

YOUTH & CHILDREN NEWS



From the Diocese of Edinburgh

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CORONAVIRUS HELP AND SUPPORT

The current situation is changing daily, and we are all concerned for the most vulnerable in our society. How can churches help the children and young people they work with?

Follow official guidance

The Scottish Episcopal Church has published its guidance [here](#), which will be updated regularly. This will be informed by the latest Government and NHS advice.

Share age-appropriate information

YoungScot have gathered some excellent age-appropriate resources for children [here](#). These include tips on staying safe, understanding jargon, finding reliable news and managing anxiety.

Safeguard mental health: ABC

Avoid hysteria: Limit time spent following coronavirus news on social media. Encourage young people to pick a couple of trusted sources of information (see YoungScot resources above) and check them a couple of times a day, rather than constantly reading the latest speculations online.

Breathe: To help with stress and anxiety, encourage young people to take 15 minutes out of their day to relax and breathe. They can use helpful mindfulness apps such as [Headspace](#). If they can get outside whilst maintaining social distance, even 15 minutes in a green or sunny spot can help reduce anxiety.

Connect: While we are socially distanced, it's important to stay connected. Encourage young people to talk on the phone or video chat with loved ones: they are already expert at this with their friends, but this may be the perfect occasion for them to teach their grandparents how to video call from their tablets! Sharing music or organising a Watch Party online with friends can help, too. Your youth group may already have a group chat, but you might like to consider connecting the parents of your toddler group children via a closed Facebook group, WhatsApp group or similar.

Share helpful online resources

Now that church services have been discontinued until further notice, we will increasingly be exploring our online potential. [The Provincial Youth Committee Facebook page](#) will continue to share prayers, support and links to reliable information - like this page for regular updates.

Pray

Most importantly, encourage your young people to pray. For example: they can say Morning and Evening Prayer together online, as Glenalmond delegates do during youth week. [The Taizé community](#) will be live-streaming evening prayer each day at 1930 GMT: like their page for links to beautiful, contemplative worship. The Provincial Youth Facebook page will be sharing further prayers over the coming weeks.

For younger children, there are great resources for nurturing faith at home on the [Godventure Facebook page](#) and in *Wild Lent*, available from Kevin Mayhew - a treasure trove of outdoor activities to help children get closer to God at home.



Hands up who slept rough in St Mary's Cathedral in December?! This was part of Social Bite's Wee Sleep Out, and our Edinburgh Ecumenical Youth Team (young people and leaders from St Mary's Cathedral, Edinburgh Diocese and Palmerston Place Church) raised an amazing £4,136.25, which put us in the top ten Wee Sleep Out fundraisers. We were encouraged on the night by visits from Bishop John and Social Bite Co-founder, Alice Thompson (pictured front left).

Our young people also received a Special Recognition Award (below) from Social Bite for their efforts in helping to plan the Wee Sleep Out, and for the imaginative way in which they engaged with the plight of homeless people. Christ Church Morningside also led their own Wee Sleep Out, raising over £1000! Thank you to everyone who took part, who helped lead, who generously donated, and who helped make these worthwhile events possible.





PLAY CHURCH

Play Church continues its pilgrimage around the diocese. It stayed at Old St Paul's from Advent to Candlemas: in this picture you can see the rapt attention on these children's faces as they learned about baptism. Play Church is now at Holy Trinity Haddington. If your church would like to host play church, please get in touch with me! Thanks to Paul Lugton for the photo.

Messy Church outreach

Here's a great idea from Rev Rosie Addis at St John's Princes St: if you are involved with a Messy Church, why not have a messy card-making activity, and use the cards for pastoral visits? In a lovely example of inter-generational outreach, these hand-made cards make their way to the homes of often isolated older people, as a colourful sign that the whole church - young and old - is praying for them.





UPCOMING EVENTS...?

There will be discussions over the coming days about this year's Youth Week at Glenalmond: check for updates [here](#). This week is enormously important to delegates, who look forward to it throughout the year. Please hold them in prayer at this time, along with all young people whose hopes are focused on the Christian summer camps that do so much to nurture their faith and sense of belonging.

The photo below shows young people from Edinburgh Diocese, and friends, at the most recent Provincial Youth gathering. Welcomed by St John's, Aberdeen, young people enjoyed a sleepover event and then played a full part in Sunday's worship.

GODLY PLAY CONFERENCE

Godly Play Scotland is hosting its third conference from 13-14 November at Portobello and Joppa Parish Church in Edinburgh with guest speaker, Dr Rebecca Nye. Rebecca will share about her own experience of childhood spirituality in those early years as she explores with us the importance of an adult culture that believes in childhood spirituality. Throughout the conference there will be market stalls, tea and coffee and time to chat with fellow Godly Players. Details and booking [here](#).

