

YOUTH & CHILDREN NEWS



DIOCESE OF EDINBURGH

Spring/Summer 2018



Olivia Smith, our under-18 Diocesan representative on the Provincial Youth Committee, is pictured here on the right of the First Minister. Olivia accompanied the Primus to the meeting at Holyrood, organised by the Scottish Churches Parliamentary Office. Full story inside...

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- PLAY CHURCH - on the road
- GROWING YOUNG - SU Scotland event
- GDPR - data protection and what it means for you
- GLENALMOND 2018 - now booking!
- THE BIG DAY

Diocesan Youth & Children Officer: Claire Benton-Evans

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MEETING THE FIRST MINISTER



This is what youth participation looks like... Our under-18 Diocesan rep on the Provincial Youth Committee, Olivia Smith, joined with Rebecca Fleming, her fellow rep from St Andrew's Diocese, and the Primus, to meet the First Minister at the Scottish Parliament. They represented the SEC and made their voices heard in a meeting with church leaders and youth representatives, discussing the well-being of children in Scotland and other issues relating to the Year of Young People.

Olivia and Rebecca were delighted to get their "Sturgeon selfies" too!

See p6-7 for YOYP ideas for your church...

BLESSED...?

In March I attended a conference for diocesan children's advisors, organised by the Church of England. Its full title was: *Blessed? Being a blessing for children and allowing them to be a blessing in life's unexpected places*. Expert speakers took us to some dark places, but were enormously inspiring, showing us how God can work through our ministry and through children themselves to bring life and hope. If you or families in your church have been affected by the issues outlined below, please get in touch with me: there are people, organisations and resources that can help.

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO MOURN

Anne Richards, author of the wonderful *Children in the Bible*, spoke about how we talk about death and dying, particularly with children. She talked about how we struggle and resort to euphemisms like "she's lost her mum" or "Grandad's passed" which can leave children confused about the reality of death. She reflected that, whereas once children encountered death and dying in the natural world, now they tend to encounter it virtually, through TV, films and games. She challenged us, as a church, to explain with clarity our own narrative about death, and our own hope of eternal life. This was a fascinating presentation that encouraged us to reflect deeply on the theology of grief and loss.

We also heard from [Rev Paul Nash](#), senior chaplain at Birmingham Children's Hospital. He spoke of his work with long

term sick and dying children, and their families, and said that his job description is "seeking to lift children's spirit". Of the families he works with, he said that they need the "4 Rs: relationships, rituals, resources and research." His job is not necessarily to find answers: it is primarily about "being present and building community", seeking to help sick children and their families find what gives them life, hope and strength. This is especially to be found in a sense of belonging and being connected to others. Paul spoke very movingly about the simple playful and prayerful things he offers sick children, and described his awe at their courage and their moments of deep spiritual understanding.

If this is something you'd like to explore further, please get in touch with me: I would like to organize some training in this area if there is a demand for it.

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BLESSED ARE THE POOR

Alison Webster from the Diocese of Oxford and Bishop Paul of Durham spoke about the impact of poverty on children and young people. It is about more than money: it affects physical and mental health, nutrition, social and emotional life and opportunities. They stressed that more money is certainly part of the answer, but families in poverty also need to feel worthy and valuable. +Paul underlined the Biblical imperative to help these most needy of people: the “widows and orphans” of the Bible are still with us today: they are the single parents in B&Bs who are waiting for their Universal Credit payment that is already a month late.



An eye-opening BBC3 Documentary: [*Living in Poverty*](#).

BLESSED ARE THE DISPOSSESSED

Mo Baldwin of [The Children's Society](#) spoke about the dispossessed: people who don't choose to move. In our society, the dispossessed are the suddenly homeless, the immigrant and asylum seeker, the Food-bank user and those who are just getting by. She described how the Children's Society is supporting dispossessed children, and is moving from “a systems-based to a child-centred approach: what does this child need?”

Krish Kandiah is the founder of [Home for Good](#), a fostering and adoption charity. Krish spoke of how God prioritises the vulnerable, putting the widow, the orphan and the stranger first. His charity aims to find one new

fostering or adoptive family per church, to meet national adoption/fostering needs: Home for Good also helps churches “wrap around” that family to support and nurture them. Pointing out that Jesus himself organized an adoption from the cross, Krish presented us with five adopting/fostering challenges for us and our churches:

1. Could you do it? (Ask God!)
2. Could you stand alongside those who do?
3. Could you speak up about it? (See Home for Good's resources)
4. Could you surround children and carers and show them “We are for you!”
5. Could you sow this vision in your congregation and especially amongst children and young people?

BLESSED ARE THE TROUBLED IN MIND

Matt Blow, of the mental health charity [Young Minds](#), told us what churches can do to support young people struggling with their mental health:

- Noticing (knowing when things are extra stressful)
- Asking (getting over our fear of being wrong and opening a conversation about mental health)
- Listening (with empathy and understanding)
- Responding (taking it seriously)

Young people say:

- Please keep asking us questions
- Please keep listening
- Please don't give up on me

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BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO CARE

Dorothy Moore Brooks, Deputy Senior Chaplain at Great Ormond Street Hospital, led us in a moving and absorbing exercise to explore the impact of a child's death on the family and wider community. She outlined the story of a four year old who died, which was fictional but nevertheless contained a combination of real-life situations she had encountered in her chaplaincy work. Together we created, person by person, a physical sculpture of the boy's family, friends and community, using our physical positions to help us reflect on our place in this situation of grief and loss.

It was an unforgettable way of exploring the wider impact of such a death, and helped us to reflect on the role of the church in this context. Dorothy explained that losses keep on happening after the death: marriages can fail, friendships can wither, and the bereaved family needs ongoing support. She described her chaplaincy work as the ministry of being present: her job is to just keep turning up and turning up again, as a reminder that God has not forgotten you, the sick child.

For further information, visit [Child Bereavement UK](http://ChildBereavementUK.org).

PLAY CHURCH ON THE ROAD

AT THE CHILDREN'S MINISTRY NETWORK SPRING CONFERENCE



Children's leaders from many different denominations enjoyed their hands-on experience of Play Church. I told the story of the project, then as all the boxes were opened and all the dressing-up clothes explored, there were expressions of delight and wonder, and lots of laughter. Grown-ups need time to play, too!

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DON'T PANIC!

GETTING YOUR HEAD AROUND NEW DATA PROTECTION RULES

- Do you organise a Sunday School rota via email?
- Do you hold a register of Messy Church attendees and their contact details?
- Do you hold email addresses or phone numbers for parents who attend your church's toddler group?

If any of these, or something similar, applies to you in your church work, then new data protection rules will affect YOU. Read on!

The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) will take effect in the UK on 25 May 2018. It replaces the existing law on data protection (the Data Protection Act 1998) and gives individuals more rights and protection in how their personal data is used by organisations. Congregations must comply

with its requirements, just like any other charity or organisation, and that includes those of us who work with children and young people.

The General Synod Office has now sent out guidelines to all vestries, direct. These are signposted on the Provincial website [here](#).

The Diocesan Office will also be putting information on the "[Vestries](#)" page of the diocesan website:

I have found it helpful to start an audit of any data I hold by asking the following questions:

- Do I need to hold this data?
- Do I have consent to do so?
- Is the data held securely?

If you need further help or advice about data protection, ask your Vestry and/or get in touch with Simon Filsell at the Diocesan Office: 0131 538 7033



GROWING YOUNG

SU Scotland is hosting a national series of events for church leaders and youth and children's workers. This is an opportunity to explore findings from the new Growing Young research, and consider resources and ideas from SU Scotland which may help to grow young people in your churches and communities.

Growing Young is an evidence-based piece of research undertaken by the Fuller Youth Institute in the United States. It has now been published in the UK under the sub-heading, *6 Essential Strategies to help young people discover and love your church*. SU Scotland believes that the research is very helpful and can readily be contextualised to churches across Scotland. SU Scotland is keen to explore ways it could work in partnership with churches for the discipling of children and young people. The organisation is committed to "invest in young people to be confident and committed followers of Jesus and help them develop as leaders."

For more information about Growing Young events and booking details, visit: www.suscotland.org.uk

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IN PICTURES: Here are some things you and your young people might do:

- Photograph something your church does with children every month this year
- Invite children to take photos of what their church family means to them
- Photograph children's engagement with Play Church
- Give teenagers a video camera and invite them to make a documentary about your church or a church event
- Ask teenagers to take a church selfie with the congregation
- Film a church service from a child's eye view and share what they see (or don't see!)
- Film or photograph young people leading worship

Remember to get consent from everyone who is identifiable in your pictures /videos! SEC forms and guidelines are available [here](#). The images and videos will be shared (without naming individuals) in diocesan publications and on our website and social media platforms. Please send them to me (details below).

2018: THE YEAR OF YOUNG PEOPLE



The Diocese of Edinburgh

in the Scottish Episcopal Church

Every year is the Year of Young People



What
will YOU
share?



IN PICTURES: This year we will be showcasing the great things children and young people are doing in our churches. I'll be creating an interactive gallery of pictures and videos like this to share what young people themselves, and all of us who work with them, would like everyone to see (with appropriate consent, of course).

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THE YEAR OF YOUNG PEOPLE CONT.D

"Seek us out and let us in. Involving young people is important because we can affect your present as well as your future. We can help you prove to the world that church isn't a thing of the past, you're still present and growing today."

Olivia Smith (under-18 PYC rep) speaking at Diocesan Synod



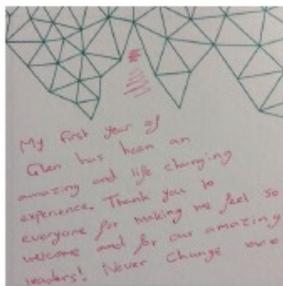
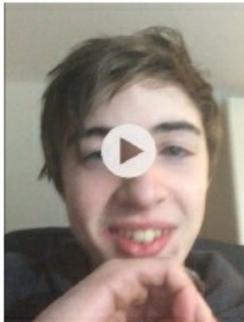
The Diocese of Edinburgh

in the Scottish Episcopal Church

Young people speaking for themselves

Thank you for the Sunday School outing:

"I went to the pantomime with my brother, my Dad and lots of my friends from St Peters Church. The pantomime was called Camelot. Some people from church were even in the pantomime. ... My favourite part was when Laughalot kept saying 'help me, help me'. My brother liked shouting 'it's behind you' every time the ghost came on stage. It was very funny and we had a good time."



What would YOU like to say?



From Thank you to the Glen leaders, by Fiona & Bo

"...You are our shoulder to cry on, our light in the dark, our family forever, you've left your mark, you've taught us, and learnt from us as well, you've been there to listen, even when we're going through hell. We wish we could say what we really mean, but all we can say is thank you."

Questions for God:
"How fast do prayers travel? Do they obey the laws of physics?"
Tobias, aged 11

IN THEIR OWN WORDS: This year we will be hearing from children and young people themselves. What would they like us to know? What questions would they ask God? How might they challenge us? I'll be creating an interactive library of words, videos and audio files like this to share what young people themselves would like everyone to hear (with appropriate consent, of course).

IN WORDS: the excerpts opposite will act as clickable links to the full text/video/audio file, so contributions can be of any length. Here are some things your children and young people might share:

- Questions for God
- Questions for the Church
- A prayer
- A song
- Thank you letters (to God, church leaders, each other)
- A report on a church event
- Observations on a Vestry meeting
- A challenge to the church or society
- A film or book review with a God connection
- A reflection on experiences at Glenalmond, Soul Survivor or other youth event
- A reflection on the experience of a Christian festival or event (e.g. Greenbelt, Powerepoint, Spree)

Remember to get consent to share these in diocesan publications and on our website and social media platforms. Please send these files to me (details below).

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GLEN '18

at Glenalmond College, Perthshire

24.7/365

"Yesterday, Today and Forever"



Scottish Episcopal
Church Youth Week

22nd - 28th July 2018

Glenalmond College,
Perthshire

Want to do something different this summer? Come & join the fun! The Youth Week is open to anyone in secondary education. Enjoy a week filled with fun, fellowship, learning, and sharing - not to mention the great activities and workshops!

Download an application form, which includes full details, and for more information:

www.scotland.anglican.org/who-we-are/organisation/boards-and-committees/provincial-youth-committee/

For more details, please contact your Diocesan Youth Officer, or e-mail The Revd Tembu Rongong rector@stpj.org.uk

General Synod of the Scottish Episcopal Church, Scottish Charity Number SC015962

BOOKING NOW!

Booking is now open for the Provincial Youth Week at Glenalmond. Forms are available from me and are downloadable from the [Provincial website](#). All S1-S6 welcome.

THE BIG DAY



And finally... Two hot-off-the-press images from Saturday's diocesan Big Day, which was a joyous, family friendly occasion. Children loved Play and Pray, hosted in the nave by St Andrew's Innerleithen! Grown-ups were inspired by children's workers telling their stories of ongoing exciting projects, including this from Lynda at St Margaret's Easter Road: she used these simple objects to show how their toddler group reaches out, builds community, reflects God's love and builds a bridge between the church and local families. Thank you to everyone who contributed their time and talents to the day, including those whose photographs I didn't manage to take, including Fischy Music, Godly Play and some wonderful all-age tactile prayer activities!

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