as the last.

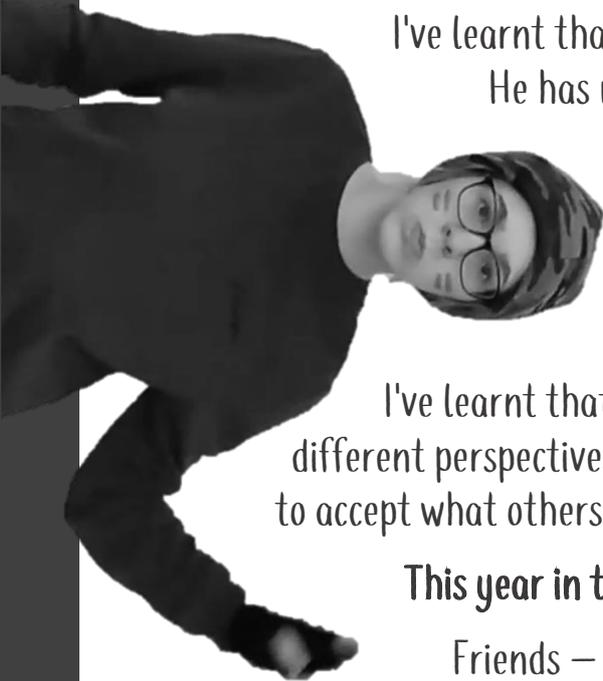
**What else have you learnt?**

I've learnt that although we are all one body of Christ we all have very different perspectives and viewpoints regarding our beliefs and it's important to accept what others believe and be open to new ideas.

**This year in three words?**

Friends – For – Life

If you would like to say goodbye to Lexi and celebrate all that God has done in the last year through SUMT, look out for details of our upcoming SUMT Thanks-Giving Service on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> July (venue TBC).





## Want to get involved?

To join our mailing list, simply fill in the form below and return it to our office at:  
**Manor Ark, Pulrose Road, Douglas, IM2 1AT**

Whether you are interested in volunteering with us, or feel stirred to support our work in prayer or finance, we would love to hear from you!

Get in touch through...



Or drop into our office for a cuppa on weekdays at:

**Manor Ark,  
 Pulrose Road,  
 Douglas**



### SUMT Mailing Lists Form

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\* Please print

I am happy for my details to be stored on the SUMT secure database and to be contacted regarding:

- SUMT updates,
- volunteering opportunities,
- training opportunities,
- new projects

by:            Post:   
                   Email:   
                   Phone:

Signed:

Date:

I am wanting specific information regarding:





**FAITH  
WITHIN  
REACH**