

## Leaders Notes for **Soul Mates Weekend 2017**

Dear Leader,

Thanks for thinking about coming to **Soul Mates Weekend**. We hope that you and your group enjoy the weekend and draw closer to God and each other as a result of it. Please find below some questions and answers that are commonly asked at Soul Mates time. If you have any that aren't answered, please feel free to get in contact with us at the address below.

### **What is Soul Mates Weekend?**

**Soul Mates Weekend** is a worship and teaching event for 9-13 year olds run by **IMYC** (the Irish Methodist Youth & Children's Department.) Around 290 children and their leaders attend the weekend from all over Ireland congregate in Lurgan for a weekend of teaching, fun, worship and church-floor sleeping. We have a team of over 120 people who help put the weekend programme together.

### **Who can come to Soul Mates Weekend?**

Anyone between the ages of 9 and 13 is allowed to come, provided that they are accompanied by a leader. Whilst Soul Mates is not solely for Christian or churching children, the primary focus of the weekend is worship and teaching, so an explanation of what will happen would be a good thing for the children to hear, especially before the weekend.

### **What will happen?**

The general pattern is thus:

**Worship & Teaching** on Friday night, Saturday morning & evening and Sunday morning;

**Seminars** after worship on Saturday morning (two of each) and **workshops** after lunch (two of each);

**Entertainment** on Friday night after worship (multiple venues) and our world famous **Soul Stars** talent competition after worship on Saturday night.

### **Who runs Soul Mates Weekend?**

**Soul Mates Weekend** is organised by **IMYC**, and we have a group of volunteers who spend the year putting the programme together. We have a proper band of musicians and worshippers who lead worship, a trained prayer team, an enthusiastic bunch of stewards and a team of professional sound, visual & lighting engineers.

### **How to get to the Jethro Centre in Lurgan?**

*From Belfast Direction:*

Take the M1 (South), travelling approximately 15 miles from Broadway Roundabout. Take A3 exit (Junction 9) signposted Moira/Antrim. At Roundabout take 1st exit onto A3. Continue on this road (Lisburn Road/ Belfast Road) through Moira, Maralin and Dollingstown before entering Lurgan on the Avenue Road. When you reach the first major junction, turn left away from the town centre. 100 yards away on your left is the Jethro Centre. You are now in the correct place!

*From Dungannon/ Enniskillen Direction:*

At Strangmore Roundabout take 1st exit joining the M1 (signposted Belfast). Travel approximately 16 miles leaving M1 at Junction 10 (signposted Craigavon, Lurgan). At Roundabout take 3rd exit onto A76 (signposted Lurgan). Continue onto Lough Road, entering Lurgan Town Centre on Market Street, beside a big Church in middle of an island. Continue right through the town. At the second set of major traffic lights which is just past Fulton's Furniture Store make sure you are in the right-hand lane and veer right. Pass the petrol station on your left. The Jethro Centre is immediately on your left. You have arrived!

*From Dublin/ Banbridge Direction:*

Come off the A1 at Banbridge/ The Outlet exit. Go left at the initial Roundabout onto the the A26 towards Banbridge. This road will take you straight into Banbridge. Follow the road through town. Once you cross over the river bridge, take the first left, which is Church Street. This will take you through Seapatrik and on towards Lurgan, once again becoming the A26. Follow the road past Lenaderg (with a right turn towards Waringstown & Lurgan.)

Continue right through Waringstown towards Lurgan. When you arrive in Lurgan, at the first roundabout you meet, go right onto Flush Place. 100 yards away on your right is the Jethro Centre. You have completed your task. Well done.

### **When can I arrive?**

The weekend kicks off on the Friday night with Worship at 19.30 (in the Jethro Centre), therefore you may arrive from 18.30.

### **When does the weekend finish?**

The weekend finishes with worship on Sunday morning. We'll be finishing before Lunchtime at 11.30. This means that most groups will be home around lunchtime.

### **What do I do when I arrive?**

Take your group to the hall that you have been assigned for accommodation, where stewards will direct you where to leave your bags. Send your main leader to the Jethro Centre for **REGISTRATION**. At **REGISTRATION**, you will receive your pack with:

- weekend passes for each member of your group;
- maps & timetables;
- leader's guide;
- group name sheets (for you to mark out your territory for sleeping);
- confirmation of workshop & seminar choices.

### **What is CENTREPOINT?**

**CENTREPOINT** is the nerve centre for Soul Mates Weekend. It is where **REGISTRATION** will take place on Friday night. If you have any questions over the weekend, come to **CENTREPOINT**, and Lost Property can be found there as well.

### **Where is CENTREPOINT?**

When you come into the Jethro Centre, **CENTREPOINT** is immediately on your right. It will be open all weekend, except during worship on the Saturday evening.

### **How long will REGISTRATION last?**

If you are fully paid up, with no changes to your group numbers, then **FASTTRACK REGISTRATION™** is the queue for you. Otherwise join the other queue and hopefully you'll be done in a few minutes.

### **What if a child pulls out?**

Please let **IMYC** know asap if you have children withdrawing from the weekend. Because of our limited numbers, we will be operating a waiting list operating on a 'one-in, one-out' basis. Unfortunately, we are unable to refund deposits.

### **Can I bring extra children?**

Once everything has been booked for the weekend, if you want to increase your numbers, contact **IMYC** and they will be added to our over-all waiting list. This will be operated on a 'one-in one-out' basis. Please don't bring extra children to the weekend as they may be turned away.

### **What Leaders can I bring?**

The main group leader needs to be over 21, the other leaders need to be over 18. If you want to bring junior leaders, they can come from age 17, however, they then need to be considered as children for ratios. The ratios are one leader (gender specific) for each 8 children. Please ensure that you have enough leaders.

### **What about Child Protection/ Safeguarding?**

**Soul Mates Weekend** employs the Safeguarding Policy 'Taking Care'. Please familiarise yourself with this document. If you require a copy, you can get one on [imycd.org](http://imycd.org), from your minister or **IMYC**.

### **What do I do with their Parental Permission Forms?**

Please bring two copies of the forms to the weekend. Please keep one copy for the main leader to have (at all times) and give one copy into **CENTREPOINT** at **REGISTRATION**.

### **What about Photo & Video Permission Forms?**

If any of your parents have refused photo permission, please make us aware at **REGISTRATION**, and we will take appropriate steps. Please note we should be supplied with passport photos to aid us in this process.

### **Where will we be staying?**

You will be staying in one of four halls:

- High Street Methodist (HSM);
- Queen Street Methodist (QSM);
- Jethro Centre (JC);
- High Street Presbyterian (HSP).

These will be allocated prior to the weekend. Please note that there will only be limited access to the halls during the day, so please plan accordingly.

### **What are the sleeping arrangements?**

We ask that the leaders sleep separately from their children, whilst staying in the same room. This means that leaders can still supervise their children, but still observe Taking Care Guidelines.

### **Is there a curfew?**

Yes, sadly for some, there is. We have lights off at midnight and everyone is expected to be asleep by 00.30. Group leaders are responsible for settling their children.

### **Who is in Charge of Halls?**

In each of the halls, there will be a Head of Halls on Duty. Each is a trusted volunteer and has been involved at an early stage in organising the weekend. They will be there to assist you, but you will be responsible for discipline within your group. They will host a leader's meeting at the earliest chance in the halls on Friday night.

### **Things for Children to bring:**

Sleeping Bag, Pillow, Roll Mat/ Air Bed (if desired);  
Pocket Money;  
Sports gear (if participating in any of the sporting workshops);  
Wash Bag & Towel;  
Several changes of Clothes;  
Bible, Note Book & Pen;  
A good attitude and a smile in your heart!

### **How do we eat?**

All of your meals are already paid for. The meals will be served as follows:

Breakfast: In your own halls (please help serve the children in your group);  
Saturday Lunch: In Kings Park Primary School;  
Saturday Tea: In your own halls  
Friday & Saturday Supper: Jethro Centre

**Soul Mates Weekend** is a **Nut Free Zone**, so please ensure that none of your children or leaders eat anything with nut products.

### **What do we do about Dietary Requirements?**

At booking stage, please let us know if you have any vegetarians in your group and we will cater for their needs. If you have any other dietary requirements, please be in touch with **IMYC** prior to the weekend for further advice.

### **Can I eat out?**

Because we have ordered enough food for the participants, we don't want any food to go to waste, so please don't decide not to have your meal on a whim at the weekend.

### **What if one of my children has special educational needs?**

We are inclusive and will do all we can to help everyone have the best possible experience at **Soul Mates Weekend**. Please let us know about particular requirements at the booking stage and we will endeavour to put in place the procedures that we need.

### **What are the stewards for?**

The stewards are paying volunteers at **Soul Mates Weekend** to ensure the smooth running of the event. If you have any questions, please ask them and be patient while they try to get you an answer. They wear bright yellow t-shirts. They are not there to discipline your group, so please ensure that you control your groups.

### **What do you need money for?**

Late Night Café on Friday Night;  
Free time on Saturday Afternoon.

### **What and where is the Prayer Team?**

There may be some people at the weekend who would like to take a bit of time to pray through some of the issues that come up at the weekend. With that in mind, we have recruited a Prayer Team who have all been through prayer ministry training and we trust them. They will be there over the course of the weekend, and in bigger numbers on the Saturday Night.

### **How and where do I get first aid assistance?**

At night:

Go to your head of hall, who will contact the First Aider on duty.

During the day:

Come to **CENTREPOINT**, (or the Staff Room of the School, during Seminars) and they will contact the First Aider on duty.

### **What are Seminars & Workshops?**

The seminars are the time when we go deeper into the overall theme of the weekend, and as such are spiritual in design. The workshops are a chance to have some fun, take part in some physical or practical activities and let off a bit of steam.

### **Where are the Seminars held?**

The seminars are held in Kings Park Primary School, which is a 5-minute walk from Jethro.

### **Can I nip out for a coffee during the Seminars?**

No, due to insurance guidelines, you need to be on the premises at all times. However the staff room (with Tea & Coffee laid on!) is open if you want a break for one of the sessions. Please go to at least one of the seminars, so you hear what your children are hearing.

### **How are the Seminars organised?**

We split our seminars into two slots: for 9-11s and for 11-13s. Please exercise discernment when choosing which sessions each 11 year old in your group attends.

### **How does our group book Seminars?**

We release the titles of the seminars in time for your children to choose which seminars they want to go to. Ask your children to fill out their choices and return the form to **IMYC**. Please be aware that spaces in these will be allocated on a first come, first served basis, so get in early to avoid disappointment. Once your choices have been filtered into the system, you will be informed of the Seminars that your children have been allocated.

### **Where are the Workshops held?**

On Saturday afternoon, the Workshops are held in various churches around Lurgan. We will use High Street Methodist (HSM); Queen Street Methodist (QSM) and High Street Presbyterian (HSP).

### **How does our group book Workshops?**

You can book on IMYC's website. You must rank the workshops in order of preference. As workshops fill up, your group will be moved to the next available choice. We release the list of workshops in time for your children to choose which workshops they want to go to. Please be aware that spaces in many of these are limited, and therefore allocated on a first-come, first served basis. Book as early as you can to ensure your children get at least one of their choices. Once your choices have been filtered into the system, you will be informed of the Workshops that your children have been allocated.

### **What is Soul Stars?**

**Soul Stars** is our talent show, which we hold on the Saturday evening. It is open to any child or group of children at **Soul Mates** wishing to enter. The overall winner will walk away with the **Soul Stars** trophy.

### **How can I book for Soul Stars?**

In your booking pack, there is a form for booking **Soul Stars**. You can either book through the website, or you can fill out a physical page and send it in and send it back to **IMYC** before the weekend, or give it to Alex McClune at **CENTREPOINT** by 10pm on Friday evening. (Alex will be introduced from the stage). Sadly, entries are limited to one act per group.

### **What if I've any more Questions?**

Well, just give us a buzz: (048/028) 9045 3510; an e-mail: [imycd@irishmethodist.org](mailto:imycd@irishmethodist.org); a letter (**IMYC**, Skainos Square, 239 Newtownards Road, Belfast BT4 1AF); a carrier pigeon (big building with the vertical garden opposite the Bethany) or smoke signals (probably best from Blacks Hill). Ask for Nicky Blair.