

Seasonal

dinosaur Sunday

AIM

To provide some ideas for Dinosaur Sunday, also called Evolution Sunday.

INTRODUCTION

This can happen at any time of the year, but is usually associated with the Sunday nearest Charles Darwin's birthday: 12th February. You might want to do this event this summer or you might want to 'think ahead' and plan for next February (2012) in which case best start now!

LET ME TELL YOU: WHAT IS DINOSAUR SUNDAY?

David Coleman and Zam Walker from Greenock URC write:

Dinosaur Sunday is our re-branding of Evolution Weekend, an international movement started by a US scientist to help Christians and people of faith generally stand up against 'Creationist' oppression and narrowing of the scope both of science and faith. If you Google Evolution Weekend, you can find a lot out about it.

Having a child in the house whose autism means that he sees the world through dinosaurs has also been very useful, and Talie's illustrated presentations have greatly enriched these events (in Brighton and Greenock) as have relics borrowed from local museums - we started off with an iguanodon's toebone, and at then a good collection from the Hunterian in Glasgow this year.

The normal timing is, however, February, close to the birthday of Charles Darwin. We made some 'Thank God for Darwin' badges, and wrote an article speculating on our ability to welcome Darwin in church today, but the co-ordinator is pleased at any take-up.

Dinosaur Sunday got us as a local church our best attendance and local paper publicity so far.

Some websites to help you:

We are feeling very kindly disposed towards the Greenock Telegraph for their coverage of Dinosaur Sunday (note that you have to sign up to view articles on Greenock Telegraph website)

<http://www.greenocktelegraph.co.uk/news/greenock/articles/2011/02/04/409915-jurassic-lark-for-church/#>

and since it mentions the youtube clip, here is that too:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uFFK3d5ltsw>

and these animations from their 2011 weekend

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xfkdUVdWI2U> and
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uFFK3d5ltsw&NR=1>

There are some photos on the Vision4life website as well.

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And then.... Let me tell you more

Janet Lees writes

We decided to have a Dinosaur Sunday Family Service at Silcoates School, Wakefield. This was primarily aimed at families of children aged from 3-11 years of age. It was a celebration of all the creatures God has created and how science helps us to understand the world better. We invited people to 'bring their own dinosaur' and most did. We then looked at them to see what was number one favourite dinosaur. Needless to say that was Tyrannosaurus Rex but there were plenty of others to choose from. We also had a rocks and fossils quiz with items lent from our Geography department. We had pieces of music and hymns and songs to follow the theme. One of the young people played the March of the Stegosaurus on her cello. Our special guest for the evening was Charles Darwin. He was played by our Head of Physics. He began by telling us something of his life as a child and how he used to look for beetles behind the Chapel where he went to Sunday School. He went on to explain about the voyage of the Beagle and the things he saw like giant tortoises. Finally he explained about his book, 'The Origin of species' and how evolution is about how animals change to fit their environment better. We too change: we believe that God helps us to do this.

You can see our report of Dinosaur Sunday here:
<http://www.silcoates.co.uk/index.php?q=print/1600>

WHAT TO DO NEXT

Find out about Evolution Sunday: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Evolution_Sunday

You will find plenty more on the web. Decide what sort of day/weekend/event you would like to have. Remember that there are many resources out there you can use. Local museums may be willing to lend fossils and rocks to local groups. You might be able to collaborate with a school or other local organisation.

EVALUATION

Please try to answer these questions for yourself and for others who will use this material:

1. What was the most helpful thing?
2. What was the least helpful thing?
3. What would you like to try now?

THE NEXT STEP

More seasonal items are available on the website. If you have missed the date for this year why not 'Think ahead' for next year? If you hold an event why not send your news and stories into Vision4Life: admin@vision4life.org.uk

Acknowledgements

Thanks to David Coleman, Zam Walker and family from Greenock URC and young people and families of Silcoates School for the stories about Dinosaur Sunday.

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HOW TO FEEDBACK TO VISION4LIFE?

If you wish to offer any feedback – brickbats and bouquets are equally welcome! – you can do so in various ways.

You can email the Vision4Life steering group and the coordinator about general issues via the website or at admin@vision4life.org.uk

Website issues can be dealt with through web@vision4life.org.uk

If you want to make contributions or ask questions about other V4L years you can email:
Year 3 – Transformed for Evangelism: evangelism@vision4life.org.uk