



baptist children & family ministries

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enjoy being a volunteer storyteller in the CM at my church. But rather than the story, what often lingers afterwards is the songs that we have sung. Last week I had an oldie but goodie, Every Move I Make, rolling through my brain. I wonder what lingers in the minds of our children after Sunday? Maybe it's the way that you showed God's love through your words, maybe it was the opportunity that they had to serve, or maybe it was the words of wisdom from the grandad who is their small group leader. What a privilege we have to sow God's Word, and his aroha into the hearts of children. Be encouraged that what you do each week matters!

Knowing that each week matters, we have some stories in this issue that showcase some of the great things that are happening in our churches. Eastview share how they are taking church outside and enabling families to not only spend time together but invite unchurched friends along. It's a great outreach opportunity. Murray Jenkins at Remuera blew me away with the story (and photo!) of how they recreated a Willy Wonka experience for over 1000 people—from a church of under 100. Inspiring stuff! We'd love to showcase your stories as well. Please do feel free to send me some of your inspiring stories.

I trust that you are starting the year well, but just in case you need some pointers a few of our 'seasoned professionals' give some great ideas on pages 4-5. Maybe you could use these pointers to take some time to pray and ponder what God might be saying to you about the year ahead.

Last but not least, there are some GREAT training opportunities coming up this year. Check out the advert for the Fast4 webinar series, the information on the Way2Go conferences on the back page, the CM block course at Carey and other events on page 19. It's going to be a great year!

Naā mihi nui.



STAR TING THE YEAR WELL

2020

We asked six of our awesome and experienced CFM pastors to tell us their secrets to starting the year well—and keeping things going well! Here are their top tips:

Take some time out to think and pray about the previous year and then the year ahead. Write some goals. (I actually do this at the end of the previous year but some prefer to start the year with this.) Pray for each child and preteen.

Define your wins—
define what winning
looks like for your
ministry for the year—if you don't
others will.

Make a plan—find a solid curriculum that can serve as a blue print for the year that will help you achieve your wins and help you keep theologically on the right path.

Communicate clearly with everyone—your team and families.

I send a letter out, welcoming everyone to the new year, letting them know key dates etc.

Have a team meeting.
Sell the vision and help the team to identify with the 'why' behind ministry.
Try to have something new and exciting for the year to share with them—this keeps ministry fresh especially for the old hats.

Brainstorm ideas and activities for the term and get their input. That way everyone has ownership in the ministry.

Ask yourself some questions:

What will each team member's part be in the goals that are set to achieve the vision? What unique strengths and talents do they bring to the team that they can contribute to its success and how will they use them? How will we celebrate together?

Kōrero with the children. Take the opportunity at the start of the year to get the children's and preteens' input into the focus for the year. This ministry is ultimately for them, to nurture them in their faith journey and to draw closer to God. So it is crucial to involve them and to allow them the space to share what is on their hearts—issues that they may be facing and needing God's wisdom, activities they are wanting more of, worship songs they want to sing more of, what responsibility they would like to be part of, etc. These suggestions will be incorporated into the year's theme.

Have a themed wall display. To create excitement and buzz about the theme or lesson, our foyer wall display is refreshed with new display based on the theme for the term or year. A fun, interactive and engaging environment/ atmosphere enhances learning which is as important as the lesson itself.

Find a ministry friend—either in the church or outside who understands your ministry and who you can call on to brainstorm ideas and for support.

Have a good look at the resources, in small group boxes and in handbooks for leaders. What do we need to change, replace, restock so everyone starts the year well resourced?

Another pastor put her priorities in this format: Him (God), me, them (volunteers). Here's how she sees these priorities in practice:

HIM

Focusing on my relationship with God—I can't do any of this without Him. Book in retreat and quiet days throughout the year and spiritual direction dates.

ME

Focusing on my selfcare—I can't give out if I'm not getting filled up first. Book in holidays or mini breaks for the year, book in supervision and choose what professional development you're going to do.

THEM

The practical day-to-day of ministry. Plan and calendar all curriculum, training and events, give the store room a good clean and organise volunteer working bees to do as much prep of craft, games, events, Welcome Packs, Volunteer Packs, birthday and graduation cards etc.

This list has a bunch of really great advice from well-seasoned leaders. I thoroughly recommend that you spend time praying through these tips, asking God what he would have YOU do this year.

And remember BCFM is here to help, so don't be afraid to email, phone or drop in. ◆



heard the other day that if you want some entertainment, head down to the bottom of Queen Street in Auckland and watch as people wander along looking down at their smartphones. Apparently it is a common occurrence to see people walk into lamp posts!

Devices have become a common part of life. They are never far from our side, and are useful for everything from shopping, listening to music and even for... wait for it... taking phone calls! Love them or hate them, they are here to stay. Good or bad, we struggle to live without them.

The latest research from the Barna Group highlights the increasing influence of devices on children and young people. There are many great benefits to our highly connected world, and the access devices give us to information, resources and networks of people. However, alongside that, we are all too aware of the dangers, dangers far greater than walking into lamp posts.

"Young people are looking to their devices to make sense of the world around them... they are using the screens in their pockets as their counsellors, their entertainers, their instructors, and even their sex educators."

(Barna, Faith for Exiles, p.97)

Devices shape our lives, and they impact on our families. Talk to any parent and you will hear that devices create challenges for family and whānau. For us this raises two important questions:

- How do families nurture the faith of their children, in a digital age?
- How does the church best support families in church and community to help them navigate these challenges?

Terry Williams is a long term staff member with Scripture Union in Australia, and Scripture Union International. He is a passionate advocate for families and the vital role they play in the faith development of children and young people. Around the world, he encourages the church to take seriously the role of supporting families in their God-given responsibility.

This includes providing families with the guidance and resources they need to negotiate the world of devices. It means facing up to the reality of our changing times and embracing the opportunities as well as finding a way through the challenges.

Terry writes, "The internet is not going away!



So we have to choose within our homes how we are going to live as members of a family—to work at controlling technology and not letting it control us."

This guidance for families includes helping them to negotiate the world of screens, harness their potential, and create healthy boundaries for all, including the adults in the house. It's certainly not easy.

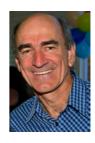
"When our children are younger we need to set adult imposed boundaries for their protection and well-being. However, as they grow, these boundaries become less effective. ('Hey Google, how can I get around the parental controls on my PlayStation?'). Regular conversations need to take place around why there needs to be boundaries and working to set some self-agreed and self-imposed boundaries. Call it a Digital Family Covenant. This also includes the Dads in the family! Then work hard to support each other in achieving these and living well."

Alongside good boundaries is the need for good conversation. As children and young people seek out answers via the phone in their pocket, the need for families to nurture face-to-face interaction is crucial.

"It is more important than ever for households around their meal tables, driving in the car to activities, on the walking path, to open up these conversations and explore life and faith together. More conversations—less debates. More putting faith into action—less preaching."

More conversations—less debates. More putting faith into action— less preaching.

Scripture Union New Zealand is excited to have Terry Williams visit New Zealand. He will be speaking at our three WAY2GO Children's Ministry Conferences, as well as hosting events around the country helping families to



navigate a world of screens. Terry is a gifted communicator, with global experience and a passion for all things family. Don't miss out on hearing him speak. For more information head to www.sunz.org.nz.

ADJENTISE CHURCH JONO & KRISTIN WARD EASTVIEW BAPTIST

astview Baptist Church (Auckland) has started a ministry they call Adventure Church.

One Sunday each term. Eastview Baptist does not schedule any Kids' Club or Sunday School, Instead the children in primary and intermediate age groups (along with their parents and families) go on an adventure together and have church outside.

"I just love getting out into nature, and being with my friends, and learning more about God-outside. Somehow. I just feel God's love more, when I am outside!" says 11 year-old Eden.

This ministry was started 18 months ago by Jono and Kristin Ward. The idea was sparked from discussions between them about when they feel most spiritually alive. For them there's nothing quite like being out in creation and having new adventures with their family and friends.

Kristin comments, "At times friends have discussed with me that they would like to come to church but it's the only day of the week that they have to enjoy going to the beach or similar with their family. All the other days are school days or Saturday



sport etc. This is a feeling that we also have had, at times, Jono and I wanted to experiment to see if we could marry up people's spiritual need to focus on Jesus. and families' wholesome desire to be doing something refreshing together in God's creation. So much of our lives and our children's lives takes place indoors. Does church always need to be? We see that both children and parents of this generation are hungry for adventures in nature. Both

kids and parents find it life-giving and soul-nourishing to get outside and have an adventure together."

The Wards believe that hanging out with friends is another thing that parents of younger families are longing to do, but all too often the parenting years are a bit lean when it comes to socializing with other families. Often people have dropped out of being able to participate in a homegroup in the baby years and may not have resumed the practice. Adventure Church is a venue once a term for great hanging out time. Kristin says, "Families spend the whole morning together and one time everyone stayed til mid-afternoon! They love to tackle epic challenges together with other families. And we find that kids have so much more





energy for walking and exploring if they have buddles with them! Parents are often thrilled about what their child is capable of, if they just are doing it together with their friends."

Adventure Church has also proved to be an easy event to invite unchurched friends to. It's a non-threatening environment. Jono says "We aren't trying to replicate a normal church service outdoors, we aren't doing anything weird, like singing in public places, or using lots of 'Christian jargon'. Each time we do a talk which usually ties in the with location or activity we're doing and sometimes we'll send families away with a question for them to discuss amonast themselves. We do want to be intentional that this is a ministry and we're doing this as Christians, but we see the enjoyment of nature and building of relationships as being just as powerful and transformative as any direct teaching."

The format for Adventure Church has become simpler over the two years Eastview has been running this ministry. The elements for a successful morning are:

- 1. Choose a beautiful location locally.
- 2. Plan a (manageable) 'epic adventure' to complete.
- 3. Invite friends (the more the merrier!).
- Deliver a simple lesson from the Bible, often illustrated by nature, as Jesus' parables were.



And annoyingly...

Make a wet-weather plan!
 This is New Zealand after all. At times they have had to re-convene to an indoor gym and have a 'Ninja Warrior' morning or a dodgeball tournament.

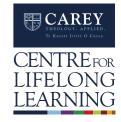
Kristin Ward says, "My favourite thing about Adventure Church is it feels so community-building for all these friends (kid-level and parent-level) to be hanging out in stunningly beautiful places, making memories together, chatting and bantering the whole way."

Jono states, "We're very grateful to be part of Eastview community that's been so supportive of us trialing this ministry. It's wonderful to belong to a church that really prioritises our kids and isn't afraid to try new things."









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arey Baptist College work hard at providing robust theological education and equipping for pastoral leaders. They also provide specialist training for those working with children and families. This year they are running the bi-annual Children's Ministry course. This course can be done either for credit (over the second semester) or for audit (attending lectures only). This year the lectures will be shared by Tammy Tolman and Annette Osborne. Annette is well known here in New Zealand for her work with SUNZ. Tammy is based in Australia and has over 20 years of experience in ministry with children, more latterly pastoring an intergenerational church in Sydney. Tammy has written several books, multiple curricula and spoken at many

international events and conferences. We asked Tammy a few questions about ministry with children and families.

You've been involved in various forms of church ministry for many years. What changes have you noticed over that time, particularly in children's ministry?

I have been encouraged to see that people are taking children's abilities to serve and give into the community and their spiritual journey more seriously over the past 10-15 years.

I do see a slow change in valuing the role of the parent in a child's journey as well as the importance of the Village,

that we need each other and we are meant to walk together.

> What are the biggest issues you think the church faces in seeking to reach and disciple children in the 21st Century?

I do believe unless we are willing to re-think the community of faith and the holistic nature in which we are called to live, we are not only doing our children a disservice, but ourselves as well. The past 20 years have proved that specialisation and isolation has not increased the amount of deeply rooted children and vouth in our churches.

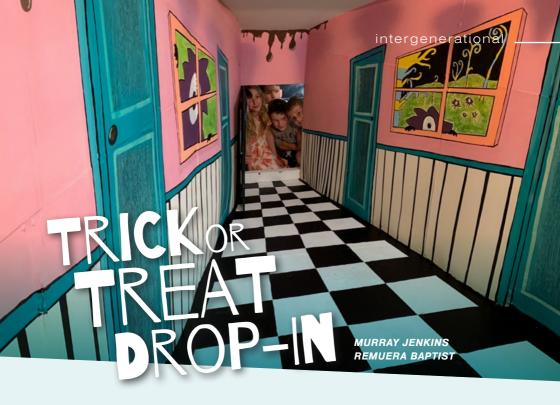
> We all want to see our children and families growing and thriving. What do you think are the most important ways we can serve the families and children we serve?

It is a privilege to partner with families in ministry. The most important ways to serve them is to know our families and children. and know where they best need support. empowerment. This is a challenge as it may be different for each family. It is also important to create spaces where they can have fun together and really connect. When life is busy, we don't need to add to their burden, but to create environments where being together is a joy. Knowing the challenges and joy they are going through and be another voice into that space. really helps parents and children not feel so alone on the journey.

- > Many of our churches are led by volunteers. Knowing that many leaders have limited time and resources what top three things would you recommend they focus on?
 - 1. Creating time and space for deep relationships to be formed across all ages. Which means doing less structured programmes and creating more environments where people can intentionally be with each other and God and see what He does.
 - 2. Do more things all together rather than separate, it means that resources and time that is limited can be shared and done together.
 - 3. Keep our eye on the main things, and not get distracted with all the things we could/should be doing. I wonder if we were brave enough to ask God what is the main thing He is asking you as a community to do/be—what He would say?
- > We are excited that you are coming to Carey Baptist College in September to teach the CM Block Course. Why do you think that theological education is important for CM leaders and pastors?

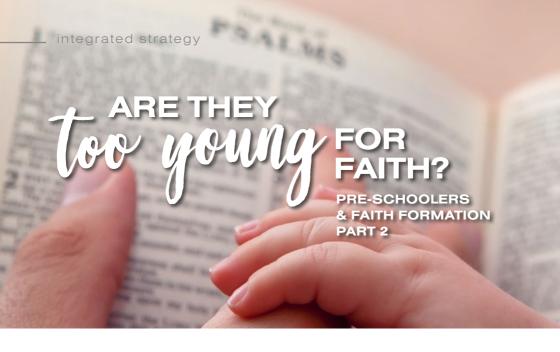
It is always important to know WHY we are doing ministry and WHAT God is calling us to. As leaders/pastors/shepherds we cannot lead anyone where we have not been, so anytime we focus on the Bible and what God has to teach us. it enhances everything we do for HIM. •

For more information (see page 19) and to enrol for the Children's Ministry course go to the Carey website: www.carey.ac.nz/study/specialist/child-family-leadership



ome with me and you'll see a world of pure imagination..." The words of the song washed over the lines of people waiting patiently for their turn to enter the hall of wonders... Willy Wonka's Chocolate Factory! It was the evening of Halloween last year, and our church hall had been transformed into a chocolatev adventure; a lolly machine room, a sideways room (imagine furniture, a piano and a Christmas tree all sprouting sideways out of the wall), a UV-light-graffiti room covered in luminescent scrawls, the incredible shrinking room, a jelly-pit room and much more! Upstairs, bouncy castles bounced and the magician magic'd. Outside, the music pumped as people tested their skills at limbo or at conquering the obstacle course. It was our annual Trick or Treat Drop-In, and for Remuera Baptist Church it was another chance to be a blessing to our community in the name of Jesus. In

our part of the world, we find that far more people are motivated to exit their front doors on Halloween than any other time of the year (including Easter or Christmas), hence Halloween represents a powerful opportunity for connection with our community. We have deliberately chosen a name for this event that will be understandable to those outside the church, and intentionally try to show the welcoming love of Christ to all (regardless of how they come dressed!) while also providing opportunities for prayer and for relationship-building with our faith community. And people come. We started this event five years ago with 300 people attending. Last year we had close to 1,300 come into our church facility. In a culture where church buildings are becoming increasingly foreign and threatening, we see this as a definite 'win' and pray that it will be the start of a journey that will lead people to Christ. •



RACHEL ROCHE FRANKLIN BAPTIST CHURCH AND CAREY BAPTIST COLLEGE

ow often have you found yourself asking a child what they want to be when they grow up? A seemingly harmless conversation starter sends a clear message. Too often we only value the preschooler for the child they will become, the child for the teen they will become, and finally the teen for the adult they will become and can finally serve in 'productive' ways. Valuing children for who they are now may take a retraining of our ways. Jesus' upside-down view of the Kingdom is a great starting place as he valued and included the least!

Each of us enters this world as a child and has something to offer and learn. In his book, "To Such as These": The Child in Baptist Thought, Andy Goodliff says "[T]he gift of children, or any person, is that they can help us have greater faith and enlarge and enrich our understanding of God." Children can genuinely contribute to life of the faith community. Children can help us

know God. Their mess, noise and views are all ways God's character is revealed. Children are relational active agents participating in the mission and ministry of the church community.² Growing and forming our faith in a healthy community is God's design.

At the 2019 Baptist Hui our National Leader, Charles Hewlett proposed a set characteristics of a healthy community of faith as having robust leadership, authentic worship, growing disciples, effective mission, and healthy resources. This article is Part 2 of using these characteristics as a framework to look at the inclusion of preschoolers and the possible response of the church.

GROWING DISCIPLES

Relationships within intergenerational church communities are often the primary way faith is influenced.³ Worshipping, learning, celebrating, and eating together are not new. The Israelites and the Ephesians

are examples of people whose faith was formed in intergenerational faith community (Joshua 4:21-22; Ephesians 6:1-3). For relationships to develop all ages were able to contribute, interact, share, serve and lead,

ACTION: Encourage intergenerational opportunities in both gathered worship and

- Interaction in all age life-groups that meet to eat, connect and do life;
- Sharing in small group discussions during church services;

EFFECTIVE MISSION

Sharing the gospel begins with welcome, Many Baptist churches welcome pre-schoolers by providing programmes and having accommodating buildings. These things begin to outline a culture of value, awareness, inclusion and resourcing which are effective for a missional mindset. Welcome can flow into all areas of weekend and weekday life as the church connects with all ages. Intergenerational missional initiatives could include: Serving togetherworking bees at the local school or visiting rest homes; Groups like mainly music and mainly play that provide opportunities for connection with the community and mentoring.

ACTION: Contact mainly music for information on how to use this programme as a missional opportunity. Read Inside Out Families by Diana Garland (available from the Carey Library).

HEALTHY RESOURCES

Plunket does multiple check-ups, parents attend playgroups and navigate Facebook for resources. What does the church do to resource parents of preschoolers? The family looks to the church to help with faith formation. It is the church's responsibility to accept this challenge. Some provide practical support for new parents, spiritually nurture adults and run marriage courses. A great concept to embrace are Faith@Home type events. These equip parents to spiritually nurture their children.

ACTION: Plan to introduce a Faith@Home session in 2020.

Remember that baby smiling at you? Even a baby is a gift and has something to offer just by their very existence. A child does not have a choice about its natural state, but we have choice about how they are included and can contribute in our churches. •

^{1.} Andrew J. Goodliff, "To Such as These": The Child in Baptist Thought, Regent's Park College, 2012), 23.

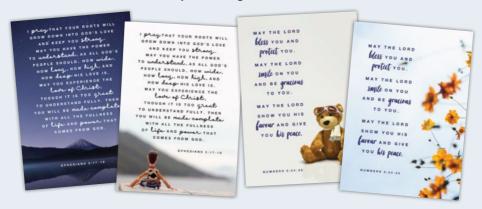
^{2.} Goodliff, To Such as These, 23-24.

^{3.} Roehlkepartain and Patel, "Congregations: Unexamined Crucibles for Spiritual Development," 329.

Resources

BLESSINGS PICTURES

Teaching families to develop a daily habit of praying a blessing over their children is a great way to encourage faith at home. We have taken two biblical blessings and designed a variety of printable images that you can frame or laminate as baby dedication gifts or for birthdays. The prints come in two sizes, and eight styles to suit different ages. Go to our website for a link to these resources: **www.baptistcfm.org.nz**



THE GOSPEL PROJECT— THE BIG STORY OF THE BIBLE FOR KIDS

The Gospel Project is a series of curricula that can be used with a variety of ages. It takes learners through the Bible chronologically and helps children to see that the Bible is one large, unified story. We particularly love this short video that takes children



through the whole story in just five minutes: www.vimeo.com/123430346

LENT + EASTER

Our friends at Strandz have some great resources for Lent and Easter that we recommend you check out:

www.strandz.org.nz/lent-easter



NETSAFE—KEEPING KIDS SAFE ONLINE



The internet is now at the fingertips of an ever younger audience and learning how to keep kids safe has become a huge priority both for schools and parents. Netsafe have some fantastic information for organisations, as well as for parents. They are also available to run workshops. We highly recommend you take a look at their resources and ensure that the parents in your church are aware of this great NZ resource:

www.netsafe.org.nz

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Editor's pick-

GREAT READS...

Our goal as pastors and leaders is to see our children growing in both their knowledge of God and their personal relationship with him. We don't just want God-smart children but God-connected children (thank you Rachel Turner for these useful terms). This same goal applies to families. One way that we can support families with this goal is to provide books that enable them to engage together in faith conversations. Author Mikal Keefer does this very well. His books Notes From Jesus and Friends with God Devotions for Kids are aimed at primary aged children and can be used by children on their own or with a parent, Growing Spiritual Grit and How do I Pray are suitable for the 10 year plus age group. These books all sit on my 'highly recommended' list.





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Pin the dates

29 FEB 4 APRIL	CBM Training Auckland First Things First For programme and registration details Special to God seminar visit www.cbm.org.nz/th_gallery/nz-training
16 MAR - 6 APRIL	Fast4 webinar series: Taking your Children's Ministry from Good to Great Carey Centre for Lifelong Learning Four Monday nights, one hour each Visit www.lifelonglearning.nz/fast4 Contact Karen for the code to access this training for free!
19 MAR	Easter Resource Evening Wellington 7.30 - 9pm \$5 RSVP to Liz Eichler: liz.e@sunz.org.nz
21 MAR	Reach INVIG Conference 2020 by Launchpad (previously Bible-in-Schools) Auckland 9am - 4.30pm To register, visit: invig.org.nz
23 MAY 6 JUNE 20 JUNE	Way2Go Conference Scripture Union's Children's Ministry Training Dunedin See back page advert and website for details: Wellington www.sunz.org.nz 0508 423 836
30 MAY - 1 JUNE	Godly Play Care Training Chilton Saint James School, Lower Hutt 9am - 5pm each day To register, email Elke Keeling keelingelke@gmail.com
15-17 JUN	Intergenerate Conference Sydney Visit: www.intergenerate.com.au/events



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with Annette Osborne and Tammy Tolman



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