



## Ideas for Family Ministry Over Summer

### By Raewyn Moodie

**As we look ahead to a summer in Auckland in the traffic light framework of red, it is more important than ever that we are planning to resource our families for faith at home.**

Christina Embree in her "refocus ministry blog" says: *Most parents today grew up in churches that had age-segregated, traditional models. Many times faith was compartmentalized and not talked about at home. Because of that, many parents don't know how to talk about their faith or worship with their children. They need help. They need support. They need their faith community to do what they promised on dedication day and walk with them as they raise their kids in the faith...The final commission left to the church by Jesus was to "Go and make disciples." Discipleship goes beyond church membership or service attendance. Being a disciple means being a follower and imitator of Christ and making disciples means leading others to do the same. As Paul says, "Follow me as I follow Christ."*

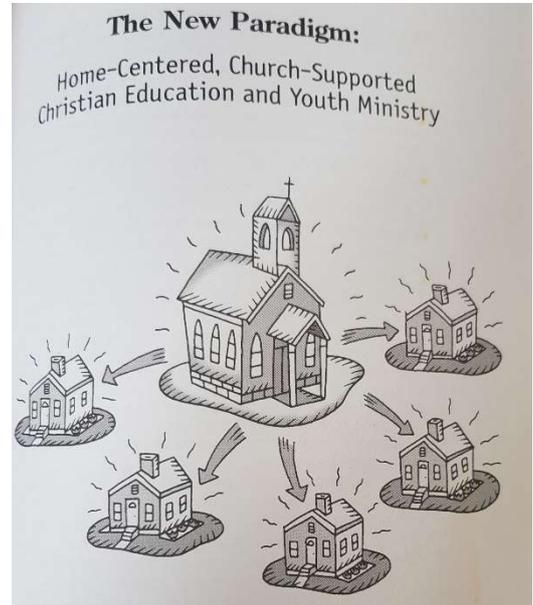


She also shares some new research with young people, coming from the US, that during the year-long pandemic *"only 10% of them had a faith leader reach out to them."* I pray that if this research was carried out in

New Zealand, our stats would be much higher, but this is a reminder to us that if there are some families who have not been seen on Zoom or have somehow "fallen off the radar" that it is important to reach out to them in some way. Relationships are so important in helping our families navigate through this difficult time. Christina's solution to how we help maintain faith in the coming season is: *"Relationships, conversation, genuine community, slow to anger, slow to speak, quick to listen, serving others without expectation of return, treating all people with love and grace, valuing a person for their humanity made in God's image over their personal beliefs or values,... pursuing peace and living as ambassadors of reconciliation."* See <https://refocusministry.org/blog/> so you can read more.

If you are preparing to do some forward planning for next year I would strongly recommend having a look at <https://network.crcna.org/faith-nurture/playlists-and-home-faith-formation> This gives some great frameworks and ideas for planning ahead for what might look like a different kind of ministry season for us all.

Some of you will be preparing **faith at home packs** for **Advent** or **'summer faith packs'** for January, as churches may not be able to meet together in large groups indoors for some time to come. I have attached some ideas which can help families do discipleship together or with another family. I am excited that in this new season we can grow disciples even more strongly than we have in the years past. If families can connect with their faith at home and then look to see how they can reach out to their neighbours in real ways, we will be winning for Jesus' kingdom! I have attached a picture from a book "**The Family Friendly Church**" by **Ben Freudenburg** which shows that churches are the lighthouse to light families who then share Jesus' light with their neighbours. One of the documents below is for families to reach out with acts of service to their communities over the holidays.



[\(Family service ideas Sheet\)](#)



Please remind your families, especially if they are going away or not meeting with any other church families that their time together is the most important and **the Faith Five** for everyone is just as valuable in a tent by the beach as it is round the dining table!

[\(Faith at home for everyone sheet\)](#)

For some resources on **outdoor faith ideas**, which would also work really well for those who've never been to church, visit

[www.muddychurch.co.uk](http://www.muddychurch.co.uk). Here is a lovely piece of reflection from the Muddy church coordinator:

*"Wondering is such an important part of what we believe in, many studies show it's important for learning and we (shouldn't) move children away from the why questions to the what... an invitation to share together - even if our thoughts are different, to accept, listen, hear and be alongside others. We also believe the Bible is true and within it answers, wisdom unfathomable and the image of a God far bigger than even our imagination and yet present in every heartbeat. It is this truth that we seek to share, inviting (families) into a relationship and adventure together."*

**Mere Kirihimete**

