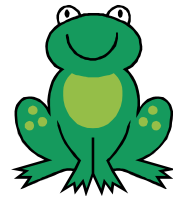


WHAT'S UP?



A newsletter for people in ministry with children and their families

Prepared by your **Resource Centre for Children's and Family Ministry**
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Changes to the RCCFM

At the end of 2010, the Resource Centre for Children's and Family Ministry (RCCFM), based at Parafield Gardens Uniting Church (PGUC), will be closing. At the start of the new year, a Children's, Youth and Young Adults (CYYA) team will be forming, based in the Synod/Presbytery office in the city. We are both sad and excited about this change.

Saying goodbye to PGUC and RCCFM

We are sad to say goodbye to the PGUC family, to the staff and volunteers we have worked with on events and ministry programs and shared many morning teas with! We will miss being in an office that is also the church crèche and where we can see (and hear!) playgroups, friendship groups, and when working late, music practice and youth group. This warm family of PGUC has welcomed, supported and ministered to us. It has been wonderful to be in ministry with them.

Creating a new team

The next phase for the RCCFM is that as an entity it will no longer exist. We, Mary Jo and Melissa, and many of the RCCFM resources will relocate to the city. We will join Heidi Harding (Children's Mission Planner), Will Hall (Youth Mission Planner) and Jo Watts (KCO & SAYCO Event Officer) along with staff from the Out of the Valley (centre for Youth) and Earth (centre for Young Adults) to form a Children's, Youth and Young Adults team. This will allow for a more coordinated approach and delivery of service to the Uniting Church of South Australia.

Why change?

The changes are the result of the regular 5-year-review, held earlier this year, of the Mission Resourcing Network (MRN). The RCCFM has been one of many Resource Centres of the MRN.

Sixteen recommendations were made from the

review, and they can be downloaded here: <http://mrn.sa.uca.org.au/newsletters/article-archive/867-mrn-reviw.html>

The recommendations that affect the RCCFM are for the MRN to:

- organise its ministries into two strands: *Mission Extending* and *Mission Immediate*.
- locate Children and Families, Youth and Young Adults support services, including related events, together within the Mission Immediate strand.
- be involved in the catalysing, envisioning and resourcing of church planting and fresh expressions of church.
- re-organise staffing by January 2011.

What next?

The RCCFM will continue to operate as we have been until mid-December when we move. We will begin the new year in our new office with our new team. Discussions are underway about roles and what services will be provided by a CYYA team. We expect to continue providing training and networking opportunities; resources to browse and borrow; and to develop and promote resources, with these continuing in some form: *Faith Family*, *What's Up?*, all-age services, playgroup and family planners. We will also still be available as a point of reference for resourcing, ideas and conversations about programs.

A key aspect of the review is the clarification of the focus of the MRN, particularly regarding fresh expressions and the encouragement of new ministries. This will significantly shape our roles and the focus of our time.

We hope to provide, as soon as possible, information about our team, roles and contact details. Most of all, we look forward to continuing to work with you and to inspire and equip people well for ministry with children and families.

Melissa Cellier and Mary Jo Zwar

RESOURCES

FAITH FAMILY - TERM 4, 2010

This is a quarterly resource for churches to bless and encourage families to share and grow faith at home. A new issue, coming soon, is about being thankful and Christmas. It includes 'An attitude of gratitude' article, recommended resources for your home, 'Commitment to learning' (the last of a series on Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets), 'A thankful shepherd' (Bible story), and articles on 'Sharing the Christmas story with your children' and 'Teaching our kids to be thankful.'

To order your church's copies today, contact the RCCFM on 8285 7104 or rccfm@bigpond.com

CHRISTMAS RESOURCES

FROM THE RCCFM

Find this and other Christmas resources at <http://mrn.sa.uca.org.au/childrens-ministry/all-age-worship.html>

ADORABLE: ALL AGE WORSHIP RESOURCE

Have you looked at the calendar for Christmas 2010? Christmas Eve is on Friday, Christmas Day on Saturday, and the following day is the Sunday after Christmas. Three days of worship in a row — or do you skip one of them? Or do you do something different for one of them?

Adorable is a simple worship service that can even be adapted to an informal café setting on one of these occasions. The premise is that although all babies are adorable, only one baby was truly adorable — worthy of being adored because he was God as well as a human being. The story of the birth of the adore-able Son of God is linked with the verses of the familiar carol 'O come, let us adore him'.

The resource includes some general notes plus a complete worship order/script which you can use as is or adapt to your needs.

FROM UNITING CHURCH OF VIC/TAS

www.ctm.uca.edu.au/children-families-ministry

Visit this newly upgraded site for a whole variety of resources, articles and information.

For Christmas resources, including an *Edible Christmas*, *Greening Christmas* and a *Christmas Prayer Tree* visit:

<http://ctm.uca.edu.au/taxonomy/term/84>

MEDIACOM FREE FREIGHT OFFER

MediaCom is offering free freight (in Australia) on all orders until December 17, 2010. So this Christmas say thanks to your team with an inspiring book, give kids in your ministry programs a story book or find gifts for friends and family. (Excludes *Seasons of the Spirit* curriculum sales.)

Visit www.mediacom.org.au or free call 1800 811 311

RESOURCES

SUMMER SUNDAYS AN INTERGENERATIONAL APPROACH TO WORSHIP IN JANUARY

Looking beyond Christmas, is the month of January: hot weather, holidays, lazy days and break time.

But our 24/7/365 God keeps serving us, and we, his people, keep worshipping him.

Summer Sundays is an idea for making the most of those quiet times; challenging and serving people who are at loose ends during the down time, and having a great time together as God's people.

For **Summer Sundays** all generations come together for an enjoyable event that includes learning, playing, eating and celebrating.

Summer Sundays can be developed around your existing lectionary-based program or other thematic worship plans. We have also developed a complete program that could also be used for this January 2011 called 'Celebrate Jesus'.

CELEBRATE JESUS - JANUARY 2011 A SUMMER SUNDAYS RESOURCE

In this series of five events, we come together as people of all ages to celebrate the life of the man, whose birth we've celebrated at Christmas.

The **Celebrate Jesus** resource is a complete planning guide covering the four Summer Sundays components: learning, playing, eating and celebrating. Event themes celebrate Jesus, who:

- is always powerful
- always loves us
- always listens to us
- always cares for us
- lives forever.

Summer Sundays and **Celebrate Jesus** are available for free at: <http://mrn.sa.uca.org.au/childrens-ministry/all-age-worship.html>

EVENTS

KCO VOLUNTEERS AND RECYCLABLES

KCO 2011 has the theme **I Wonder...** and is being held on Sat 26th - Sun 27th March at the Barossa Valley Tourist Park.

For more info. about KCO and being involved visit:
<http://mrn.sa.uca.org.au/happenings/kco.html>

If you would like to be part of KCO and you haven't been before, contact Jo, our Events Officer on kco@sa.uca.org.au. Jo will be happy to send you information about how KCO works and how you can get involved - no matter how many kids you have to bring, be it 1 or 1000!

KCO Crafts is a much anticipated part of KCO. The wonderful Craft Coordinators, Anne and Maureen, are already busy planning. Volunteers are the lifeblood of KCO Craft. **I Wonder...**if I could help out? We would love for new people to **join the KCO Craft Team**, so if you or someone you know loves working with kids and can free up a Saturday afternoon in late March, please contact Maureen (8296 2508) or Anne (8265 3066).

I Wonder...if I should throw this out, or if KCO Craft could use it? **Please collect the following recyclables:** cardboard rolls, beads (for threading), small glass jars with tight fitting screw top lids (220gm vegemite ones and spice jars are ideal).

Or if you would like to donate materials, the following would be useful: glitter pens/glue, sequins, small coloured foam letters/shapes, rolls of foil. Please contact Anne if you live North of the city (8265 3066) or Maureen if South of the city (82962508). We'd love to help you recycle!

CHRISTIAN ENDEAVOUR - SCRIPTURE UNION KIDS CAMP

When: January 4th - 8th, 2011

Where: Cornerstone College, Mt Barker

Theme: It's Party Time!

Christian Endeavour and Scripture Union partner together for this annual camp for children aged 9 - 13 years. For promotional posters, camper registration forms and leader application forms visit: www.su.org.au/sa/supa/cesu.html

Also find information and videos from the 2010 camp. For further information please contact Kaye Evans: gkhomeren@adam.com.au

ARTICLES

THE UPSIDE DOWN CIRCUS - SHARING THE MESSAGE OF JESUS WITH NORTHERN KIDS AND FAMILIES

The UPSIDE DOWN CIRCUS was held on Oct 6th - 8th in the school holidays. It was a free festival for kids and families, organized by 15 partner churches and 4 para-church organizations as a community outreach held on Ridley Reserve, Elizabeth.

Almost 200 volunteers, aged 8 - 70, worked tirelessly setting up tents, running activities, performing short shows and being clowns. This team felt like family and was a joy to be part of. Approximately 1500 people attended, experiencing a taste of what life in God's Kingdom is like. Activity tents each based on a kingdom value were run by different churches, so people explored through games, crafts, stories and activities what it means to have courage, care for others, serve others, forgive others, persevere and more. Every child who attended received a free show bag that included a *Top Ten Stories about Jesus* (from Mark's gospel).

People were blown away with the generosity of the event - free entry, activities, bread, fruit and water and cheap food and drinks (many thanks to generous donations from churches and businesses). Six local churches combined their shops into our *Be Generous* Tent where everything was sold for 50c and proceeds went to World Vision.

A key highlight was the *Hall of Fame* tent where children completed a short survey and were then identified as being like a Bible character, taking home a certificate with the Bible passages on to look up about that person. A sketch artist was there drawing the Bible characters. One teenager's profile had him like Gideon who he'd never heard of. He was given the Bible passages to look up, went home and did so that night. He came back the next afternoon specifically to visit the Hall of Fame tent and get a sketch of Gideon, saying, *You're right I am like Gideon*. It was wonderful to watch children's faces light up as they realised they could be like someone who did great things.

It was also exciting to see kids ministering to kids. In one activity tent a child volunteer shared

about saying sorry and forgiveness and the kids who were watching were totally engaged. Many team members were youth and young people giving up their school holidays. As the event drew closer, one volunteer commented she had begun to almost regret making the commitment to join the team, but once involved she loved it and was absolutely hanging out for each following afternoon to start!

The Upside Down Circus was an amazing experience of seeing God at work through his people sowing seeds of love, hope and truth. Please pray for continued church partnerships in outreach opportunities across Adelaide, including Christmas seminar teams in schools this term. Please also pray that those who came will find people to help them and places where they can continue exploring about being a follower of Jesus.

CALLING VOLUNTEERS: SINK OR SWIM

From an SA church children's team member:

Due to a number of reasons, the volunteers on the children's roster at my church had declined from about 8 people to 3 in the space of a month at the end of last term. This left us wondering if Kids Church would continue in Term 4. For a couple of weeks, the need was announced in the notices with no response. Listening to these requests for help, I was reminded of an article I'd read earlier this year in the *Children's Ministry Magazine* (May/June 2010, Vol 20, No. 2) titled *Titanic... or Carnival Cruise Ship*.

The article says that "people won't board a sinking ship" but will "line up to board a Carnival Cruise ship...to join something that's a fun adventure, feels like family, and knows where it's headed." It lists a number of "signs to know whether you're sending distress signals - or going full speed ahead" (p48).

Taking this on board and feeling strong promptings from God about a way forward for our Kids Church, I shared in the church service about what our Kids Church was about: relationships, discipleship (God and me, me and others), and keeping things simple and fun. I also shared about what happens in a session and about the kids (we have a great bunch of kids!).

I shared about the opportunity for people to join in who had key teaching skills and outlined their role (including the need for a police check and Child Safe Environments training), the roster and how they would be supported.

I then shared a possible new way forward for Kids Church that I'd felt God had given. I commented that many people in church have skills and hobbies, such as craft, cooking, sports, music, drama and that they could share these in kids church to help children either engage with or respond to the story. I explained that they would not be responsible for planning the session, they would not be left in charge of the children or have to worry about behaviour management. I outlined how they would be supported, that their role was for one week only, they needed a police check and they could just plan for their part of the session to share their interests with the kids.

I also expressed that I hoped they would be blessed by meeting with the kids and that through this the kids would also get to know their wider church family!

I emphasized that I knew support was important because our kids are too valuable to send people out who are ill-equipped and that the adults (potential volunteers) are too valuable to just send out with the kids to sink or swim.

After sharing once, 2 key teachers (who actually happen to be school teachers!) and 6 helpers signed up and the next week another 3 helpers signed up. This gave us a full roster for the whole term! And a few interested in helping next year.

Most of these people are not involved in other ministries. A few had been thinking about Kids Church but weren't sure what was involved, others just hadn't thought they could do it. A few others I'd never met before, so I've talked with my church leaders to ensure they are appropriate people for Kids Church.

I admit that this has given me more work to do in the short-term answering all of their questions and reassuring them of how we'll make things work. But last Sunday, I stayed in church, while for the first time a new teacher and helper ministered with the kids. I caught up with them afterwards, and the new helper who had shared her scrapbooking crafts asked me when she could join in again! Next week, we're looking forward to one of our "grandmothers" helping the kids to bake morning tea for the church and the week after we're telling the story using musical instruments with a mum and her teenage son. I'm not sure how it's all going to work but it's definitely a fun, church-family adventure!