

BYSA Summer Camp 2021 Report

Ministry in lockdown down times has been rather interesting. Interesting in the sense of we had to adapt in how we ministered to the teens. Most ministries had to move online and as youth pastors and leaders we had to learn new ways of reaching out and caring for our teens. Whilst the pandemic has been difficult and has affected many families, it did in one sense come with some growth. Youth Pastors had the opportunity to grow and get to know their teens more. Teens got to open-up more which presented an opportunity to minister and care for them. Thus, we thank the Lord for His Goodness and Kindness during these Pandemic times.

With the lockdown restrictions put in place and the increase of covid cases made it rather impossible to host our yearly BYSA Summer Camp, which is the only Youth Ministry program that is associated with BYSA and is run by a group of volunteer Pastors, youth workers and interns. Logistically, financially and ethically it was not wise and would be unloving to host a camp of over 800 campers in the times we are in. So, we had to go back to the drawing board and see how we can still reach out to the teenagers. After much prayer and planning with a team of pastors, the idea of Summer CampUS was planned. A mini local based Summer Camp in which local pastors can partner together in reaching their community with the Gospel. A Team was put together in preparing all the resources to make things easier for the potential hosting Church's. The resources covered everything from pre recorded sermons, worship, workshops, discipleship material and counselling resources.

As we were planning, we had the theme of Abide impressed on our hearts. We had a great desire for our teens to know what it means to Abide in Christ, to live a life that is centered on Christ the solid rock. Praying that the teens would come to see Christ as their firm and sure foundation. Abide was the chosen theme taken from John 15:4 *"Abide in me, as I also abide in you. No branch can bear fruit by itself; it must remain in the vine. Neither can you bear fruit unless you abide in me."* It is our prayer to have young people's lives' transformed by the gospel and as they begin to abide in Christ it would cause them to be zealous in evangelising to the last and thus bearing fruit.

We had several church's that got together and hosted a Summer CampUS. We had a Kempton CampUS consisting of these Church's (Benoni Baptist Church, Gateway Uniting Presbyterian Church, Grace Kempton Baptist Church, Sunrise Christian Church and Wychwood Baptist Church). They had over 50 teens in attendance, the teenagers got to learn what it means to Abide in Christ. There was another CampUS in KZN hosted by Howick Community Church and Hilton Baptist Church. It was a great camp and the teens were incredibly blessed.

Recently a group of pastors met to discuss Summer Camp for 2021, It was decided that due to the current uncertainty of Covid 19 numbers in December, there will be a camp run in January of 2022. However, this camp will be smaller and the pastors and youth workers at the meeting will be using this camp to record and finalise material that others churches can use to host a Summer CampUS.

It is still our prayer to have more Church's hosting a local Summer CampUS, so if you would be interest on hosting a CampUS in your area please do not hesitate to reach out to Dan or Zak. We will provide you with the resources and also make ourselves available to assist in any way we can as you plan this.

May God continue to be gracious to you as you love and serve Him

Zak Mbethe and Dan Riddell