

YOUTH & CHILDREN NEWS



From the Diocese of Edinburgh

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SAFEGUARDING FOR ONLINE YOUTH WORK IN THE SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

Young people are used to inhabiting online spaces where they work together, play together, share, socialize and develop friendships. During the lockdown and in times of social distancing, being in community with our young people means joining them in these online spaces. This is new territory for many adults, and we are unsure of the ground. The Scottish Episcopal Church has produced a new guide to good safeguarding practice for church leaders who are connecting with their young people online. You can read it in full on the Provincial website [here](#).



“In times of social distancing, being in community with our young people means joining them in online spaces”

Contact the Diocesan Protection Officer, Simon Filsell, if you have a live safeguarding concern on dioadmin@dioceseofedinburgh.org

These safeguarding guidelines can help answer those nagging questions, such as:

- How do I make sure that my youth group via Zoom is a safe space?
- What if a young person from my church messages me online, asking to talk? How do I support them safely?
- Is a WhatsApp group an appropriate way to stay in touch?
- How do I use Facebook safely with young people?
- I want to get children and young people involved online with a photo challenge or video project. How do I make sure this is done safely?

In the rest of this newsletter you can also find examples of creative and safe ways in which youth leaders and organisations are connecting with children and young people, without meeting in person.

THE LOCKDOWN BAND



#wewontstopsinging

FISCHY MUSIC LOCKDOWN BAND

The latest exciting Fischy Music song is out now! Watch 'We Won't Stop Singing', featuring The Lockdown Band via video from all over Scotland and beyond! Fischy Music says: "These guys are TOTAL STARS! ★ Such great energy and singing - you will be grinning from ear to ear by the end - we promise!"

TODDLER GROUP SONG TIME

With Lynda
from
St Margaret's
Easter Road



Lynda and Alison run the popular toddler group at St Margaret's Easter Road, which has not been able to meet since lockdown began. So to keep in touch, Lynda has been presenting live song time with all the children's favourite songs. She presents from home (with her teddy family!) and shares the videos on the private playgroup Facebook page every Monday and Wednesday. This has met with a lot of interest from members in the group. Alison says: "It is a great way of keeping in touch and letting the families know we are thinking about them. Lots of toddlers benefit from watching it, especially 10 Little Monkeys when they get to bounce on the bed! Sadly it will probably be a very long time before the group can meet again but we are keeping a supportive presence." Lynda's song times even have a global audience, as her grandson in the USA also joins in!

NEWS AND RESOURCES FOR YOUTH WORK ONLINE



Many children will be missing church-run holiday clubs this summer. The Scottish Bible Society has put together a FREE "home delivery" holiday club resource for you to take to children and parents in your church and wider local communities! Each week contains five Family Activity Cards and Five Online Events outlines designed to be used on a 30 minute video conference call platform. You can find out more about these Bags of Discovery [here](#).

The Glen leadership team has been facilitating a popular lockdown programme of Provincial Youth online worship and activities. Now we are looking to offer a Glen Online Experience during the first week of August! We can't recreate Glen itself, but we want to help delegates connect with each other and God throughout the week. We have surveyed current delegates to find out which bits of Glen they will miss most, and the planning continues... More details will be emailed to parents soon! Keep an eye on the [Provincial Youth Facebook Page](#) for updates.



Showcase | Youthscape

Showcase is a fresh approach to youth ministry that explores how human creativity can help us think about and connect with Christian faith.

Youthscape has produced loads of great resources [here](#), some specifically designed for lockdown, such as Together Apart. A new one which looks interesting is Showcase, particularly if your young people are creative types. It's described as "a fresh approach to youth ministry that explores how human creativity can help us think about and connect with Christian faith."

CREATIVITY IN GALASHIELS



"Socially distant but spiritually close" - a selection of banners created by the children at St Peter's during lockdown. Different parts have been produced in isolation then collated for display



Karen Ellis from St Peter's Galashiels has written to tell me how her church is staying connected with young people from St Peter's Sunday Squad.

"As we are located on one of the main roads into Galashiels, we are ideally located to reach passing travellers. So we have put posters up to let them know that although the building is closed the church is still alive. Before lockdown, we had already produced a banner for Holy Week made up of hand prints, with a notice saying "Palm Sunday leads to Holy Week". So after that I decided to contact the children and ask them to do a small part of the next banners. It's been amazing how all these separately created parts have come together to produce these banners."

CONNECTING IN MORNINGSIDE



Alex Barrett is the Families Networker at Christ Church Morningside. She has shared her all-age talk with the congregation on the church website, featuring a thought-provoking video about what it means to be disciples today. She is also planning a virtual holiday club this summer, which already has 23 children signed up! She will be sending out parcels to all participants containing everything they need for the week's craft activities - great idea!

MORE IDEAS FOR STAYING TOGETHER APART



"All in the same boat? A picture to remind us that in difficult circumstances, some need more help than others."

HELPING TOGETHER

Young people love to put their faith into action in practical ways. Are there ways in which your church is reaching out to help the local community during these difficult times, and can young people get involved?

RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES



Beki Cansdale is a Mixed Mode student with the SEI who is based at St John's Prices St. During lockdown she has produced some great resources for the young people at St John's: they're ideal for helping families nurture faith at home during these socially-distanced times. Highly recommended! You'll find Lectionary-based reflections, prayers, craft activities, games and more on Beki's blog [here](#).

There are many ways of keeping your church's children and young people connected at this time, which don't require particular youth work expertise - just a bit of creative thinking and a commitment to include all ages.

PRAYING TOGETHER

This is one of the easiest things to do via Zoom. You could try some creative ways of praying and get young people to help lead them, e.g. using a picture as a focus for prayer, by screen-sharing. See Bishop Anne's series, [Picturing Prayer](#), for inspiration.

CHURCHES TOGETHER

Are there ecumenical projects happening online in your area that you can join in with at this time? A great way to share expertise and resources.



HAVE FUN TOGETHER!

- Host a Quiz Night in which children and young people set some of the rounds e.g. on Doctor Who, popular music, Superhero movie franchises etc. They could also set the adults some of their own genuine school work questions!
- Hold a Bake-Off, in which both children and adults compete - sharing the results via Zoom and taste-testing within their own households. You could do something similar with art and craft projects.
- Hold an Open Mic Music Night, when musically talented people of all ages in the congregation do a turn via Zoom.

**Is something working well for your church?
Share it here next time!**