

# connect

May 2020

*Growing  
God-connected  
children*

**4 QUESTIONS FOR  
THE DINNER TABLE**

**WHAT'S NEXT FOR CHILDREN  
AND FAMILY MINISTRY?**

**LOCKED DOWN,  
BUT NOT OUT!**

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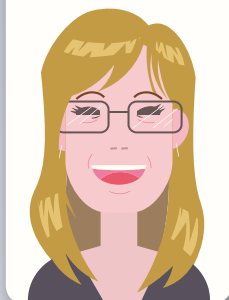
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I don't know about you, but I'm finding it increasingly difficult to separate my work from my home life. The two seem to be finding a sometimes, unhealthy habit of blending together! Maybe it's my lack of self-discipline, or maybe it is just something I would eventually get used to. Whatever it is, I have to admit I'm really looking forward to being able to see people in person, and move my desk back to my real office. I'm also thinking we may eventually be using Zoom as a form of punishment e.g., "If you don't behave yourself you'll be sent to Zoom!" But all joking aside, these have been the best and the worst of times. I've loved the slower pace of life; not having to rush anywhere, and having more family time. But they have also been the worst of times as we've been separated from some of our loved ones. I wonder what has been great for you? What have been your best moments? And what have been the worst? If you could have a conversation with your pre-lockdown self, what would you say?

I'm starting to ponder three words as I look ahead—**keep, tweak, drop.** What things do I want to keep from my 'previous' life and work? Things that are still useful and relevant as I move ahead. What things have I tweaked to adjust to this 'new normal' that have turned out to be great and are definitely needed as I go forward. And what things have I dropped that need to stay dropped? Things that are neither useful nor the best as I go forward. I wonder how you would answer those questions? **What do you want to keep, what do you need to tweak, and what should you drop? And, more importantly, what does God have to say about all of this!**

With the necessity of having moved all our gatherings to online spaces, our CFM cluster groups have now become accessible to anyone with an internet connection. This has been one of those tweaks that has turned out to be great for many of you. If you're not already connected and are interested in taking part in one of these groups, the Regional CFM Coaches and I are hosting these at various times during the week. You can join any group that suits you, regardless of your actual location. Our contact details are on the left.

This issue of Connect is our first that is fully online. We have made some tweaks (loving that word!) to the format to fit this new context, and so that you can keep or print articles for your teams and families. It also means that links to websites etc. are easier to check out!

Lastly, I want to say that I am SO VERY PROUD of the way you have all creatively adapted your programmes and your pastoral care to this new way of being the church. I have been blown away each week as I have heard the stories, seen the Facebook posts, watched the online services and listened to you sharing in cluster groups. I genuinely believe that Jesus is smiling on you all and wants you to know that he sees both your tears and your laughter. **Let's be child disciple makers who navigate the uncharted territory ahead with passion, creativity and a willingness to listen to what the Spirit is saying to the church.**

"Who knows if perhaps you were born for such a time as this." Esther 4:14.

Ngā mihi nui,  
*Karen*

## PRACTICAL DISCIPLESHIP:

# 4 QUESTIONS THAT TRANSFORM DINNER INTO DISCIPLESHIP

CHRISTINA EMBREE, 'REFOCUS' BLOG

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*Four simple but ever so critical questions families can ask each other over the dinner table.*

### 1 WHAT WAS YOUR HIGH TODAY?

Simply put, you are just asking what went well that day. Why? Well, I'm sure you've all experienced the oh-so enlightening after-school conversation that goes something like this:

**Parent:** "So, how was school today?"

**Child:** "Fine."

**Parent:** "Well, what'd you do?"

**Child:** "Nothing."

**Parent:** "You had to do something. What did you learn?"

**Child:** "I dunno."

**Parent:** "Oh come on, give me something!"

**Child:** \*blank stare\*

Asking a question like "What was your high?" begs the answer in story form. Sure every now and then, we get a shrug, but most of the time, we get to hear about something that happened that day that otherwise we would not have been privy too. Plus the whole family gets to celebrate the moment together.

### 2 WHAT WAS YOUR LOW TODAY?

It is important to recognize that not everything that happens in a day is fun and happy. Sometimes things happen that make us angry or sad. Having a safe place to mention low times and process with family can lead to some of the most meaningful moments in your family's life. We've cried together, talked through some difficult situation, prayed for people who hurt us or were hurting, and addressed some of the harder things kids face in life. We don't want our kids to live a 'Facebook' existence where only the good moments get highlighted; rather, we want to teach them that God and home are safe places even in the hardest times.

### 3 WHAT MISTAKE DID YOU MAKE TODAY?

We all cringe a little bit at this one. It means we have to step back and acknowledge that we may have messed up. It takes humility to admit that, not only to ourselves, but also to our family. And no one is exempt; even Mum and Dad have to answer the question.

Do you know what message this sends our kids? That we mess up, but God's love is available anyway. Forgiveness and grace are always available. Sometimes, we can genuinely say, "I had a good day and I can't think of any mistakes" but those times are outweighed by the moments we recognize that we trip up and fall into the grace of God. We want our kids to know that no matter how big the 'mistake', God's grace, love and forgiveness are always available, and so is ours.

### 4 WHERE DID YOU SEE JESUS TODAY?

This is by far my favourite question. It's different from the high of the day. It's where we have experienced God in our everyday life. I love the answers my kids give to this question, things like, "I saw Jesus when my friend gave me a hug" and "I saw Jesus when my teacher forgave some kids who had three strikes and let them have ice cream anyway." Seeing the attributes of God in the world around them keeps them looking for Jesus everywhere they go. Once, one of my girls wrote a note to a friend in which she said, "When you [did that thing] I saw Jesus in you." That's exactly the kind of note we need to be giving one another!

**FOUR SIMPLE QUESTIONS.**

**FOUR AMAZING LIFE LESSONS.**

**FOUR EASY WAYS TO CONNECT.**

**FOUR INTENTIONAL MOMENTS FOR DISCIPLESHIP.**

And while the dinner table works for us, maybe it would work better for you on car rides? Or before bedtime? Or maybe even over text if your kids are older?

The idea isn't to create another 'thing' we feel pressured to do. Rather, it is to layer some intentionality over what we are already doing to create the opportunity to model faith, experience grace, and increase love together.

Remember, discipleship at home is never about doing more things. Rather, think of it as an opportunity to invite Jesus into everything we are already doing. Many of us eat dinner at home and most of us strive to do that together, as a family. Inviting Jesus into that everyday practice takes it from ordinary to sacred, from dinner to discipleship, from temporal to eternal, and that is discipleship at home. ♦

# GROWING GOD-CONNECTED, RESILIENT CHILD DISCIPLES

*We love hearing the stories of how churches are making mid-week discipleship a focus for their children's ministry. Sporadic attendance on Sunday mornings means that children are often only attending church two, or even less, times in a month. This means that finding times outside of Sunday morning to help shape faith is becoming more important. We want our children to become God-connected, resilient disciples who know how to navigate their world with confidence in the Gospel and a heart attuned to Jesus. In this issue we share the ways that two of our churches are seeking to do this.*

*NOTE: during lockdown both groups have adapted by using virtual meeting spaces.*



## HOT CHOCOLATE DISCIPLESHIP CLUB MT ALBERT BAPTIST

**W**innie Huddleston is the children's pastor at Mt Albert Baptist church and she read about the Hot Chocolate Club, by David Goodwin, in a previous *Connect* issue.

She was inspired by the concept and began one at her church in an after school slot. She only advertised it a couple of times and ended up with 17 children from Year 5 to 8 and seven helpers who were teens and parents.

They opened the church doors at 3:15pm with a great afternoon tea for children as they arrived from school, then began the programme with some games, before getting into the curriculum. Winnie also added a worship time and some extra object lessons. The children all had their own journals for writing or drawing their prayers and the things they noticed from God during the afternoon. Some children invited unchurched friends from their school, and their parents who do not attend any church, were happy for their children to be part of something positive. Some children had said they would just check it out once or twice, but then decided they would be there every week! Helpers came when their own child was away at school camp.

Children went into small focus groups of three or four for

discussion and loved that their ideas were respected and they could safely share there. Children loved writing in their journals, and often didn't want to leave at 5:30pm when the programme finished.

Winnie's biggest disappointment came when lockdown prevented them from continuing, but it will be small groups like these, that will most likely be able to open ahead of larger groups in our churches.

This model shows real discipleship occurring between peers as well as intergenerationally! This is developing a close relationship with God as well as reaching out evangelistically. I pray that many more 'Hot Chocolate Clubs' can begin around our country as meeting restriction levels change! ♦

If you would like to read the article that inspired Winnie to start the Hot Chocolate Club take a look at **this link**. It features Lois Rodler and the Hot Chocolate Club she has been running at Pirimai Baptist in Napier for a number of years.



# DISCIPLESHIP THROUGH BIBLE AND PIZZA

**BRONWYN OWENS**  
**KUMEU BAPTIST CHURCH**

About mid-last year, I identified a need with some of our young people. Here at Kumeu Baptist, we have two great youth groups—Kumeu Youth for Year 9 to 13 and Frenzy for Year 7 to 9. Frenzy meets on alternative Fridays and is a group that is run by a terrific and talented leader. The aim was primarily for Frenzy to be a place of safety, fun and relationship building. It is also a place where kids can be introduced to scripture and the love of God. The need that was identified was “where to from here?” So, Bible and Pizza was born. We meet on alternative Fridays to Frenzy and it is a place where we dig in to the Bible and we dig into pizza. Although I lead this group, I see my role more as a facilitator, as it is the young people who choose what Bible passage we dig into each week. I suggest things that they could look at, step in at times to re-focus the discussion and of course, order the pizza. This is a group of approximately 8-10 kids, but the discussions we have had have certainly been lively. Recently (just before lockdown), the chosen story was the feeding of the 5000. This led in a direction that I would never have planned for. Why were the women and children not mentioned? From here we discussed the lives and roles of women and children in that context but also compared it to the world today. At Bible and Pizza, the young people know that this is a safe place to ask questions that they might not normally voice. They have also grown in their faith. Late last year, one of this group asked to be baptised! We learned about baptism and then in November, we came together as a church family to celebrate with her as she was baptised.

*The young people know that this is a safe place to ask questions that they might not normally voice.*

With the lockdown, we have not been able to physically meet so our group dynamics have changed slightly. At the kids' suggestion, we now meet weekly in a Zoom session. They still choose the Bible Story, but instead of digging into pizza,

they also choose a challenge to dig into. The first week's challenge was to make your own pizza. Last week it was to bake and decorate biscuits and this week, the challenge they have set is to bake and decorate a cake (any size—cupcake or a large one). They then judge each other's creation on Friday night and I get to post out a prize to the winner. The story that they have chosen for this week is Matthew 3, John the Baptist and the baptism of Jesus. Very apt as another of the group has recently come to me and asked to be baptised. In regards to discipleship, I have noticed that it is not only me doing discipling. The young people are also (and probably without realising), discipling each other and in turn, discipling me. A wonderful and very enriching discipleship circle!

I have just heard from a member of our church whose wife passed away last year. He just received a card in the post from a pair of sisters in this group. When we looked at the Bible story of the loaves and fishes, I asked the question: what has God given you and how can you use that to help others? In answer to this, these two girls made a beautiful card and posted it to this gentleman who had just had the first anniversary of his wife's death during lockdown. They are listening to God and using the gifts he has given them to bless others. ♦



# WHAT'S NEXT

## FOR CHILDREN'S & FAMILY MINISTRY?

**JULIE MCKINNON**  
**CHILDREN & FAMILY MINISTRY ENABLER**  
**CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY CHURCHES OF NEW ZEALAND**

**T**he great commission is one of the most well-known verses in the bible.

"Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age" Matt 28:19-20.

What does 'make disciples' look like in Children and Family Ministry in the current climate? This is a crucial question to ponder as we think about what comes next. We have an unprecedented opportunity to reflect on the core purpose of our ministry and evaluate if what we are doing contributes to that goal.

We want the children we work with to love Jesus for the rest of their lives. Discipleship is at the heart of our ministry. This mission has not changed, but perhaps the method has. Maybe it's time to hone our focus to what really contributes to making disciples.

What is the church's role in a child's discipleship journey? Aren't parents primarily responsible for the faith formation of their children? While it is true that parents have the God given responsibility to disciple their children, our role is to partner with them as they do this.

Partnership is about working together; it's about filling the gaps and deficits of the other. Yes, parents are called to be the primary nurturers of their children's faith and we can support, equip and encourage them in this. However, there are many parents who are not able or willing to do this. Not all children have Christian parents, and of those who do, many are not engaging in regular faith rhythms with their children. Who will fill these gaps?

We, the body of Christ, have a responsibility to stand in the gap as family for those children whose parents are missing or unable to provide spiritual nourishment. Even for those who

*"Therefore, go and make disciples  
of all nations, baptising them in the name of  
the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit  
and teaching them to obey everything  
I have commanded you. And surely, I am with  
you always, to the very end of the age."*

do get intentional spiritual input at home, church family fills the gap of community; it allows them to experience the contagious, communal faith of the body of Christ. Every child needs the love of a caring adult who is not their parent.

What comes next is an opportunity to step out of the day to day mechanics of ministry and take a balcony view. What is the big picture? What is our vision? Is discipleship really at the core of ALL we do?

It's time for some critical conversations. Is what we are currently doing producing something lasting that will travel with our kids into adulthood? What would Children's Ministry look like if we prioritised captivating our kid's hearts for the gospel? What does it look like to partner with parents to raise resilient disciples who love Jesus for the rest of their lives?

Can we refocus our energy on discipleship rather than programmes and renew our passion to see children grow in knowledge, love and relationship with Jesus? ♦

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:

1. What is your vision for the families and children in your church and local community?
2. What do the children in your church most need in order to become resilient disciples?
3. How could you refocus your energy towards discipleship rather than just running a Sunday programme?
4. If you were to design a Child Discipleship Pathway for the children in your ministry, what might that look like?
5. What is the place of parents in the discipleship pathway?



# a little child shall *lead* them

**PATSY WAY**  
**WINDSOR PARK BAPTIST**

*Patsy was on the pastoral care team at Windsor Park for six years before transitioning to director of their children's ministry, WindsorKids. Here she talks with the Baptist magazine about this ministry and why she believes children should not be overlooked as ambassadors for Christ. (Note: this interview has been adapted from an article in the April/May 2020 issue of the Baptist magazine and was written pre-COVID-19).*

**WHEN YOU THINK OF CHILDREN AND MISSION,  
WHAT COMES TO YOUR MIND?**

Growing up, I was told we had to support our missionaries overseas. I always understood 'missionaries' to be people who leave their homes and families and go and live on a little island somewhere, because, as a kid, those were the missionaries we were supporting at our church. But I have learnt that everyone is

a missionary. For me, children and mission means children on a mission to share the love of Christ. I want all kids to know that you don't have to leave the place you are in to be a missionary. →

*I want all kids to know that you don't have to  
leave the place you are in to be a missionary.*

## HOW DOES WINDSORKIDS HELP CHILDREN TO SEE THEMSELVES AS MISSIONARIES?

I am passionate about children learning to recognise the voice of God that is already in them. So, we are big on asking our kids, "What do you want to do for mission and serving this year?"

WindsorKids sponsors five children through Freeset. We have profiles of the sponsored children, what schools they go to, their favourite colours, their pets, etc., so that our kids know these children are real, like them. They write letters and birthday cards and we pray for the children. At the end of this year we will transition out of sponsorship, as our kids have said they want to do something for children in NZ. It's great that they are starting to think of local mission as mission too.

We also do two or three Serving Sundays a year, where the kids decide how they want to serve their community. This year they have chosen to do a car wash for people at our church, weed the gardens, and go on a prayer walk around our neighbourhood and place handwritten cards in people's letterboxes.

We tell them, "You are a missionary wherever you are. Wherever you are planted is where you can show the love of Christ." We often get them to share how they have shared the love of Jesus that week, or how they can be a missionary the following week.

## AND IT IS NOT JUST CHILD-TO-CHILD MISSION, IS IT?

In our context we are starting to see children bringing parents to church, not the other way around. Families who are late often say, "We weren't going to come today but our child said, 'No, it's church; I have to come.'"

We especially see parents who are new immigrants in our area wanting a good foundation for their kids. Our rule is that the parents have to stay on the property during the service, but often they won't go in the auditorium; they might sit in the café instead. We then see those kids telling their parents what they have learnt, and often the parents start going into church themselves. Some of the parents don't want to go to church but still volunteer to serve on our security team. Often within a few weeks there they are, singing the songs and joining in on prayers. So, it has flipped around now, I think, and these kids are ministering to their parents.

This year we intentionally started a segment on Sundays called 'More Than Me', which is basically showing our children the bigger mission of the church. Most of the church and Windsor Park's 'business as mission' staff are rostered to come into WindsorKids one Sunday each. They talk about how they contribute to the wider mission of the church and their own relationship with God, and then our kids have the opportunity to pray for them.

## TELL US MORE ABOUT THIS YEAR'S PRIORITY OF STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

A lot of our families are first-generation Christians. They didn't grow up in Christian homes so they have no idea how to spiritually parent their children. We love intergenerational learning, so we've created a teaching series that will be held on four Friday nights, for parents and kids to come to together. The parents will learn how to spiritually parent their children and the family will have the opportunity to brainstorm how they are going to serve, and how they can do things like bring prayer into everyday family life.

Like many other churches, attendance on Sundays can be irregular. So, this year we are looking at how we can live out our motto "Sunday is only one day" and do church outside of Sundays. For instance, we're looking at starting Messy Church on Saturday afternoons. We're also purposely putting staffing hours into our biggest mission fields: mainly music, ICONZ, Windsor football league, Small Fries Christian Childcare Centre, caféwindsor, and so on.

## ANY FINAL THOUGHTS ON CHILDREN, GOD AND MISSION?

Never underestimate a child and how much they already know. I'm constantly surprised at the depth of their understanding of who God is, of who God is to them, and of how they already have a relationship with him. Adults often talk about children being "the voice of the future". But if we keep looking to what they are going to be in the future, we ignore who they are now; they already *are* the voice of their generation. ♦

*Children have got such a powerful voice...  
They already are the voice of  
their generation.*

## TAKE OUTS:

1. What voice do children in your faith community have? How are they involved in your missional work?
2. Knowing that it will be a while before we can meet in large gatherings, how could you be encouraging your families to be on mission in their street and neighbourhood?
3. What help could you give first-generation Christians to spiritually parent their children?

Adapted from an article originally published in the April/May 2020 issue of the Baptist magazine.

## COVID-19: CHILDREN (STILL) ON A MISSION

In WindsorKids, as with all other churches we found ourselves having to reinvent church practically overnight, but our vision and heartbeat, our why, remains the same, it is just our how that has had to adjust.

Throughout this season we are so grateful for the foundations of mission that have been laid in WindsorKids over the years, and I believe that God has been preparing the hearts of our children to focus on local mission. We see this in their choice to move away from only supporting Freeset kids to focussing on local mission, too. In our WindsorKids online services and Facebook communication we have kept a heavy focus on mission and our 'More Than Me' ministry, looking at how putting teddy bears and crosses in our windows is sharing the love of Christ, and how community kindness is the best mission our children can be on now—knowing that something small like smiling at people we pass on our walks is a blessing to them. We have also given our children and families optional challenges to do in and around the house to bless and serve each other during this time of doing church@home.



# Locked down, but not out!



*The COVID-19 crisis has taken many things from us, but one thing it has given us is the renewed appreciation that the church is not a building, but a community of people who love Jesus. The building is simply the place where we gather. And in this time, when we are unable to gather in person, our churches have been finding new and creative ways to be together, and on mission. These are YOUR STORIES of being 'together, apart'.*

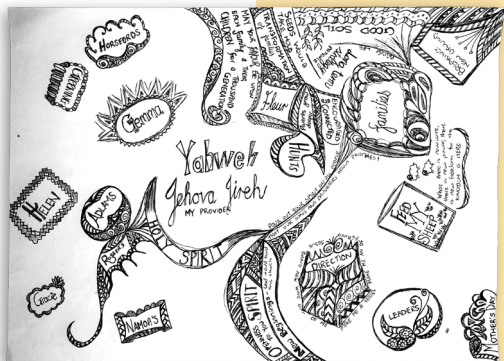
**Taupo Baptist** decided to divide the church directory into groups and allocate each group to a family in the children's ministry. Each family has been given the task/opportunity to contact each person on their list to see how they're going. Because the lists were randomly compiled there are people that the families hadn't met which has given the opportunity to connect across the different ages, which has been great.

Stories that are coming back are wonderful: An elderly widow living on her own sprained her ankle while out walking. She 'met' her family on the phone which ended up with prayer, and more frequent phone calls. Another family contacted a woman who is caring for her sick husband. She hadn't been to church for ages and she was really touched to have some personal contact. Her 'new family' are ringing more frequently as well. And one young mother who is very anxious is receiving daily calls from a friendly mother to see how she's doing and share stories of what she and her children have been up to.

At **Manukau City Baptist** we've seen people watching our services who haven't been to church in a really long time. We have missionaries being part of our church family again. We've set up a 'respond' button on our website so people can action a decision and have had 4-5 decisions for Christ. I've been able to invite all my Facebook 'friends' as I 'share' our service on Sundays and seen friends log on who normally wouldn't. People are commenting how great it is to have kids stuff in the service and we need to continue this going forward. And families are doing 'faith' with their families.

As our churches have been forced online we at **Petone Baptist** have had the blessing of our young people writing and posting original worship songs, and some videos of paintings created at home during personal worship. We are delighted to see God's spirit doing something new at this time of lockdown as we see worshipful responses emerging from our youth and young adults. What a wonderful surprise.

**Westgate Baptist** are seeing families watching the services together then having conversations that stem from the sermon. People's driveways and windows have been strategically used for sharing faith to the neighbourhood, especially over Easter. Some children have even been delivering home baking to their elderly neighbours' doorsteps.



Trish Nees, at **Northgate Baptist** says, "With this new season, I've been challenged to make prayer a much more central part of what I do and inspired by Praying in Colour, I now start each work day with prayer and doodle as I pray. This prayer time takes different forms— sometimes seeking God's direction for the ministry in this new season, sometimes for specific families, children or leaders and sometimes for families or leaders in general. As I pray I add the name or general idea of what I'm praying for and then doodle until I have finished praying. As someone who likes to achieve things, I've found it encouraging to have a visual representation of time that has been spent in prayer and also a reminder to keep praying."

**Fairfield Baptist** have been doing activities for families that include online Zoom Kahoot Bible quizzes. They are posting a midweek Pastor's update with a devotional and notices and a sermon online. Most of the small groups are meeting via Zoom and all church folk are in pastoral care groups with a leader who contacts each week. They are also doing grocery and pharmacy runs for a local retirement village. People tell them they are feeling more connected than ever.

Jan Ozanne at **Otumoetai Baptist** writes, "While technology is wonderful and has been a life saver at this time, I have been rediscovering the power of personal communication the old school way! I have enjoyed the phone calls with our parents and have found these informal chats over the phone a great way to connect and check-in with people. I also spent an afternoon writing letters to the children of each family. I think there is something exciting about receiving a personal, hand-written letter in the mail, especially in this digital age."

Bronwyn Owens from **Kumeu Baptist** has been sending out activity ideas for families to do with their kids for Sunday. Andie Davies, the wife of one of the pastors, hosted a Zoom group where families could come together online at 3pm to do the activities and share together. Andie kept it short with both her girls engaged (showing how to do the activity with real time parenting) and she got quite a few views from families including some from outside of the church!



Wendy Joyes at **Hutt City Baptist** shared this: I've been making short (approx 1min) devotional video clips. Every day another one goes live on our children's Facebook page. I've also emailed the links out to our families in my regular newsletter. Sometimes I've included my family in that newsletter mailout. My parents have then been forwarding it to their ministry contacts who have been forwarding it on again. The only direct comments I've received have been from within my own church congregation however I have no idea on the real reach of these short clips. Knowing how far such a small thing is being shared has blown me away! I have no idea what God will do with that and I doubt I'll ever find out, but wow!



# FAITH FORMATION IN CHILDREN

Working out what faith formation looks like at the different ages and stages is not always easy. To help churches understand how to help children flourish in faith, and develop targeted strategies, we produced a chart that looked at three areas—children, families and the church. Several years later we have just put this through both a wording and image revamp.

The Faith Formation chart covers three different stages in the faith development of children under 10 years. Each stage lists things to think about as you plan your programmes and structures. We have included pointers for parents and families as well as for the broader church. Each of the three areas lists faith needs that are common to all ages, and would be a great place to start.

We encourage you to discuss this chart with other staff members as well as volunteers and to place it in a prominent place in your office or Children's Ministry space.

The poster is available in both downloadable and print versions and can be purchased here: [athomeandchurch.org.nz](http://athomeandchurch.org.nz)

## FAITH FORMATION IN CHILDREN



### FLOURISHING CHILDREN

#### COMMON TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES:

1. Regular church attendance.
2. Inspiring, competent and trained leaders/mentors.
3. Family faith rituals.
4. To be present at the gathered worship service for part or all, where appropriate to learn and learn about the traditions, rhythms, rituals and celebrations of the faith community. Celebration of faith and life-stage milestones.
5. Strong peer relationships within the faith community.

#### 0-4 YEAR OLD CHILDREN NEED:

1. Family faith rituals and rhythms:
  - Prayer that is modelled
  - Age appropriate Bible reading
  - Spoken blessings
  - Songs and stories
  - Mealtime grace.
2. Children need to observe their parents' personal faith rituals. Ritual and rhythm also feeds the preschooler's need for things that are familiar.
3. Unconditional love and nurture and an understanding that God loves them.
4. Short truths; e.g. God loves me, God loves others, God wants me to love others too.
5. People who are familiar and routine, that give security. This is especially important in the church crèche and preschool programmes.

#### 5-7 YEAR OLD CHILDREN NEED:

1. To discover who God is and how to have a personal relationship with him.
2. To know that God's love is greater than any human love we can experience.
3. Family faith rituals and rhythms—this follows on from what has already been happening in the home, with the addition of family devotions and faith conversations.
4. To learn to:
  - Pray on their own
  - Read the Bible—both with the family and on their own, as appropriate
  - Memorise Scripture.
5. Age appropriate service opportunities within the church.
6. Positive peer relationships within the faith community.
7. Older role models—especially older children and teens.
8. Intergenerational relationships within the faith community.

#### 8-10 YEAR OLD CHILDREN NEED:

1. A deepening understanding of God: know who he is, he loves and has a plan for us; he also loves the world and wants us to make a difference in it.
2. Opportunities to make a personal commitment to following Jesus.
3. A discipleship pathway that helps them learn to pray on their own, read the Bible, memorise Scripture, hear from God, develop daily faith rhythms, share their faith with others, show grace and love to those who have a different worldview.
4. Positive peer relationships, and programmes that encourage those.
5. Service opportunities, both within the church and in the local community.
6. Worship response times at Children's Ministry—I can know God and he can speak to me.
7. Room to ask questions and express doubts in a safe place.
8. Peak experiences; e.g. camps.
9. To hear the faith stories of older believers.
10. Older role models and intergenerational relationships.
11. Help to transition between Children's Ministry and Youth Ministry.

### FLOURISHING FAMILIES

#### COMMON TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES:

1. Faith rituals in the home.
2. Parenting resourcing and support—Faith@Home sessions, social media, Toolbox courses, Spiritual Parenting classes, eBlogs resources etc.
3. Regular church attendance—aim for weekly.
4. Strong peer relationships within the faith community for support and encouragement—for both parents and children.
5. Modelled discipleship.
6. Positive and intentional intergenerational relationships; e.g. with Children's Ministry leaders and other mentors.

#### FAMILIES OF 0-4 YEAR OLDS WILL HAVE:

1. Bedtime and mealtime faith rituals and rhythms.
2. Peer relationships for encouragement and support; e.g. mainly music, playgroup.
3. Parents who model the showing of grace, so that children will later see how this reflects God's grace to us.
4. Parenting support and resourcing—at this stage parents are at their most receptive.
5. People who are familiar and routine, that give security. This is especially important in the church crèche and preschool programmes.

#### FAMILIES OF 5-7 YEAR OLDS WILL HAVE:

1. Modelled discipleship—parents will share with their children their faith stories and testimonies. Children need to observe their parents' personal faith rituals.
2. Family faith rituals and rhythms—continue with what is already being done and add family devotions.
3. Beliefs that are reinforced: "In our family we..."
4. Opportunities to develop intergenerational relationships within the faith community.
5. Strong peer relationships for encouragement and support.

#### FAMILIES OF 8-10 YEAR OLDS WILL HAVE:

1. Modelled discipleship—parents will continue to share with their children their faith stories and testimonies.
2. Family faith rituals—add discussion of life issues and worldviews.
3. Opportunities to develop intergenerational relationships within the faith community.
4. Family service opportunities—both within the church and in the local community.
5. Strong peer relationships; e.g. through social events, home groups.
6. Beliefs that are reinforced: "In our family we..."

### FLOURISHING CHURCHES

#### COMMON TO CHILDREN OF ALL AGES:

1. Value ministry with children and families—giving it support, resourcing and profile.
2. Provide resourcing for parents and children; e.g. discipleship, sacraments, parenting.
3. Have an intergenerational focus in all aspects of church life.
4. Celebrate faith and life stage milestones.
5. Have a relational focus, i.e., more than Sunday morning.
6. Have a strong discipleship focus and provide discipleship resourcing for the home.
7. Be outward focused—look for ways to engage community families and children.
8. Provide role models and mentors for both children and parents.
9. Ensure that church is a safe place, both spiritually and physically.

#### CHURCHES OF 0-4 YEAR OLDS WILL:

1. Welcome and accept children and noise—showing grace to families.
2. Celebrate the faith milestone of baby dedication.
3. Have beliefs that are reinforced: "In our church we..."
4. Have strong preschool Sunday ministry with consistent leaders and set routines.
5. Provide role models and mentoring relationships; e.g. grandparent figures.
6. Provide programmes or events that encourage peer relationships and give opportunity for outreach to community families; e.g. mainly music, playgroups.

#### CHURCHES OF 5-7 YEAR OLDS WILL:

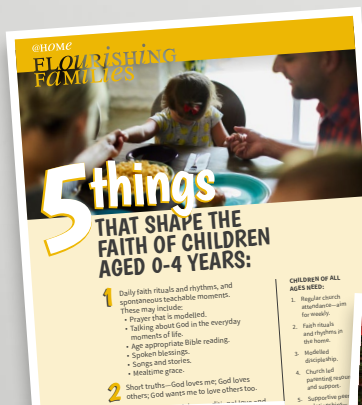
1. Resource parents and children so they can flourish in faith.
2. Have strong Sunday programmes.
3. Provide discipleship resources that can be used in the home.
4. Include children in Sunday services, wherever possible.
5. Develop intergenerational linkages through which to view services and other church activities.
6. Celebrate the life stage milestone of starting school.
7. Have spaces where children of different ages can interact on Sundays outside of the Children's Ministry; e.g. a sport space where older and younger can play games together.

#### CHURCHES OF 8-10 YEAR OLDS WILL:

1. Celebrate faith and life stage milestones; e.g. graduating primary school, making a faith decision.
2. Provide peak experiences; e.g. camps.
3. Where possible, have weekday clubs and events that further discipleship.
4. Provide programmes that encourage peer relationships and give opportunity for outreach to community children; e.g. Launchpad, ICON, IFC.
5. Have strong connections between children's and youth ministries—an integrated strategy.
6. Provide parents with teaching and information on the sacraments of communion and baptism.
7. Include children in Sunday services, wherever possible.

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This resource is produced by Baptist Churches of New Zealand

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CHURCH



## FAITH FORMATION POSTERS FOR PARENTS

Alongside the poster for churches, we have designed a series of three posters that help parents know how they can help their children flourish in faith at home. Each poster lists five/six simple things that help shape children's faith both at home and at church.

The posters can be printed and laminated and families encouraged to place them on the fridge or a place where they will be seen regularly. They come as a set of three and are downloadable in A4 and A3 size, and can be purchased here: [athomeandchurch.org.nz](http://athomeandchurch.org.nz)

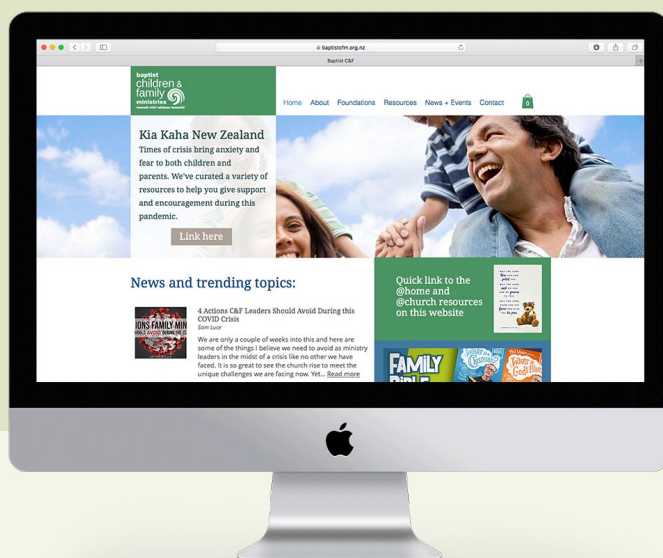
# Resources

## MR PHIL TV—FROM THE CREATOR OF VEGGIE TALES

### IT ALL STARTS WITH THE BIBLE

We want to bring faith to life for our kids, but it's hard to make sense of faith until you can make sense of the Bible. So Mr. Phil TV starts with a library of videos that take kids through the Bible from Genesis to Revelation. Then they meet famous folks from history whose faith shaped the world in amazing ways, to show kids faith in action. And finally they add a library of Bible study videos that take whole families through key books, together!

Check out this brand new online resource here: [mrphil.tv](http://mrphil.tv)



## CHECK OUT THE BAPTIST CFM WEBSITE!

We've surfed the net and talked with our CFM buddies and have curated a selection of great resources that we hope are helpful for the current ministry landscape. We are constantly updating so keep an eye out for new links and resources.

Visit: [baptistcfm.org.nz](http://baptistcfm.org.nz)

## MY LIFE RULZ

This well-loved New Zealand resource is aimed at helping children and their whānau build emotional resilience—skills that are much needed at this time.

My Life Rulz presents 10 foundational rules, or principles, for life that help kids navigate the world in which they live by developing healthy ways of thinking and living. It helps them build a healthy mind and can be grasped by children of all ages, cultures and aptitudes. Using a variety of media presentations this 10 week programme is suitable for both churches and schools.

Visit: [myliferulz.com](http://myliferulz.com)





## Parenting Place

Mā tāua, oti atu ai



### THE PARENTING PLACE

The Parenting Place have a dedicated 'Lockdown Hub' on their website with articles, videos and podcasts that are aimed at helping parents navigate the uncharted territory in which they find themselves. There's lots of helpful advice and tips from seasoned professionals. Visit: [theparentingplace.com/lockdown-hub](https://theparentingplace.com/lockdown-hub)

### FAITH AT HOME— MARK HOLMEN

For many years we have promoted Mark's books that help families of all ages and stages learn how to develop faith at home practices. As families and churches are all currently learning new '@home' ways of living, Mark's ideas and resources are very applicable. They help churches give families tools for living rather than tasks to complete.

They have also recently published the results of a large survey looking at the faith practices of Christians in the US—a lot of which is also relevant in our context.

Visit: [faithathome.com](https://faithathome.com)



### CHILDREN'S MINISTRY FAST4 WEBINAR SERIES

The Carey Centre for Lifelong Learning have graciously given free access to this recent series. The topics were changed to adapt to the COVID-19 crisis:

#### 1. Episode 1

10 keys to establishing a Children's Ministry that engages children, enables spiritual growth and inspires leaders.

#### 2. Episode 2

1. Pastoral care—ourselves, families, and volunteers.
2. Staying connected as a church community when we can't physically meet.
3. Ways to empower and equip parents for Faith@Home.

#### 3. Episode 3

1. Leading while grieving.
2. Navigating the uncharted territory.

#### 4. Episode 4

Looking ahead—mission vs. methods; what's most needed and why; 10 critical questions to consider as we move forward.

**You can access the webinars here, using the following code and instructions:**

All four webinar recordings are available on-demand and can be watched on iOS, Android, Apple TV, Roku, Chromecast, and your computer. To access recordings go to this webpage:

[vimeo.com/ondemand/fast4children](https://vimeo.com/ondemand/fast4children)

Click on the blue "Buy all \$1.00" button—you will be asked to join vimeo or log in. Then use the coupon code CHILDREN which will reduce the price to zero. You will then be able to stream the videos.

**FAST4**  
ONLINE TEACHING SERIES

CAREY  
CENTRE FOR  
LIFELONG  
LEARNING

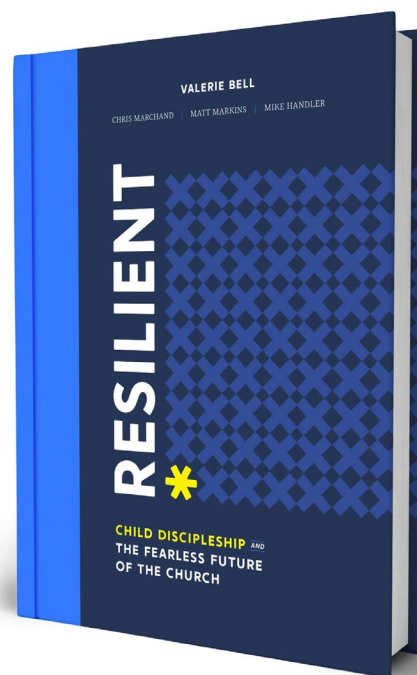
# Editor's pick

## RESILIENT: CHILD DISCIPLESHIP AND THE FEARLESS FUTURE OF THE CHURCH Valerie Bell et.al

Tomorrow's church, cultural, and community leaders are in our children's ministries today. What are we doing to not just teach them about the Bible, but raise them to belong, believe, and become lifelong followers of Jesus?

As new research continues to show, the cultural gap between secularism and the convictional Church continues to widen. A recent worldwide Barna Group study uncovered that over 50% of children leave the church between the ages of 10 and 28. Are we adequately discipling today's kids to lead the future of the church in a culture that's becoming increasingly hostile to the gospel? For many, the answer is "no," and a new conversation around making resilient disciples is emerging.

*Resilient* is an honest calling to ask robust questions about the future; it is a timely conversation in the midst of changing cultural landscapes; and it's a call to children's ministry leaders and disciple makers to walk this road of child discipleship together.



*Resilient: Child Discipleship and the Fearless Future of the Church* focuses on three key areas, essential for shaping long-term faith:

1. Belonging—Highly relational ministry led by a loving and caring adult
2. Believing—Deeply Scriptural ministry rooted in the truth of God's Word and the power of the gospel
3. Becoming—Truly experiential ministry, designed to move children from simulation to real-world application of faith-based living.

The authors believe that child discipleship is the leading factor to consider when shaping the future of your church. Culture is changing so rapidly and radically that the future is likely to look far different than the world we know today. The children's ministry community has new conversations to explore as we prepare today's kids to lead the fearless future of the church.

This book helps leaders or volunteers to see their role as Child Disciple Makers and gives an encouragement to be more intentional in developing a Child Discipleship Pathway that fits both the church and the New Zealand cultural context.

For more, visit: [resilientdisciples.com](http://resilientdisciples.com)




## CAREY COLLEGE TRAINING


As we grapple with the huge changes that have occurred this year, two important questions rise to the surface: why and how?

Why do we do what we do? The pandemic has forced us to think about the purpose of our ministry with children and families, and to consider our priorities. We are re-examining what it means to nurture children's faith, to create church programmes that enable worship as a family of God, and to think about the vital role of the family and household in faith formation.

We are also very aware of the 'how'. In a changing world, how do we achieve our 'why'? How do we see lives transformed in church and community? As we consider the financial and social implications of this global pandemic, how do we respond to the needs of our communities and bring God's love to our most vulnerable children and their families?

Come and join Tammy Tolman and Annette Osborne for these crucial conversations and many more. Together we will explore a range of topics in depth and be challenged in our thinking for the future.



**31 AUG - 4 SEPT** **block course**

# children's ministry course

with Annette Osborne and Tammy Tolman

Equip yourself to be more effective in your Children's Ministry.

This highly interactive course explores the biblical and theological foundations, current trends, and relevant issues in ministry to children and their families within a local church context.

[carey.ac.nz](http://carey.ac.nz) | [rachel.roche@carey.ac.nz](mailto:rachel.roche@carey.ac.nz)



# INTERGENERATE AUSTRALIA ONLINE CONFERENCE

**Intergenerate Australia** is one of the many voices equipping people and advocating for intergenerational faith formation.

Join us on June 16 and 17 for an online conference. There will be multiple webinars giving you access to some of the world's leading thinkers and practitioners in the intergenerational space from wherever you are. For the one low price you can both join the conversation live and receive access to every single video after the event.

We recognise that the first intergenerational community is that of households and so a number of sessions will explore intergenerational expressions of faith formation in that sphere. Alongside this, we are advocating for and equipping churches to reorient their approach to ministry so that every generation might intentionally connect and encourage one another in holistic lifelong faith.

Grab hold of this opportunity to be in conversation with John Roberto, Liz Perraud, Tammy Tolman, Cory Seibel, Caesar Kalinowski, Holly Allen and Christina Embree, alongside many, many more speakers.

See [intergenerate.com.au/events](https://intergenerate.com.au/events) for details.



# INTERGENERATE

*Australia*

*"Working together to see generations connect"*

**16 – 17 JUNE, 2020 / ONLINE CONFERENCE**  
**INFO / REGISTER : [INTERGENERATE.COM.AU / EVENTS](https://intergenerate.com.au/events)**



***“What if we didn’t start with our assumptions about the needs of the system (existing programming), but rather***

***started with the needs of the child?***

***What if our ministry started with a young boy or girl looking up at us and asking,***

***‘Where are we going?’”***

***Resilient: Child Discipleship and the Fearless Future of the Church  
Valerie Bell et al.***