

YEAR OF YOUNG PEOPLE 2018 TOOLKIT FOR CHURCHES

Throughout 2018, we seek to inspire Scotland and our Church through our young people, celebrating their achievements, valuing their contribution to communities and creating new opportunities for them to shine locally, nationally and globally.

“Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?”
He called a child, whom he put among them, and said, “Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Whoever becomes humble like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me”

Matthew 18: 1-5

What can you do in your congregation to engage with children and young people; encouraging their participation and celebrating their achievements and gifts?

ENGAGE | **PARTICIPATE** | **CELEBRATE**

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INTRODUCTION



Message from the Moderators

To all Churches in the Church of Scotland

It is my pleasure to introduce you to the Year of Young People, which is a special focus for both the Church of Scotland and the Scottish Government in 2018. I invite your Church to plan to participate in ways that are possible for you, and relevant to your context. The particular focus during the year will be on involving, including and celebrating children and young people.

Amongst the opportunities and challenges that this year will offer will be time to reflect with children and young people on what faith means today and how we make it authentic and relevant. This is not something exclusive to children and young people but has wonderful and questioning implications for all who are children of God.

We seek to inspire Scotland and our Church through our young people, celebrating their achievements, valuing their contribution to communities and creating new opportunities for them to shine locally, nationally and globally. The Church of Scotland has a considerable 'reach'. As we continue the process of looking at who we are, what we do, how we do it, and how this relates to our witness to God and our world, we will discover ways in which we must use imagination and provide links and introductions that will benefit our Churches, including our younger people.

This Church Toolkit gives a number of ideas of things to do and ways to involve young people, however they connect to your Church. Toolkits are only of use if they are put into use, and this will involve imagination in using some of the ideas on offer. We hope that the suggestions and ideas will spark off ideas that you can use in your context. But please, be encouraged to DO something. There will also be Presbytery and national events and initiatives across the country for churches and young people to be involved in throughout the year.

Who are the people we meet, what do we share with them, what do they share with us, and how does that encounter shape our faith? In the engagement we have and could have, with our children and young people, now is a time for encounter, dreams and visions, and then for thought, planning and action.

I hope you enjoy working with the Toolkit, engaging and celebrating with young people during 2018 and may this enrich the lives of your Churches and communities.

Rt Revd Dr Derek Browning

Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland

INTRODUCTION



To all Churches in the Church of Scotland

I have a dream for a Church that makes the most of its young people, empowering its youth to have more of a say and influence on the church; a church that challenges and inspires its youth; a church that recognises the value of young people within the body of Christ; a church which works towards more opportunities for intergenerational work and conversations; a church which listens, respects and acts on the views of young people; a church which seeks to develop God-given gifts and callings within young people.

On behalf of the many young people within the Kirk, I would like to add my voice to that of the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, to encourage churches to make the most of the opportunities of the Year of Young People; to get involved with talking with young people within and beyond the church walls, engaging them in the life of the church and planning some special activities with them during this year.

I have a dream for our church which I believe, hope and pray can become a reality. Can we work towards that dream together?

Robin Downie

NYA Moderator of the 2017 National Youth Assembly

INTRODUCTION

Get Involved!

Scotland's first ever Year of Young People is happening in 2018. The Church of Scotland plans to be actively involved, through events and activities, celebrating church engagement with children and young people at local, presbytery and national levels. We want young people to be at the heart of designing, developing and deciding what shape the Year takes and how churches get involved.

'This is an amazing opportunity and we would like to encourage the participation of all local churches in Year of Young People 2018 services and activities during 2018. Seize the moment God has given for our generation.'

Rt Rev Dr Derek Browning Moderator General Assembly of the Church of Scotland

Year of Young People 2018 – a Government Initiative

The Scottish Government is working with a number of delivery partners, for a national programme of celebratory events, which all ages can enjoy. A number of national organisations are encouraging youth engagement and ensuring young people's views are heard and acted upon. YoYP 2018 Ambassadors have been recruited to represent every local authority in Scotland and promote the year-long engagement. We encourage churches to get involved in some of these events too.

There are 6 core themes, identified by young people, that the Scottish Government encourage us to explore, during the Year of Young People 2018:

- **Participation** – looking at how young people can influence public services and decisions which affect their lives
- **Education** – creating a stronger role for young people in shaping their learning
- **Health and Wellbeing** – supporting young people to lead healthier, active lives and have opportunities to learn about and improve their mental health and resilience
- **Equality and Discrimination** – broadcasting the value of young Scots, challenging negative perceptions of young people, and supporting young people to take leading roles in challenging discrimination in all its forms
- **Enterprise and Regeneration** – celebrating young people's role in innovation, entrepreneurship and the Scottish economy as well as making Scotland a greener and more pleasant place to live
- **Culture** – celebrating young people's talent and contribution to Scottish culture and arts

Year of Young People 2018 – Church of Scotland Engagement

Throughout the Year of Young People 2018, we would like to encourage all churches to be involved and explore new ways to involve and recognise children and young people within the life of the church. We hope to foster a renewed focus on, and celebration of, children and young people in our churches and communities. Churches both large and small, those with children and young people and those with none can all pray, hold a celebratory service and plan something new. We would encourage all churches to think about how to enable participation and involvement of children and young people and to celebrate who they are and what they are involved in.

EVERY CONGREGATION CAN PRAY FOR CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN OUR NATION

INTRODUCTION

We hope this year will

- Provide a platform for young people to have their views heard and acted upon
- Encourage church communities to involve and include young people
- Showcase the amazing talents of young people through events and media
- Develop better understanding, co-operation and respect between generations
- Recognise and celebrate the impact the church community has on young people's lives
- Recognise, celebrate and develop the role of those in ministry with young people in the church (paid and voluntary)
- Provide opportunities for young people to participate fully in the life of the church

Through active involvement in the Year of Young People 2018, we hope to see the Church of Scotland change, develop and grow so that in the future

- Young people have more opportunities to be welcomed, included and accepted as equal members of local churches
- Churches are more intentional about engaging with children and young people
- There are more opportunities for intergenerational work and conversations
- Young people have a greater say in decisions about the church and their lives
- Young people are recognised and valued within the Body of Christ

This Toolkit has lots of ideas of things that every congregation could do during the Year of Young People 2018. We encourage involving children and young people in discussions and planning for what you might do during the year.

Church Involvement

- Every congregation can hold a Year of Young People Service on **Sunday January 28th**
- Every congregation can pray with and for children and young people
- Every congregation can seek God for new ways to connect with children and young people during the year
- Services that encourage particular prayer and involvement of young people could be held throughout the year eg Week of Prayer for Christian Unity; Lent and Easter; Harvest; Advent and Christmas, Christian Aid Week; Back to School Sunday; a Sunday to appreciate the work of your volunteers

Church and Community Events

- Your church could plan and run a community event for children or young people or for all ages together. You could also get involved in other community events being run by others during the Year of Young People
- Your church or a group of churches could make a special effort to run something new for children and young people in 2018 eg a Holiday Club; how about a trip or a celebration?
- You could encourage your young people to attend a Christian camp or a festival during the year, perhaps even offering to pay part of the cost

INTRODUCTION

Monthly Focus

We would like to encourage churches to have a particular monthly focus throughout the year, giving a focus for prayer and engagement. Additional suggestions, prayers and activities for each month will be promoted through www.churchofscotland.org.uk/yoyp. Do discuss with children and young people in your local situation what you might do around some of these themes.

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV/DEC
One Church/ one body	Health and Wellbeing	Community	Equality and Discrimination	Participation and influence	Volunteers	Culture	Education	Global Justice	Harvest	Celebration

Your church may wish to explore some of these focus areas and themes further during the year, together with children and young people – in prayer, worship services, campaigns and action.

Presbytery Events

- A number of presbyteries are planning to run events for children and young people
- Some are planning a training event for those who work with children and young people during the year
- There could be opportunities for churches across a presbytery to plan to do something together
- Contact your Presbytery Clerk or Children/ Youth Worker for information, or offer to get involved to help run something to benefit all the churches in your area
- Encourage your presbytery to fill its Presbytery Youth Rep place at the General Assembly and encourage that person in their role

National Events

There will be a number of national initiatives and training opportunities for leaders and young people throughout the year.

The National Youth Assembly is an annual event that draws young adults (17-25 year olds) together from across the country, to worship together, learn together, discuss together and celebrate together.

www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/children_and_youth/young_adults/national_youth_assembly

More information on YoYP 2018 events will be on the Church of Scotland Children and Youth Events web pages: www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/children_and_youth/events

INTRODUCTION

Share your Stories:

We will be intentionally sharing stories around the theme of the month and we are sure that a lot will happen around many of these key areas that we would love to hear about! Please contact us with your stories.

✉ YOYP@churchofscotland.org.uk



The rest of this Toolkit provides a number of ideas for you to consider trying and resources to help you.

'We are here - we are willing and ready to be involved'

INTRODUCTION

Few Children and Young People? YOYP 2018 is for you too!

Increasing numbers of congregations now have no or very few children and young people in their Sunday Services. Some communities also have very few families and children. The Year of Young People can still be an opportunity for your congregation to look afresh at ways to engage with children and young people.

Even if there are few or no children and young people in your church or community, your church members will no doubt have young people they know in other areas (eg family members). You could pray for these young people. You could consider a gathering for grandparents to share their ideas as to how they can help in the faith formation of their grandchildren.

If there are children and young people in your community, you could explore what you can offer and how to encourage and support needs in your community. You might link in and do something together with another church for local children or young people. Can you link Boys and Girls Brigades more closely to your church? You could pray and support local schools? You could try something new as a one-off or a regular activity. If you do have a small number of children, be encouraged to invest relationally into them, in creative ways.

Here are some ideas that congregations, that have found themselves with few of no children, have tried as they have explored the needs of their community. Further information on these can be found on the website:

www.churchofscotland.org.uk/childrenandyouth

Parent and Toddler Groups

Messy Church

Holiday Club

Midweek groups and Uniformed Organisations

Serve your Local School www.sylys.org.uk

Sponsor young people to attend the National Youth Assembly or a camp



'There are no other young people in my church, but I still feel valued and supported'

INTRODUCTION

Even if your church has few, or no children or young people, we would still encourage you to find some ways to be involved, to pray and maybe do something new.

3 years ago we had around 10 children attending Sunday School sporadically and numbers were declining fast. The decision was made to fully look at the way we interact with our young people and their families and develop more of a vision and plan for our church. We developed some new ways of doing things and these are going very well.

We have a Pram and praise for under 5s on a Sunday. Our Sunday School now follow a weekly theme: Building together, games or arts and crafts - all scripture related. Once a fortnight our Teen Zone meets for fellowship, discussion and once a month we have a Sunday Fun Day - all our young people plus families and volunteers from the church come together for worship, arts and crafts and snacks. Our morning worship still takes place at 11am in conjunction with this.

This year we celebrated that we now have 30 children coming along for Pram and Praise, we have around 25 in Sunday School and 8 teenagers now. In our Sunday Fun Day we can have around 60 folk from all stages of faith worshipping together.

Uddingston Old Parish Church



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VISION

Developing our Vision for Children and Young People Involving the Kirk Session

The Kirk Session has responsibility for guiding and shaping the direction and vision of the church. This vision needs to be of a church that includes, welcomes and engages children and young people in worship, mission and discipleship, within and beyond the church building.

During the Year of Young People we would encourage all Kirk Sessions to discuss, review and renew a vision for its ministry with children and young people. It is important also to find ways to hear from young people and engage them in these discussions. All this then needs to feed in to concrete plans for the future.

Some things a Kirk Session could do

- You could ask yourselves questions about your work with children and young people and explore your church vision and strategy for children and young people eg read and discuss the sections of the **Learn: How Will Our Children Have Faith** publication www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/learn; or use the **Children and Young People Healthcheck** at the end of this Toolkit
- You could engage with some thinking about youth and children's ministry eg read and discuss the sections of the **Learn: Children and Young People** publication <https://standrewpress.hymnsam.co.uk/features/learn>
- You could think about how your Kirk Session can hear the ideas of children and young people and involve them in decisions and plans? You could do the **Have Your Say** exercise in this Toolkit and then discuss how you might respond to what the children and young people are saying
- You could develop and approve ways in which the church can be involved throughout the Year of Young People 2018
- You could discuss and agree upon a **Charter for Children and Young People** and how this can be implemented in your congregation. (A **Church Charter** can be found at the back of the Toolkit and a template that you can develop yourself is on www.churchofscotland.org.uk/yoyp)



VISION

Resources to help in developing a vision and strategy

1. **How Will Our Children Have Faith?** – this Learn publication has four sections that can help a church to work through their vision for the church.



Where are our children and young people? Is what we are doing working? Should we employ a youth worker? 'How will our children have faith' will help congregations ask 'Why?' they should run a children or youth ministry before they ask 'How?' to do it. The guide will take you through four steps, helping you to reflect on and evaluate ministry with children and young people in your church. We hope that by working through this resource, congregations will be able to understand the importance and the purpose of their work with children and young people before starting up activities.

www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/learn/resources/how_will_our_children_have_faith

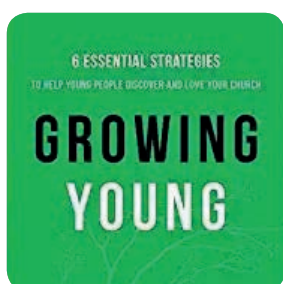
2. **Learn: Children and Young People** publication has articles exploring how we can be church together, work together and be formed together.



The articles in this publication all focus on the importance of thinking theologically; including children and young people in the community of faith and the importance of skilled and effective leadership. This is offered as a starting point for further thought, offering questions to think about or for discussion, ideas for further reading, actions to try and resources to use.

<https://standrewpress.hymnsam.co.uk/features/learn>

3. **Growing Young** explores six essential strategies for churches to become more effective in their ministry with young people.



The strategies covered focus on how a church can involve and retain young people in the congregational community, as well as helping them develop a vibrant faith in Jesus Christ. What helps in engaging young people effectively? What helps young people develop lasting faith that carries them through the challenges of adulthood? Which faith experiences help them commit to following Jesus beyond their youth ministry and family contexts?

www.churchesgrowingyoung.com/

'We need to work together to make sure there is a positive and vibrant future for children and young people'

VISION

We have been blessed with good numbers of young children and their families in church and take seriously the belief that God has laid on us the responsibility of nurturing these “little ones” in their faith. We spent time as a Kirk Session reviewing the different ways that we connect and engage with children and families. We have a ‘Sticky Faith Group’ who report at every Session meeting. We recently devoted a full Kirk Session to exploring recent research about children and the church and the development of faith, and discussed how this could help us develop a renewed vision and focus on our ministry to children and families. This led to an immediate change in the way we do Communion with our Communion Table re-positioned and children fully involved in welcoming new members to Communion. It was moving to see them lining up with grown-ups to shake hands and hug our new members at the formal welcome. We are keen to develop and grow in this area and know we have a long way to go but we have at least made a start!

Barclay Viewforth Church, Edinburgh

What will you **DO** during the Year of Young People?

‘Let us share our vision for our church and be part of it’



‘Does the Kirk Session hear our voice and concerns?’

God's Heart for Children and Young People

'In the Bible we read of God's call to the whole Christian community to affirm God's image in all of God's children, to recognise their place within Christian fellowship and to enable them to flourish through active engagement with all generations. Only by being people of all ages together will we flourish fully as Christ's church.'
Rev Grant Barclay

There are more than 1,700 references in the Bible to children and childhood and these reflect God's special care and concern for children, the gifts they have and how God uses children and young people in His purposes and kingdom.

- Children have a special place in God's heart (Matthew 19:13-15)
- God created each of us and knows us intimately from before birth (Psalm 139:13-16)
- Every child is a special gift from God, to be valued and nurtured (Psalm 127:3-4) (Hosea 11:4)
- Each child is full of God-given creative potential and spirituality. Children have something to offer, which God can use (Joel 2:28) (Psalm 8:2)
- God welcomes and blesses children (Mark 10:13-16)
- God speaks to and through children (1 Samuel 2:18) (Matt 11:25)
- We need to bring our children to Jesus and teach them about God (Mark 10:13-16) (Deut 4:9-10) (Joshua 8:34-35)
- Children should be fully part of congregational life and practice; how we welcome and include them is important (Deut 31:12-13) (Acts 16:34)
- Children have a voice and can lead (Jeremiah 1:6-10)
- God expects families and communities to pray, love, care for, protect, train and nurture their children (Matthew 18:5-6) (Lamentations 2:19) (Proverbs 22:6)
- The Church needs children as part of the whole Body of Christ (Acts 16:33)
- Children are a sign of God's blessing (Psalm 127:3)
- Children are a model for the Kingdom (Matthew 18:3)
- God is on the side of the vulnerable and children need care and protection (Psalm 127:3-4)
- God's salvation and 'God with us' comes through Jesus, born as a baby (Isaiah 9:6)

How did God use the following children and young people? What gifts did they have?

Servant girl (2 Kings 5); Samuel (1 Samuel 3); Isaac (Genesis 18 – 22); Joseph (Genesis 37); Moses (Exodus 2); David (1 Samuel 17); Miriam (Exodus 2); Esther (Esther); Timothy (1 and 2 Timothy)

What other children and young people – in the Bible, history and your community - have been used by God? How?

During the Year of Young People 2018, you could get a group together to explore some of these questions.

VISION

How do these principles and examples encourage you and your church to engage with children and young people, encourage their involvement and participation and celebrate their gifts and contributions?

How do these examples from the Bible encourage, inspire and shape your vision for children and young people?

How might you share these principles and passages in your church and with young people?

Share stories of how you are applying these biblical principles?

How is God using children and young people in your context?

What God given gifts do they have?

✉ YOYP@churchofscotland.org.uk

'Jesus welcomed little children and bestowed on them the blessings of the reign of God. He even taught that we should become like children in order to enter the reign of God. In the light of the Gospel's teaching, Christians are called to make a place for children in the fellowship of believers as co- participants in the gifts of salvation through Christ, and also to learn from children how to participate in God's reign'

Judith Gundry-Volf - To Such as These Belongs the Reign of God: Jesus and Children - Theology Today Jan 2000

'The Bible has a lot to say about children and young people within the community of faith'

'Our theological view of children and youth shapes how we minister to them and how we allow them to minister to us. The theological ethos of the church affects how the whole church family nurtures the spiritual life of it's children'

Csinos and Beckwith – Children's Ministry in the Way of Jesus IVP 2013

ENGAGE | PARTICIPATE | CELEBRATE

VISION

Have Your Say...

What do your Children and Young People think?

How do you seek and value the thoughts and opinions of children and young people? During the Year of Young People 2018, we would like to encourage all churches to talk to and ask children and young people for their thoughts about what they enjoy and are concerned about. How would they like the church to get involved in the Year of Young People and how might they get involved? You could explore these with children and young people in the congregation, uniformed groups, local schools etc.

Tell us about yourself – your age; family and what you enjoy.

What worries you or concerns you about your life/ community/ world?

What do you like most about your church?

What would you change about your church?

How would you like to be more involved in the church, locally, regionally and nationally?

What would you like to see your church do during the Year of Young People?

Think of varied ways to get your young people sharing their thoughts eg make short videos or interview each other; a graffiti wall etc. You may want to ask other questions or do different questionnaires for different ages.

You could watch the **Our Church video** of children and young people in Livingston, sharing their thoughts and then have further discussion with your children and young people. www.churchofscotland.org.uk/yoyp

When you have asked children and young people for their thoughts and views – what will you do with this?

How can this be fed back to the Kirk Session and will it prompt some new ideas?

How can you continue to invite the contribution of children and young people and include them in decisions and engagement in your church?

VISION

A **'Have Your Say'** Template can be downloaded from www.churchofscotland.org.uk/yoyp

Send in your responses, as we would be very interested to hear what children and young people have to say across the church.

✉ YOYP@churchofscotland.org.uk

Last year, one of our young people came up to me in church and said that the teenage group felt there was nothing particularly for them in church on a Sunday. They felt that the children's address was directed at much younger children. They also said that they needed to be heard more and to influence the congregation. We held an "anything goes" meeting where they could express their views openly. Eleven young people turned up, ate pizza, drank Coke and told us what they wanted, including their wish to be involved in the appointment of the new Youth Associate. Their views were written up, anonymously and presented to the Session.

So what's changed? The morning service now has a slot with one of them reading the 2nd lesson, introduced and explained by the youth associate to help them, and indeed the adult congregation, to understand the passage. The young people contribute to what music we use. They had a very significant say in the interviewing and selection of our Youth Associate whom they describe as 'Ace'; they have held an afternoon tea for elderly people in the congregation and a number of them have recently become Adherents. Now with a vacancy for the Minister, we have a young person on the Nominating Committee who will vote as an equal on the final selection for that role.

We are proud of our young people and the increasing influence they have in our congregation.

Greenbank Church, Edinburgh

'I love the church, I love God and I want to help the way the church shapes the future, but often we are not listened to or valued'

'Listen to us - we have a lot to say and a lot to give'



ENGAGE | **PARTICIPATE** | **CELEBRATE**

WORSHIP SERVICES

Service to Launch the Year of Young People 2018

We would like to encourage all congregations to hold a special service to launch the Year of Young People on **Sunday 28th January 2018**. This can be an opportunity to do something a bit different and encourage children and young people to take part as much as possible, in putting together and delivering the service. This service can be held with a focus on children and young people in all churches, whether large or small, with children and young people in your midst or not.

We offer here an outline and some suggestions for this service. Other ideas for this Sunday can be drawn from:

Weekly Worship (using the Revised Common Lectionary) www.churchofscotland.org.uk/worship/Weekly_Worship

Spill the Beans (using the Narrative Lectionary) www.spillbeans.org.uk

Theme: One Church – One Body

Call to Prayer:

Come into His presence - all people of God

Come into His presence - just as you are

Come into His presence - to worship and share

Come into His presence - as the Family of God

(This could be said by people of different ages from different parts of the church)

Music Suggestions:

- Year of Young People song – Fishcy Music www.churchofscotland.org.uk/yoyp This new song has been commissioned to use during the Year of Young People
- Jesus Walks Beside us in Scotland song - Fishcy Music – words chords and recording at www.churchofscotland.org.uk/yoyp
- Welcome Everybody - Fishcy Music - Great to include everyone. Don't forget the actions!
- A Place at the Table - CH4 685
- I am the Church; You are the Church - CH4 204
- Come All You People - CH4 757
- Are there songs that your young people would like to suggest that fit with the theme of the service or can be shared in a different way eg with a recorded soundtrack or with images to reflect on?

WORSHIP SERVICES

Ideas to listen to the Voice of Children and Young People:

Before the service, you may want to engage with, and listen, to your children and young people by doing the **Have Your Say** process in the Toolkit and draw into the service some thoughts and ideas from your children and young people. If you don't have any children or young people in your congregation, do think about how you might 'hear the voices' of those in local schools or groups using the church premises or grandchildren of your church members. What can they tell us?

You could also:

- Show the **Our Church video** in which children from Livingston share their thoughts about their church. www.churchofscotland.org.uk/yoyp
- Do an interview style conversation with young people talking about their experience of faith and church. What do young people enjoy about being involved in the life of the church?
- Have conversations in small groups of different generations of the church, looking at what church means to each of them, what gifts they have and how they are involved and contributing

Scripture:

Romans 12:4-8 For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function, so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others. We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with your faith; if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach; if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.

The passage could be used, which explores how the Church is a Body – made of different parts working together to enrich and build up the whole. The gifts of God are talents given to individuals, not in the sense of human accomplishment, but as gifts to be exercised in the service of God. The gifts of individuals are given for the service of the community, the Church, and are to be used within it for the good of the Gospel. Each of us has gifts to offer and share – elders and lay people; young and old. The Church grows as we come together and share who we are and the characteristics and gifts we bring. What other gifts do people in your church have? What gifts can younger people offer the church?

This is a challenge for all of us to share ourselves and our gifts in our worship, involvement in the church, community and world for the common good and the well-being of the whole. During the Year of Young People we can celebrate the gifts that all members of our Body, including younger members, have.

WORSHIP SERVICES

Explore together, question together. learn together, grow together:

Is there a creative participatory way that you can explore the Romans 12:4-8 passage, without using the traditional 'talk/ sermon' method?

- Can you draw in some of the things that you may have heard in listening to the voice of young people above?
- In groups – you could expand the examples of 'gifts' and then discuss what gifts people feel they have. How can we grow and value the range of gifts we have? How would our church be different? We all have gifts, and these gifts differ one from another, but all are as important as the other! You could get small groups to discuss their gifts and write these on fruit shapes to hang on a tree
- Illustrate how your church is One Body, that includes and welcomes all ages; what are the different gifts that we can bring together? How are we 'better together'?
- Discuss things that won't work without all the parts being there -for example, a pen with the spring missing, a car with a part of the engine missing or no petrol, the TV remote control with batteries missing. It is the same with the church – how can we as a church work? Nobody is more important than anyone else and the church works better together!

Act of Commitment:

Before using these in your service, you may want to discuss and agree these Commitments with others, including children and young people and explore with them how these might be worked out through the year.

The following statements can be read out by different members of the church with an affirmation by all.

As (Name of Church ...) we commit ourselves to prioritise the needs of children and young people

- We will create a community of faith where young people are valued, listened to, and are actively involved in the life, work and mission of the church **(We will / Aye)**
- We will create worship that is meaningful and relevant to all **(We will / Aye)**
- We will provide an environment where the faith of children and young people can grow and deepen in love, respect and with confidence **(We will / Aye)**
- We will work alongside young people as equal partners, journeying together in discipleship **(We will / Aye)**
- We will seek to enable their voices to be present within our decision-making structures **(We will / Aye)**
- We will provide training for our parents, volunteers and leaders **(We will / Aye)**
- We will offer pastoral support and encouragement for our young people **(We will / Aye)**
- We believe in a church where young and old learn from each other and grow with each other **(We do / Aye)**
- We believe that every young person in Scotland, and within the Church of Scotland, matters! **(We do/ Aye)**

Following this, a **Church Charter for Children and Young People** can be developed, shared and signed.

(A template for this can be found at the back of the Toolkit or on www.churchofscotland.org.uk/yoyp)

Intercession Ideas (prayers for children and young people in the church, community and world):

- Use the Year of Young People Prayer
- Involve children and young people in the writing and sharing of prayers
- Use prayer stations or creative ways of praying that may suit different styles

WORSHIP SERVICES

Closing Prayer:

(The response could be said holding hands as a sign of being one body)

Lord, send your blessing on us, as we start this Year of Young People,
in our church, local community, and nation.

Send us out to share a vision that takes all people, young and old, seriously.

Send us out to celebrate and share all our gifts.

Send us out to be a blessing to our community and world.

In your name we pray.

Amen



WORSHIP SERVICES

In all services throughout the year

Every service needs to recognise the presence of different ages, as well as different spiritual styles, and give opportunity for active involvement and worship. Many churches already have part or all the service where children, young people and adults worship together. This requires a creative approach to ensure the involvement and engagement of all ages in the different parts of the church service.

How might you lead the different parts of a service in a new way that includes and involves children and young people?

We involve an all age group in planning and running the service each week. This started 4 years ago with 20 people involved and now we have around 60 coming each week. We wanted to have these services planned and run by all age groups, so we have 3 teams who each plan for the services for a month at a time – so one month they are meeting to plan the services; then they lead the services and then they have a month just attending. Each team has 5 people of a range of ages from 13 to retired. When they are planning they read the Gospel passage and then discuss what stands out for them, what theme they might use and how they will share that theme and help people to reflect and engage with what the reading is about. A special effort is made to get ideas and input and involvement from younger folk and ask them what they would like to do. People are encouraged to be creative and involve everyone. Within a fluid service structure, we usually have a song, different ways of doing the reading, creative ways of praying (in silence; prayer stations etc). Occasionally we have been outside for the service; one time we plaited giant ribbons around the church as we reflected on the Trinity.

Livingston United Church



‘How can you bring young people into the life and worship of the church and encourage us in our faith?’

More ideas:

www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/childrenandyouth/church

Year of Young People Prayer

Welcoming God,

You welcome all of us with your open arms. Inspire and guide us, that we may we never hinder your children from coming to you; and remember that we are all part of your family. Bring us together as a loving community for all, that we may learn from each other as we walk side by side in faith.

Loving God,

We pray for those who have come to know you, whether that relationship is new or if they have made a commitment to you and stepped out in faith; we pray that they would grow in grace and knowledge as they continue their walk with you. We pray for those far away from you. Meet them where they are and give them the courage and strength to make the right decisions, that they may come to know and experience your gracious love.

Caring and Compassionate God,

We pray and ask you to guide and protect children and young people from that which may restrict them on their journey in life and faith. We pray for the day when all children in the world can be just that: children. Be with them as they experience the dangers and injustices that are ever present in our world today.

Nurturing God,

We pray for all those who work with and support children and young people - for those of all ages who give their time, talents and love to create a place in churches and communities that can be the foundation of growth, confidence and a relationship with you.

Calling God,

You call us to follow, to serve, to welcome and to share.

We come now to answer your call, to lift our minds and voices to you, and to thank and praise you for all the children and young people in our churches, communities, country and world. We ask that you would walk alongside them and grant them courage, strength and wisdom as they face the challenges of life.

Guiding God,

As we travel through this Year of Young People and beyond, help us to come alongside children and young people to draw closer to you, to answer your call to follow, to serve, to welcome and to share together, through the Holy Spirit,

We offer these prayers through Jesus Christ our Lord,

Amen.

(This prayer can be read by different voices. Members of the church can also be invited to develop and write their own prayer with and for young people. The prayer can be used at different times through the year)

WORSHIP SERVICES

Praying With and For Children and Young People

As we get involved in the Year of Young People, there are a number of ways in which we can pray with, and for children and young people, during the year. As we think about praying with children and young people, it is good to remember that we each have different styles and preferences in ways we encounter God. Children generally have a marked preference for one of 4 different styles: word, emotion, symbol and action. It is good to be aware of this as we think about worship and prayer with children and young people.

www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/children_and_youth/leaders/faith_formation/spiritual_styles

We would love churches to pray regularly throughout 2018, for and with children and young people.

In Services

- Use the Year of Young People Prayer regularly throughout the year
- Explore creative, participatory styles of prayer during your services. Can you encourage groups of different ages to pray together?
- How can they be involved and included in shaping prayers for church services?
- Additional prayers and ideas will be provided on the Church of Scotland website related to the monthly focus areas. These can be used for children and young people, the whole congregation, in church or at home

www.churchofscotland.org.uk/yoyp

Monthly focus for prayer and action

JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV/DEC
One Church/ one body	Health and Wellbeing	Community	Equality and Discrimination	Participation and influence	Volunteers	Culture	Education	Global Justice	Harvest	Celebration

Young People and Prayer at other times

- How can you help children and young people develop their personal prayer lives?
- Encourage intergenerational prayer by creating opportunities for different generations to pray together
- Young people could write and share their own prayers along the YOYP 2018 focus areas
- Involve children and young people in the National Prayer Initiative

www.churchofscotland.org.uk/togetherwepray

WORSHIP SERVICES

Pray for Children and Young People

- Encourage all members of your church community to pray for the young people in your church and community, as well as young people in other parts of the world
- Pray for special occasions in young people's lives eg birthdays, exams
- Can members of your church commit to pray regularly for one or two young people?
- Give a small note or prayer card to remind young people that you are praying for them

Share your Stories:

Share your prayers and tell us about the prayer activities you have done and how young people were involved.

✉ YOYP@churchofscotland.org.uk

More ideas:

www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/children_and_youth/church/praying_with_children_and_young_people

www.prayerspacesinschools.com/



'I like to draw close to God in different ways and places'

WORSHIP SERVICES

Celebrating our Volunteers

During the Year of Young People 2018 it would be great to recognise the impact of teachers, children and youth workers and other supporting adults, on young people's lives. In many congregations a lot of work is done by volunteers, particularly regarding ministry with children and young people. During the Year of Young People, we would love every congregation to say a special 'Thank you' to those who have shaped us and those who invest in our children and young people and are helping them reach their full potential.

We suggest that each church uses, at least part of a service, to recognise and appreciate the contribution of volunteers, in the ministry of your church, with children and young people. (This could happen in June as the first week of June is National Volunteer Week.)

Ideas to include in a YOYP 2018 Volunteer Service

Children and Young People in your church can be actively engaged in the development and delivery for a service and the activities afterwards.

Suggested Reading:

Ephesians 4: 11-1: So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up

'The simple fact is this: we can't do what we do without volunteers. Whether you need two or fifty, you need to be wise in how you recruit them and care for them'.

Ivy Beckwith - author of *Formational Children's Ministry*

Suggested Songs:

- CH4 175 Praise, I will praise you Lord. Serve I will serve you
- CH4 533 Will you come and follow me
- CH4 694 Brother, sister, let me serve you
- CH4 801 Ubi caritas et amor

Church Promises for their Volunteers:

- We celebrate and thank you for your ministry with our children and young people
- We will pray for you and support you
- We will support you by providing training and retreat opportunities
- We will resource and equip you in your ministry

Celebrating our Volunteers:

- Show a Powerpoint or short video of what has been done in the youth and children's groups during the year
- Show photos or videos of all the volunteers
- Share stories and examples of what volunteers have done
- Thanks, from the children/young people that the volunteers work with. This could be shared in a number of creative ways
- Calculate the approximate number of hours people volunteer within your church

WORSHIP SERVICES

Thanking our Volunteers:

Below is something that could be read out as you thank your volunteers:

To be a volunteer, it takes...

- Generosity, a willingness to give your time to others
- Empathy, an ability to put yourself in someone else's shoes and walk together
- Patience, because your ministry will have its ups and downs
- Compassion, to truly care about making a difference to someone else
- Dedication, to stick with the work and see it through

You've shown these qualities and so much more, so thank you for all that you do.

- In recognition and to mark what they have contributed, a Volunteer Appreciation Certificate can be presented during the service. (**Volunteer Certificate Templates** can be downloaded from www.churchofscotland.org.uk/yoyp)
- A gift can be made or bought and presented during the service. This could be chosen or made by the children and young people

Dedication Prayer:

(This could be read by children with the bold response said by everyone within congregation or another one written by children and young people.)

Heavenly Father,

We are blessed to have many volunteers within (Insert your church name here.)

We give you thanks, O Lord

For the gifts given to them

We give you thanks, O Lord

For the many hours of service

We give you thanks, O Lord

For being the hands, feet and hearts of Christ in our world today

We give you thanks, O Lord

For the service of(you could name your volunteers and committees here)

We give you thanks, O Lord

May we recognise everyone and their gifts, time and talents. Make us one in the body of Christ.

We dedicate our lives to your service

In Jesus name

Amen

WORSHIP SERVICES

After the service:

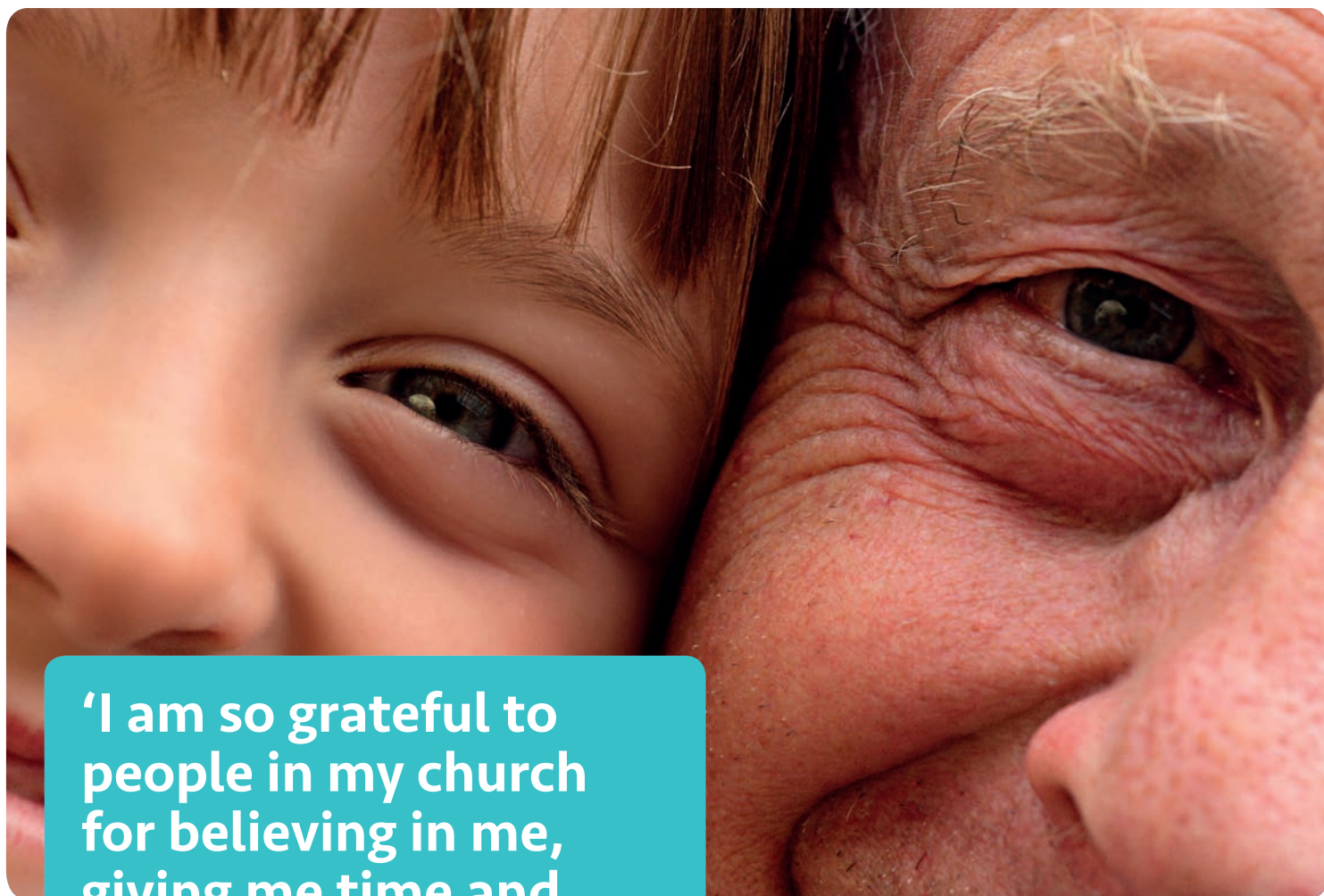
- Let the children and young people plan and serve special refreshments after the service (eg include donuts! - we 'donut' know what we would do without you!)
- Use poems and quotes about volunteers within the service or on cards on tables

Share your Stories

Who are the 'Saints' who have invested in, prayed for and supported you and your young people?

Have you got young people volunteering and serving their church and community?

✉ YOYP@churchofscotland.org.uk



'I am so grateful to people in my church for believing in me, giving me time and showing me God's love'

THEMES

Engaging with the YOYP Themes

The Scottish Government is encouraging activity for the Year of Young People 2018 to be focussed around six key themes. These were identified by young people as key areas around which to focus much of what happens during the year. Across the Church of Scotland, we are broadening and including these themes to have a particular focus for each month of the year (see the 'Monthly Focus' in the introduction to this toolkit).

Below are a few ideas you might like to explore with children and young people around the six national Themes. Do work with your children and young people to get them involved in deciding what they might get engaged in.

PARTICIPATION

Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Joel 2:28

- Give young people the chance to influence decisions that affect their lives
- How are young people involved in decisions in the church? How can this be developed? How can young people be more involved in the Kirk Session?
- Ask children and young people what they want to do in the groups they attend
- How are young people involved in decisions at Presbytery and National Level – can they attend National Youth Assembly or become a General Assembly Youth Rep?
- Can young people share a video of something they are proud of or some challenges they want to share with the wider church?
- To further develop your relationship with your children and young people, find out if any young people or children participate in the decision-making within their school. Are they members of the Pupil Council? Eco Committee? Or any equivalent? Celebrate these achievements with your young people
- **Do young people have other ideas?**

HEALTH AND WELLBEING

I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. John 10:10

- Do you know about the Convention on the Rights of the Child? What does the Bible say about Children's Rights? How can you discuss this with your young people?
www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/children_and_youth/leaders/childrens_rights_and_protection
- Can your young people do some art work or videos on different areas of the Convention on the Rights of the Child
- How does your church contribute to Getting it Right For Every Child Wellbeing Indicators for young people to live life in all its fullness? (GIRFEC is a national approach to supporting and working with all children and young people in Scotland, to make Scotland the best place to grow up in)
www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/children_and_youth/leaders/childrens_rights_and_protection

THEMES

- Get involved in Crossreach Grey Cakes Mental Health campaign
www.crossreach.org.uk/crossreach-grey-cakes-resources
- Discuss mental health in young people with young people, members of your church and community (see the Mental Health and the Church booklet which shares stories from young people)
www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/children_and_youth/young_adults/national_youth_assembly/reports
- Find out if there is anything else going on in your community to make sure young people have the chance to lead healthy, active lives and understand the importance of mental health and resilience. Signpost the young people to these services
- What can you do around physical health? Can you do a sponsored walk or a pilgrimage?
- Offer healthy snacks in church groups
- **Do young people have other ideas?**

EDUCATION

Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. (Deut 11:19)

- What involvement and support can your church give local schools – to both staff and pupils?
- How can you further develop and strengthen your relationship with local schools? Serve Your Local School (www.syls.org.uk) has lots of ideas
- How can young people you work with support others in their schools?
- You could run an anti-bullying campaign in partnership with the school
- You could have an on line safety discussion
- How can you best support the young people within your church at exam time?
- How can you support young people in transitions from primary to secondary schools or secondary to work or university?
- **Do young people have other ideas?**



THEMES

CULTURE

Fan into flame the gift that is in you (2 Timothy 1:6)
Gifts are given for the common good (1 Cor 12: 7)

- What is the special local culture or customs that young people might want to celebrate in your area?
- How might you get involved with local events?
- Can you involve children and young people in music and drama within your services?
- Can young people create some artwork for the church building?
- What Scottish talents do your young people have and how can this be celebrated?
- How can you support local youth theatre and music?
- Involve young people in planning for church events eg Burns Supper
- **Do young people have other ideas?**



THEMES

ENTERPRISE AND REGENERATION

See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it? I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland. (Is 43:19)

Celebrate young people's role in innovation, entrepreneurship and the Scottish economy as well as making Scotland a greener and more pleasant place to live.

- How can your children and young people contribute ideas to 'regenerate' your church? What ideas do they have? How can they be involved?
- Is your church an eco-church? How are, or could, young people involved in this initiative?
www.ecocongregationscotland.org
- What contribution can your church and young people have to 'greening' your local community?
- Get involved in Climate Change campaigning – Christian Aid has a lot of information on this
www.christianaid.org.uk/campaigns
- How can we celebrate where young people are innovative or showing entrepreneurship?
- Encourage and celebrate youth involvement in local / community councils/ leadership at school etc
- **Do young people have other ideas?**

EQUALITY AND DISCRIMINATION

Speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves, for the rights of all who are destitute (Prov 31:8)

He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. (Micah 6:8)

- What issues of discrimination do your young people face that need tackling?
- What areas do your young people want to discuss and think more about?
- Are there peace and justice initiatives or campaigns to get involved with?
- Get involved in a campaign or fundraising project
- With the terrible events that have happened in the world over the past few years, how can we support young people to challenge all forms of prejudice and discrimination and engage with others in peace building?
- The National Youth Assembly in 2017 explored Inter Faith work. How might your young people explore this?
- **Do young people have other ideas?**

'We want to make a difference in our community and world'

CELEBRATION

Celebrating our Children and Young People

We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done. (Psalm 78:4)

Who are our young heroes? How do they shine? How can we celebrate them? How well do we know our children and young people - what their interests and skills are, the things that they are involved in? How can you find out and celebrate their gifts and skills? Can we 'Search for the Heroes Inside Ourselves'?

You can recognise and celebrate the things that young people are involved in at school; in Boys and Girls Brigade; Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme; volunteering etc. Seek out, recognise and celebrate young people and children showing gifts of service, faith, courage, kindness, creativity, etc? Perhaps you could have a time for sharing during a church service or at the beginning of your children or youth group? You could run a youth group session where your young people share stories of what they are involved in. You could explore with them what gifts they have and share these with the wider congregation. Consider how to utilise and encourage these gifts across the church.

If appropriate you could nominate young people for an award:

www.youthscotland.org.uk/projects/volunteer-action-plan/amazing-things.htm

Or maybe consider running a presbytery award scheme, or recognise gifts and contributions in a church service.

Share your stories:

What stories have you got to share of how children and young people are engaging in the life of the church and community? What can you celebrate, that young people are involved in? How are young people participating in your church? We are hoping to share a story a day on the Church of Scotland website, so do send in your stories, with photos or short videos.

✉ YOYP@churchofscotland.org.uk

'I know many young people who do amazing things – let's find out and celebrate these achievements'

'God creates us all with skills and talents – discover, use and celebrate them!'

CELEBRATION

2018 and Beyond...

The Year of Young People 2018 is a prime opportunity to focus our attention on children and young people. As we all take steps to involve our children and young people fully in the life of the Church, forming them in faith and celebrating who they are and what they bring, we believe we could see great change throughout the Church. During 2018, we can be encouraged to explore further how we can be church and connect with children and young people in various ways and contexts – not only Sunday worship. It is vitally important that all the good things begun don't stop once 2019 has arrived. We hope that all that we work on in 2018 will have an enduring legacy in the lives of our children and young people, and also in the form of long term change across the church.

This Church Toolkit can encourage local congregations to explore new ideas in their ministry and engagement with children and young people during 2018. Many Presbyteries are also developing plans of what they can do to bring people together in their areas. Alongside this, there will be a number of national and regional training and events. We hope that using this Church Toolkit and the opportunity to get involved with the Year of Young People 2018 will encourage your local congregation to:

- Connect and engage with children and young people in your church and community
- Create opportunities for active participation and involvement of children and young people
- Try something new or maybe join with others to do so
- Develop a vision and a plan for further ministry with children and young people

'From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. '(Ephesians 4:6)

As we share stories of what is happening in churches across the country, through the year, we will be encouraged and excited to hear about the new ideas and initiatives that many churches are doing with children and young people and be inspired by our children and young people.

As National Development Workers, we are here to encourage and support you, so please do get in touch.

With all best wishes,



Let's continue to work together as a Church that loves, nurtures, engages, includes and inspires children and young people, to be all they can be.

Suzi Farrant

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CELEBRATION

Further information

- There is a dedicated YOYP section on the Church of Scotland website with lots of ideas, information, stories and events. This Toolkit and other resources are available there to download and a lot more will be added throughout the year www.churchofscotland.org.uk/yoyp
- The Children and Youth pages on the Church of Scotland website have a wealth of information to support you with many aspects of your vision and work with children and young people www.churchofscotland.org.uk/childrenandyouth
- Sign up to receive the Children and Youth Newsletter www.churchofscotland.org.uk/resources/children_and_youth/connect
- Join the Now You're Talking Facebook Group for up to date conversation, resources and ideas. www.facebook.com/groups/588801184539545/

