



Jenni does MTS!

<https://www.jennimurraymts.com>

Term 1 Update



Dear friends,

Much has happened since I began my MTS journey in February! Term 1 has been a busy but wonderful start with many new experiences and learning opportunities. Before starting my apprenticeship in February, I attended the MTS G8 conference, which was a great way to set the foundations for what was to come and to make friends with my fellow apprentices.



Reading Bonhoeffer and spending time in God's creation!



One of the biggest changes has been going back to school, not as a teacher, but as a student! I packed my lunch into my backpack and headed into Newtown for my orientation days at Youthworks College in February. I'm doing three units this semester. Old Testament Foundations covers Genesis through to 2 Kings, while Children's and Youth Ministry takes us through principles and practice, looking at the history of ministry to the younger generations, Biblical perspectives on young people, and topics such as child and adolescent development, discipleship, evangelism and conversion. A highlight was the intensive unit Personal and Spiritual Formation, otherwise known as College Tour. The first years headed up to Scott's Head for ten days for a deep dive into topics to enhance our wellbeing for longevity in ministry. These included understanding our personality types, spiritual disciplines, and strategies for managing time, teams, boundaries, conflict, and self-care. We also read Dietrich Bonhoeffer's short but powerful book 'Life Together' and discussed how we can apply this to our own communities. I've learned so much already! It's been challenging (managing several assessments is definitely a learning curve after being away from university for many years!) but I'm loving the rich and varied opportunities each week provides to become better equipped for faithfully serving Jesus.

Another back-to-school highlight has been in a very different context at Matthew Pearce Public School, where I teach SRE to Year 2. They're certainly a change from the age group I'm used to, but it's been such a joy to go in every week and share God with them! It's a great way for me to put into practice what I'm learning outside of youth group, and I'm discovering a variety of activities I can use to keep younger kids engaged with the Bible through games and stories.

The experience that stretched me the most so far was organising our annual youth camp. I had the chance to put my logistical skills to the test with budgets, buses, tech gear, timetabling, merchandise, and the other behind-the-scenes operations that go into making camp run smoothly each year. It's difficult to put into words what a rewarding experience this was! I was able to get an in-depth understanding of the hands-on aspects of youth ministry, and it was so awesome to see God bring it all together on our weekend away after months of preparation. It was also a fantastic opportunity to practice some of the ministry strategies I'd learned on College Tour.

As well as continuing with youth group on Friday nights and Discipleship Communities on Sunday afternoons, I've been blessed with plenty of other new and exciting experiences this term, like workshopping my youth talks with the staff team, service leading and prayers on Sundays, helping lead a young adults community group, and hosting my very first podcast. I'm so grateful to the staff team, who are such a blessing and have welcomed and supported me wholeheartedly as I've embarked on this new adventure with them! Term 1 has been a blast and I'm very much looking forward to the rest of Term 2.

If you would like to support me through prayer, here are some things you can be praying for:

- Thanks for God's guidance and provision in a busy term, particularly with starting College and organising the logistics for youth camp.
- Thanks for the many new experiences I've had that have stretched and challenged me, allowing me to grow in my ministry skills and knowledge.
- Thanks for the support and teaching of the staff team, particularly my trainers Paul and Miki, and prayer for them as they continue to train me in ministry.
- Thanks for the love and care of my husband Pete as we've adjusted to a new routine, and prayer that God will continue to strengthen and sustain us both as we continue on this journey, relying entirely on God as we face the joys and challenges of this apprenticeship together.
- Prayer that I will be putting into practice the strategies I learned on Tour, particularly in two areas: that God will continue to help me strengthen my spiritual disciplines of Bible reading and prayer so I can go deeper into his Word and let it infuse all that I do; and that God will continue to help me manage my energy, guiding me to be thoughtful and intentional in my time management so I can serve him to the best of my capacity.

I'm so thankful for the people who have so generously given financially and prayed for me to support me through MTS. My apprenticeship is fully fundraised, and I still need financial support to be able to work full-time in this position over the next two years. If you're in a position to consider supporting me this way, I'd love to chat with you about it, or you can follow the link to my MTS website, where you can find the account details for contributions:

<https://www.jennimurraymts.com>. This is also where you can subscribe to my mailing list and find my updates. If you think there are others who would be interested in following my MTS journey or supporting me during my apprenticeship, please feel free to share my website with them!

A huge thanks to all of you. Looking forward to sharing my next update with you later in Term 2!

*Grace and peace,
Jenni.*



I've loved having the opportunity to write and deliver more youth talks this year!