

## Information

Firstfruits is fully supported by donations and volunteers!

Web: [www.first-fruits.co.uk](http://www.first-fruits.co.uk)

Email: [info@first-fruits.co.uk](mailto:info@first-fruits.co.uk)

Donate online:

[www.justgiving.com/first-fruits](http://www.justgiving.com/first-fruits)

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Texts are free (except for the donation!) and 100% goes to Firstfruits

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## Faces

Becky (Support Worker & Development Officer)



Rachel (Founder and Outgoing Manager)



News from Firstfruits - Autumn 2012



*The Firstfruits Team at Llangorse Lake (see page 2)*

## Firstfruits - New Season

It has been over four years since the official 'house opening' of Firstfruits in September 2008. We have been hugely blessed as a community in that time and have been able to positively impact the lives of vulnerable mothers, their babies and wider families.

At a recent prayer weekend we felt that God was bringing us to a new season and so this newsletter comes in the midst of many changes. As we had a chance to reflect over the summer and 'dream big' we realised that although our current house has served us well during this time, with a new model of operating it may be that there is another house more appropriate for our requirements. We are taking the opportunity while there are currently no residents living in the house to end our tenancy there and will be looking to find a more suitable house.

In the interim, we will be focusing on strengthening and maintaining our community, including the previous residents of the house and welcoming any new members! This is a time of 'stripping back' and concentrating on the core vision for Firstfruits; showing God's love and grace to vulnerable mothers and their babies. We will look to develop ways of supporting and befriending new mothers and those already in our community that are not based in our house.

Another recent change was Rachel stepping back from her current role as she took on more responsibility in a pastoral role at Glenwood Church. Rachel has brought so much to Firstfruits in terms of vision, time, direction and hard work and she will be greatly missed within our team! The main operation of Firstfruits will now be under Becky's leadership. Becky has a heart and a passion for this work. She has lived in the Firstfruits house as a volunteer for 2 years and has also been involved in the administrative running. She is looking forward to the challenge of this new role.

As we look to move into a new house we believe it will look slightly different to our current model, with more of an emphasis on community living, encouraging an ethos of equality and shared living in terms of skills, time, resources and responsibility.

We are really excited about what the future holds for Firstfruits and appreciate you standing with us as we enter this new phase. If you have any thoughts we would love to hear from you.

## Goodbye from Rachel

It is with mixed feelings that I say goodbye to Firstfruits. It has been a privilege to see the ministry begin and change over the last 4 years, with many challenges and lessons learnt along the way. We sat down and calculated how many people had been a part of the community of Firstfruits since it began, and we came to about 50 people including all volunteers, girls and their babies. They have included visitors from abroad, some from slightly closer, and some on our doorstep. Some have stayed for the whole 4 years, and others have come and gone, but each one a different and valued member of a community that has sought to be family, with Jesus at the centre.

I believe that God has asked me to move on to different things and it is with some sadness that I do this. Firstfruits reflects many things that mean a lot to me and I have huge love for the family! But I recently read this passage in Ephesians, which reminded me of the different roles that we are all given in God's building work:

“God is building a home. He's using us all, irrespective of how we got here - in what He is building. He used the apostles and prophets for the foundation. Now He's using you, fitting you in brick by brick, stone by stone, with Christ Jesus at the cornerstone that holds all the parts together.”

This is God's work and His plan for Firstfruits is in capable hands. Although it is with sadness that I leave, my prayers are that this community continues to grow, with more girls, babies and volunteers understanding the depth of God's love for them more and more. Thank you so much for your love and support throughout the 4 years that made it all possible, and I know that the team will value this ongoing support in the years to come.

## Weekend Away

On the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of October, the Firstfruits team spent a weekend together at Llangorse Lake in the Brecon Beacons National Park.



The team consisted of current and former volunteers, former residents, adults and children, some staying in static caravans and some braving the autumn weather in tents.

Saturday came with an opportunity for a somewhat muddy walk in the countryside, the high point of which for many of us was being treated to a spectacular rainbow, arching over the lake. We couldn't help but feel that there was a message from God within that powerful symbol.



Deciding that the message may possibly have read “Get inside, it's going to rain soon”, we decided to head back to the comfort of our caravans to share a meal together, followed by an evening being all together with God.

A Sunday morning “caravan communion” was led by Rachel, which was followed by a fried breakfast and a rowing boat trip out on the lake.

## Volunteers Needed!

Firstfruits are looking for more volunteers. We are currently without a house, but are hoping to get a new one next summer and are looking for more volunteers to move into the house in a supporting role for pregnant girls

The most important part of your role in the house would be to love the girls you would come alongside, showing them grace and support. Living in the house is so rewarding as you see first hand how the girls grow and mature in their pregnancy and early motherhood.

We are also looking for anyone who wants to become involved in the Firstfruits community. As we continue over the next year, we hope to create more supporting roles for pregnant girls and build up the community we already have, and we would love anyone to join us who feels encouraged to be part of Firstfruits without living in the house.

*'My people will live in peaceful dwelling places, in secure homes, in undisturbed places of rest' Isaiah 32.18*



\* Donation amount: £1, £2, £3, £4, £5 or £10.