

YOUTH & CHILDREN NEWS



DIOCESE OF EDINBURGH January 2016

NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS

The new year is a great time for rethinking and rebooting what we do with children and young people in our churches. Why not meet with your fellow volunteers or team members to make some resolutions for 2016? Some things might be new initiatives, others might be about doing things better. Here's my own list-in-progress for my work as an all-age worship leader in my home church:

- Make sure all the felt pens are working
- Make monthly email contact with families connected to our church
- Keep the Children and Families noticeboard looking fresh
- Regularly ask the children and young people what they think
- Before I make any more To Do lists, PRAY

What would be your resolutions?



The weather may be wild this winter, but there are lots of opportunities for using it in creative prayer and worship with children. Marvel at snowflakes under a magnifying glass, make snowballs as a sign of confession (and watch them disappear, just as God's love melts away our sins) or wonder at frost feathers on glass. En-

courage young people who have phones to take pictures of beautiful or interesting wintry things they notice, such as sunsets or green shoots poking through snow. Could they create a montage of images to encourage reflection in church?

THIS EDITION

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- GLENBOMBING 2016 - St Peter's Lutton Place
- LAUNCHPAD - Holiday Club training
- TEENAGERS AND MENTAL HEALTH - HealthLink 360

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EPIPHANY MOMENT

FINDING OUT WHAT FAMILIES WANT FROM CHURCH

CASTING NEW LIGHT



There are some new families in church, while others have drifted away. Some children who have enjoyed Sunday school are now old enough for rugby on a Sunday morning, but still feel like part of the church family. It's a big-hearted church that wants to encourage families, in a busy town full of activities for children. Sounds familiar?

Here's how one church is responding to the changing needs of its younger members.

At St Peter's Peebles we held an Epiphany party and invited the families who are connected with our church. We planned for a children's party plus consultation exercise. In practice,

this meant a Rectory full to bursting with 18 children from 17 months to 17 years, a table groaning with a bring-and-share feast and various creative activities. Some were for Epiphany-related fun, and others were a way of engaging children and adults anew and (we hoped) finding out more about what they wanted from our church.

Here's what happened...

WHAT WE DID...

- We sent out printed party invitations before Christmas and shared the event on Facebook (4-6pm on the last night of the holidays)
- Opening activity choice #1: building a Bible story out of Lego
- Opening activity choice #2: making a Magi's crown with lots of shiny card, stickers and colourful pom pom 'jewels', plus a red 'velvet' (tissue paper) lining and white 'ermine' (cotton wool) trim.
- Opening activity choice #3, for toddlers: playing with a large wooden Noah's ark with loads of chunky plastic animals.
- We covered a large table with lining paper and wrote two big questions: 'What could St Peter's church do for you?' and 'What could you do for St Peter's Church?' We invited children and adults to write or draw their responses. We also wrote the days of the week across the middle and asked families to sign up for whichever days suited them best.
- We said grace together and all ate pizza, garlic bread, chicken dip-pers, cheese, dips, crudites, cake, fruit and chocolate fingers. Yum.
- We prayed for the new school term together, and children were encouraged to write 'please' and 'thank you' prayers to fill a jar during the year. Every child was also given a small cross made of soft but robust red felt to take away, as a reminder of God's love which is stronger than anything. (Thanks to Bob King for these!)



What we found out...

We loved the feedback we got at this event, and will be discussing all these ideas with the Vestry. Here's a taste of what people suggested...

Some things our children want from the church:

- A church rock band
- Bible Study for kids
- A sleepover in church

Some things our children want to do for the church:

- To be sidespersons
- To read in church
- To help light and put out the candles

Now the real work begins: looking at all the feedback, and planning with the Vestry how to take forward these great ideas for including children in the life and work of the church. Watch this space...

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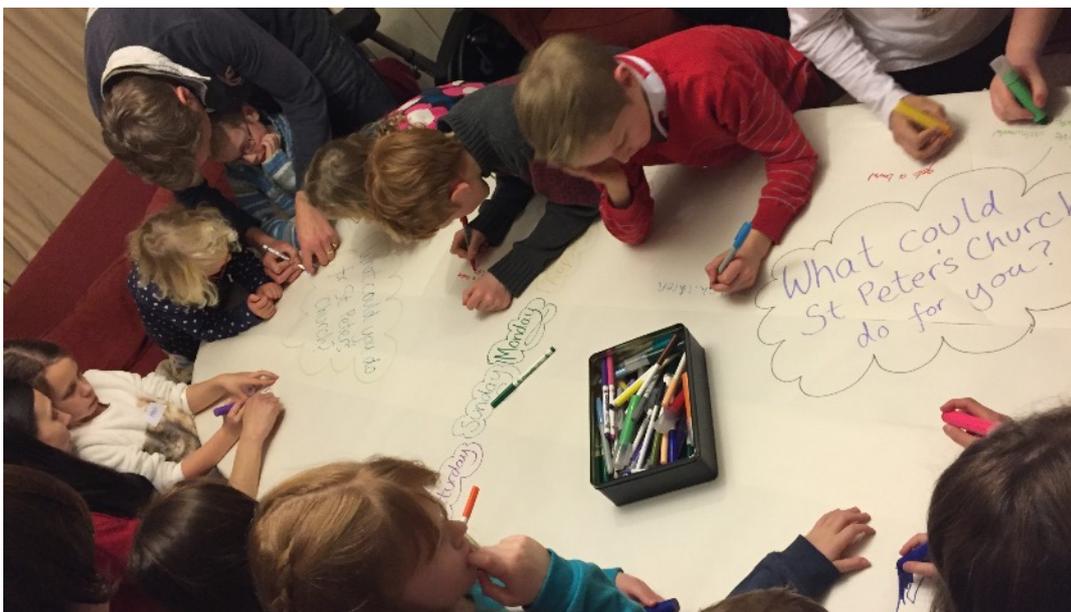
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FUN, FEASTING AND FEEDBACK



We asked two questions:

- 'What could St Peter's Church do for you?'
- 'What could you do for St Peter's Church?'



(Clockwise from above)

- The fun included making Lego models of Bible stories
- The feast of all-you-can-eat pizza and more
- The feedback Everyone had a chance to write or draw what they thought, in answer to the questions

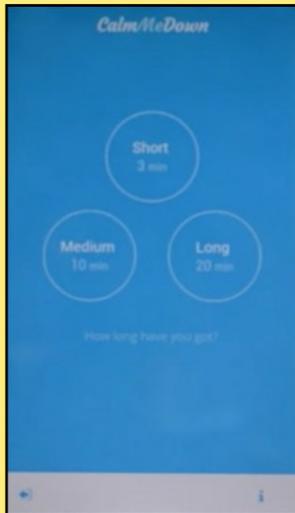
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CALM ME DOWN

USING SILENCE WITH TEENAGERS



Why not try using this mobile phone app with stressed teenagers? It has been developed by Dr Helen Lees, who has studied the beneficial effects of silence in schools. The free Calm Me Down app introduces some very simple techniques for meditation and mindfulness which are suitable for use in a Christian context.



You can see a YouTube guide to the free app [here](#). It is available for all Android phones.

St Peter's, Edinburgh Scientists and Congregations Project

A short service for teenagers and adults to celebrate the work of scientists

including a talk by **Professor Simon Conway Morris**

followed by a buffet and question and answer session

Come and meet a famous scientist that believes in God



Simon Conway Morris is a Professor of Palaeobiology at the University of Cambridge and is famous for his work on fossils discovered in an area of the Canadian Rockies known as the Burgess Shale.



As well as being an accomplished scientist he is also a committed Christian and is regularly involved in discussions about science and Christianity.



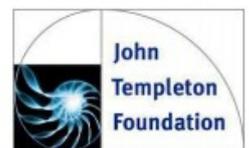
Professor Conway Morris will be speaking on his experience as a scientist that believes in God and will also participate in the question and answer session after the service.

St Peter's Episcopal Church, Lutton Place, Edinburgh

Saturday 27th February

5.30 - 7.30pm

Enquiries – childrenandyouthwork@stpetersedinburgh.org



GLENBOMBING! 27 FEBRUARY

This is an exciting opportunity for teenagers and adults to think about the relationship between science and faith, and to ask experts some difficult questions! St Peter's Lutton Place is hosting this event, and have invited Glen delegates and

friends to meet together for worship, followed by a Q & A session, pizza and a catch-up. If you have teenagers in your church, please encourage them to come along. For further details, contact Derek Harley (enquiries email above).

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HOLIDAY CLUB?

IT'S NEVER TOO EARLY TO START PLANNING...



LaunchPad is Scripture Union's training for anyone involved in leading a church Holiday Club.

Scripture Union says, "LaunchPad aims to equip new and experienced mission and holiday club teams with lots of ideas, resources, thinking and enthusiasm as they prepare to reach out to their communities.

Come, be inspired, discover new and practical ideas for your mission/holiday club. Network with others involved in

mission with children and young people throughout Scotland. We look forward to having you with us. Our main session will explore how we help children engage with the Bible. There will be opportunity to explore the 2016 Holiday Club resource, *Guardians of Ancora*, although the day will be relevant whichever resource you use.

Seminars give choices across three focus areas:

- Opening the Bible with children and encouraging spiritual response.
- Planning your mission strategically to engage with different people.
- Practical sessions for holiday clubs.

Please see the website for full seminar listings - not all seminars will run in each location."

LAUNCHPAD TRAINING



Guardians of Ancora, the new SU computer game and Holiday Club resource

BOOK NOW...

You can book for you and your whole team online by using the booking form at

www.suscotland.org.uk

You will be emailed detailed seminar information for your location.

COST:
£10 per person
£5 per student/unemployed

EDINBURGH TRAINING:
Sat 12th March
Davidson's Mains Church,
EDINBURGH EH4 5BB

- 10am Registration & refreshments
- 10:30am Start
- 4:30pm Finish

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GLEN '16 DATES

TEENAGERS AND MENTAL HEALTH

OUT OF THIS WORLD



24-30 JULY 2016

Save the dates! Tell the teenagers in your church! Planning for this year's Provincial Youth Week at Glenalmond is already underway, and application forms will be ready soon. This year's theme is 'Out of this world: living the Christian life'. The keynote is these verses from John 17.14-19: "I have given them your word, and the world has hated them because they do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth. As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sakes I sanctify myself, so that they also may be sanctified in truth." As we explore what it means to be 'out of this world' Christians, we will also find time for all sorts of sci-fi fun, space-time ideas and (maybe) some Star Wars dressing up...

1 in 10 teenagers have mental health problems that require professional help. Fewer than 50% get the help they need. In Scotland, 1 in 7 adolescents self-harm. These alarming statistics introduced a recent presentation by the Christian healthcare charity, [Healthlink 360](http://Healthlink360.org).

Some of you may know this Edinburgh-based charity for its work in supporting overseas mission. It offers a travel vaccination service, and provides counselling and support for people working in traumatic circumstances - for example, nurses working in Africa during the Ebola crisis.

Healthlink 360 now offers training and support to church leaders and youth workers, to help them spot and respond to mental health problems in young people. Hearing the Head of Psychological Services speak, I was impressed by Healthlink's expertise in this area, and their heart for supporting the whole person - their physical, emotional and spiritual well-being.

If you feel you could be better equipped in this area, please email me (see below) to express an interest in Healthlink's training and I will keep you informed.

We are committed to the physical, emotional and spiritual well-being of our clients, enabling them to give of their best

in demanding roles

difficult circumstances

or unfamiliar locations

Would you be interested in training to help you spot and respond to mental health problems in young people? Here are some questions to ask yourself...

- What would you do if a teenager in your church had unexplained cuts on their arms?
- Do you know how to spot the warning signs of depression?
- Do you know what kind of questions can encourage a young person to open up about their mental health?
- Do you know how to have conversations about teenagers' mental health safely and within boundaries?

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