

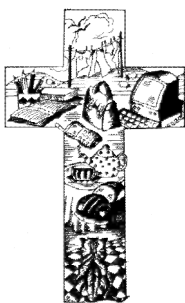
Transforming Lives; Transforming Communities

Year of the Child 2009

Celebrate	Review	Challenge
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What you said about
The Church



My Community - Update

We have received our first feedback from overseas! A reply came from our link diocese of Mara in Tanzania. It was clear that the children and young people there are not part of as many different communities as those here, but the sense of "strength in community" seemed much greater. "Being together is good for solving various problems" and community is good "to comfort each other during bad news." The young people stated that there was no difficulty about being with each other "because being together is the best way to solve problems with each other's gifts" The Church helps build community, in teaching about God and helping children and young people to be "against the devil" and to "respond to Christ."



We believe that replies are on the way from Sweden, USA and Australia too!

Children on The Church

☺ What does the word Church mean to you?

"A place of worship" "A place for meeting God" "A meeting place"
"God and Jesus" "A place of love"

☺ Where do you do "God things?"

"Church" "School" "Home" "The Dinner Table" "In Bed"
One group came up with lots of ideas before everyone said simultaneously:
"Everywhere!" (It was a special moment for the leaders)

☺ What sort of "God things" do you do?

"The list was almost endless!" reported one leader.
"Singing" "Praying" "Being blessed" "Trying to be good"
"Being friendly" "Being thankful" "Listen to Bible stories"
"Talk with people" "Play with people" "Help people in need"

Reviewing The Church

☺ What part do you play in the Church?

"Prayers" "Learn" "Watch" "Ring the bell"
"Read" "Get bored" "Help set up the altar" "Cook the food"
"Part of Sunday school, which is part of the Church"

☺ What difference does Church make?

This seemed to be the most difficult question for some of the children. For some it was that they had never really known life without church as part of it, and for others it was more that Church didn't seem to make much difference. There were, though, a couple of particularly special answers:
"It makes you believe in God" "Helps you to be good in RE"

☺ What does Church do for children and young people?

"Helps them learn about God" "It let's them join in"
"Helps them to pray" "Helps them to learn, share and create"
"Encourages friendship and moral understanding"

☺ What is the best bit about Church?

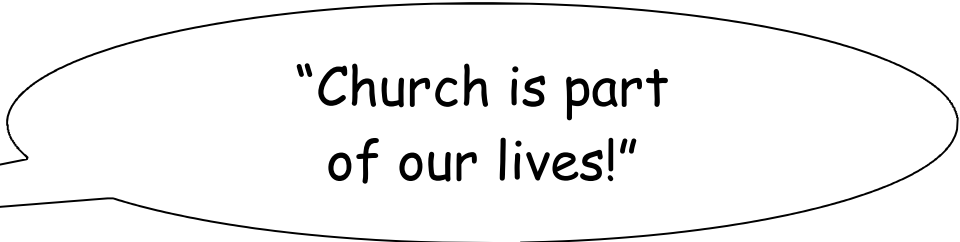
"Food & Drink" "Friendship" "When we get to join in, all of it"
"Having Communion" (This answer came up several times)

☺ What would make Church better?

"More older toys" "More children and families to attend" "Computers"
"If it was less boring" "If it was more meaningful to everyday life"
"Everyone to have communion" "Make it more Fun" "Child Friendly"
"Clear Speakers" "Microphones" "Buy new pew mats"

Challenging the Church

There were some good positive responses to the questions about The Church. The community side of the Church family is clearly recognised and appreciated by the children and young people who have replied. Many have clearly found their Church experience at Junior Church or Sunday School a very positive representation of Church. Sunday service times came in for less positive feedback from most. Boring and irrelevant reflect the major feedback. One of the more positive responses was that the children felt the Church "lets them join in" although behind this there may be a challenge for it betrays a sense of "us and them" rather than a cohesive "Body of Christ." Communion is clearly an important issues, we hoped it may figure prominently but were amazed at just how much it did. Other themes came out clearly too. That the Church is more than the building was clearly understood by the children and young people. As too was the concept of action and practical activities being "God things:" Helping others and friendship is part of worship and prayer in the eyes of many who responded. Church is a happy place, where people who worship God can come to worship together. It is a "bringing together place," a "teaching place" and a "loving community" which "cares for people"



"Church is part
of our lives!"