



When I was younger, I had a theory about time. The older I got, the faster the weeks and months seemed to fly by, and I decided that this must be because time is literally speeding up. Something to do with the solar system and how the Earth rotates that skews all the chronographs and clocks of the world, but keeps us thinking that the seconds, minutes & hours are still as we know them.

When I was a little older, I found myself recalling this possible conspiracy with a friend, he suggested that the reason that the days, weeks and months go by faster the older you get is because they represent a lesser percentage of your life. When you're 10 years old, 1 year is 10% of your life to that point, where as when you're 20 its only 5% and so on. It blew my theory out of the water, I'll tell you that much. This one actually made sense.

Whatever the reasons for it, this year is flying by faster than I expected. At the time of writing, El (who you can read a bit from below) & myself are midway through our 3rd month with Soulroots. When we realized that it was a bit of a "wow, really?!" moment. Christmas is just a few weeks away, and 2012 will be upon us before we know it, but before that we'd like to let you know about the last couple of months and what's been going on.

First of all, I'd like to say thanks to everyone for making me feel welcome. The first 6 weeks was a bit of a whirlwind of meeting many new people, in churches and youth groups, and I've experienced nothing but warmth and openness from everyone, which made settling in here much easier, so thank you. The last 2 months have been quite a settling period. From my first week of starting to meet various youth groups it has very much been a case of getting to know a lot of new names and faces and really find my feet in what is a new experience for me.

So what's been going on, and what's coming up?

FRESH (Years 6-8, Sundays, 6:30 @ Dore Church Hall) & Fishdotcom (Years 9 – 6th Form, Sundays 7:45 @ Soulroots Office)

Having not been here in previous years I wasn't able to see it first hand, but I can tell you that both these youth groups have had quite a dynamic shift since last year. Plenty of new year 6's and year 9's mean that both groups a quite a bit younger. While there were a lot of year 8's in FRESH a year ago, they're all now year 9's in Fishdotcom!

This term we have been looking at the fruits of the spirit - Love, Joy, Peace Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Faithfulness, Gentleness and Self-control – and how we can develop and show these qualities in our day to day lives. There has also been quite an amount of sweets and hot chocolate consumed.

On the 13th of November, former Soulrooter Tom Hughes, now working for Christian Aid in Leeds, came to speak to both groups about his work, including a 2 week trip to Sierra

Leone that he took in October, and how we as a community can respond to some of the issues of injustice that Christian Aid works with. More guest speakers will, I'm sure, follow!

RockSolid - (Years 6-8, Tuesdays, 6:00 @ St Johns Abbeydale Church Hall)

Rock Solid is always busy, noisy and a lot of fun. Primarily organized and led by Rob Studd and Elaine Ferguson, Tuesday nights are packed with crazy games, ball games, team games and messy games. A particular highlight for the young people (and obviously myself) was the recent trip to Lazer Zone. Lots of fun!

Quest – (6th Formers, Thursdays, 7:30)

It's fair to say that there isn't much that 'goes on' at Quest, in the sense that we simply meet up, eat doughnuts, drink tea and chat about anything anyone wants to chat about! One thing we have been enjoying this term is the 'My Favourite Bible Bit' series. Each week, someone in the group, leader or youth, brings a passage, verse or story from the Bible that they particularly like. It gives us all an opportunity to see scripture in a new light.

There are a few things coming up that I'd like to let you know about. On Friday the 2nd of December there is a big event at the O2 Academy called Glory Revolution. Primarily organized out of St. Thomas Philadelphia, it is a youth event for young people (aimed at Year 7's-10's) across the city. Some of you may remember hearing about it in the summer. Tickets are £2 in advance, and you can get them from me, or £3 on the door. Unfortunately we aren't going to be able to travel down as one big group so young people will need to make their own way there, but if you would like more information please get in touch with me.

As mentioned earlier, Christmas is coming up, which means the Soulroots Christmas party is fast approaching! It will be held at Dore Church Hall on Sunday 11th of December, and tickets are on sale now for £2 each. It's going to be a great opportunity for our young people to invite friends too, so if you have children in Soulroots please encourage this and make sure they buy their tickets! Other details, at this point, will remain under wraps. It's a big deal and we are looking for help organizing and setting up on the day, so if you feel you can contribute please get in touch with me, it would be appreciated!

Finally, you may already be aware of our planning to take Soulroots to Soul Survivor in the summer. Soul Survivor is a youth camp on a huge scale, thousands of young people come together for a week in the middle of nowhere to worship God and live in a tent for 5 nights. It will be held at Stafford Show Ground on the 27th-31st of July. We will start taking bookings at the end of this month (November). It's going to be a hugely exciting week, and the earlier we can book the cheaper it is, so if you know your children want to come, please get in touch with me and I'll make sure we get it sorted out.

I think that'll do for now! Once again, if you have any queries please do feel free to contact me.

God bless,

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A few words from El Lomas, Soulroots Student Youth Worker

Getting thrown in at the deep end would be how I would describe my first few months here at Soulroots and I've loved every minute of it. From meeting the young people to moving into my new house, starting my youth and practical theology degree in Nottingham and learning the balance between the different aspects of what I'll be doing over the next three years has been a steep but exciting learning curve. After a mad few weeks zipping around getting lost and meeting new people Sheffield has slowly become my home.

Settling down and getting into a routine of the different groups that happen each week has opened up the opportunity to really start to personally get to know the young people of S17. The best question that I was asked when I first arrived was what my favourite type of cheese was, I have to admit I was a bit taken back by such a strange question to ask someone but I have become more aware that it's these types of questions which allow us to learn the most.

With each group having different ideas and different themes it's not only the young people learning about who God is but over the past three months I have learnt a lot myself. Being reminded at Fresh and Fish.com (talking about fruits of the spirit) that just because we should be patient and wait on God doesn't mean we shouldn't be passionate about something we believe in. Talking about many different topics at RockSolid St Johns Abbeydale allowed great discussions of who God is and who we are, and with a trip to Lazer Zone there's no better way to get to know people than running around competing to hit as many other people as possible with a lazer. With Quest being a more relaxed 6th form group the conversation drifts from TV programs and school work to a more structured talk about favourite bible passages, throw in doughnuts and you have a great Thursday evening.

With each group being so different from each other one of the things that I have learnt and will continually be reminded of is that working with young people is never boring and that the hospitality of the Church continues to strengthen relationships within the community.

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