

# THE foundations

OF MINISTRY & MISSION  
WITH CHILDREN & FAMILIES



baptist  
children &  
family  
ministries   
manatō iriri whānau tamariki

# Waharoa

The role of Baptist Children & Family Ministries (BCFM) is to inspire, equip and support our Baptist churches and faith communities as they seek to grow lifelong disciples of Christ. This includes both a ministry and a mission focus. Our emphasis in this process is to support our churches as they nurture faith in children, and equip and resource the home to be the primary place of that spiritual nurture.

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manatū Iririri whānau tamariki



**AS** Baptist Churches we follow Jesus, who is revealed in the Bible as God in human form and is the absolute authority in all matters related to faith and practice. Our churches and faith communities, guided by His Holy Spirit as they listen to Scripture with the wider church, have the freedom to interpret what He says, and put this into practice in their own contexts.<sup>1</sup>

This ability to interpret ministry and mission practices within the local context, alongside an understanding of how we are to see and value children, serve as the basis for this document.

In the following pages we outline the ways that we are called to see and value children, the place of the child and the family in the faith community, the importance of developing a vision for ministry and mission with children and their families and a foundational basis on which to build and establish your church's vision.

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<sup>1</sup> For further reading see:  
[www.baptist.org.nz/general/Being-a-Baptist](http://www.baptist.org.nz/general/Being-a-Baptist)



# valuing children

## AS JESUS DID

The Bible shows us that God values children as people made in His image. Jesus was quick to take children in His arms and bless them (Mark 10:16), heal them (Luke 8:48; 9:42) and use their gifts in His ministry (John 6:9-11).

Jesus encouraged children to come to Him and used them as 'living parables' showing the disciples that they must receive the kingdom of God as a little child, for that is the way disciples enter the kingdom (Mark 10:13-16). Children help us understand the dynamics of love and trust required for Christian disciples,<sup>2</sup> and in this, they are exemplars to adults. Jesus also explained the nature of the kingdom of God when He drew a child to his side after a dispute about greatness amongst the disciples (Luke 9:46-48).

In opposition to a society which classified people based on human levels of importance, Jesus showed that children (like others of low status) are valued and significant members of the new community.<sup>3</sup> Children are to be nurtured in the faith (Matthew 18:1-7), valued as ones able to offer up praise and worship to God (21:16; Luke 2:41) and should be embraced as members

of the community as ones for whom God Himself cares (Matthew 18:10; Mark 9:33-37, 42; Luke 17:1-2).

### The Child at the Centre

"[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."<sup>4</sup>

In Matthew 18:1-4 we see Jesus placing a child in the centre of his disciples and declaring that the kingdom of God belongs to them. He implies children matter, they can participate, are to be welcomed and are a gift.<sup>5</sup> Placing children at the centre is helpful from several perspectives. Firstly, it makes children visible thereby countering the neglect/hiddenness/lack of voice/non representation that can often occur. This is not to say that the child is more important or that the child's needs must dictate an adult, family's or church community's functionality, but by drawing them to the centre we at least notice that they are there. By placing children in the centre they will be visible, remembered and valued. Just as a child has nothing and is totally dependent, they can be valued by simply being a presence of the kingdom and reminding us of our utter dependence on God.

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2 G. R. Beasley-Murray, *Baptism in the New Testament* (Exeter: Paternoster, 1972), 325.

3 Andrew J. Goodliff, "To Such as These: The Child in Baptist Thought" (Oxford: Centre for Baptist History and Heritage, 2012), 12.

4 Goodliff, "To Such as These", 23.

5 Goodliff, "To Such as These", 4:17.



Secondly, by placing a child in the centre they can have a voice. The Baptist movement is currently faced with an alarming rate of decline in the number of children in our churches. Recent statistics concerning Baptist churches found the average number of children attending has decreased by 32% over the past 10 years. This confronting statistic coupled with the average attendance of all ages having decreased by 21% prompts an urgent response.<sup>6</sup> Congregations need to be invited to view each person through God's eyes as fellow pilgrims, connected in relationship and valued equally. When congregations obediently welcome children, ensure they are visible and have a voice they increase their faithfulness as the radical welcoming community of Jesus.

### Hear, O Church!

Alongside this view of the way that Jesus saw and valued children, Moses' words to the Israelites in Deuteronomy 6 are also a guide for how faith communities and homes are called to function:

*Deuteronomy 6:4-9 (NIV)*

*"Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie*

*down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates."*

We are called to pass on the stories of God, His Word, and His impact in our lives to our children, both within the home and the faith community.

This understanding of Scripture forms the doctrinal foundation for what we believe about children and our responsibility for their spiritual nurture. These beliefs then form the basis on which to develop a theological vision and set of values. So, what do we want to see in the lives of our children?

Na to rourou,  
na taku rourou,  
ka ora ai te iwi.

With your food basket,  
and my food basket,  
the people  
will thrive.



<sup>6</sup> This 21% is made up of the 32% children, 40% teenagers and 15% adults. Lynne Taylor, "Children in Baptist Churches 2020" (Baptist Churches of New Zealand, 2020), 1.



# A **ViSiON** FOR BAPTIST CHURCHES

**T**he following vision statements are designed to start you thinking about what you want to see in the lives of the children in your church and community. They incorporate the ways that we are called to value children through both the words and example of Jesus, and the exhortation found in Deuteronomy. To use a line from a famous Baptist pastor, we “have a dream...”

## **IMAGINE A CHURCH WHERE EVERY CHILD:**

- Knows they matter to God.
- Has non-parental adults who also mentor and support them.
- Feels valued, welcomed, and has a sense of belonging within their faith community.
- Understands their part in God's “Big Story”.

## **IMAGINE A CHURCH WHERE EVERY FAMILY:**

- Models an intentional and transparent faith through the everyday rhythms of life.
- Passes on that faith.
- Serves together bringing gospel renewal both within the faith community and beyond.
- Is seeking to be salt and light in their neighbourhood and community.

## **IMAGINE CHURCHES THAT:**

- See children as fellow pilgrims on the faith journey.
- Value intergenerational learning.
- Partner with and empower parents in the spiritual nurture of their children.
- Are intentional about missional initiatives with both children and families.

What are the **Values** that would underpin a **ViSiON** like this?

What are your **Values** and what might a **ViSiON** that fits your **context** look like?





# THE foundations

**B**ased on this vision for the church and an understanding of the place and value of children we have identified four foundational areas that we believe churches need to incorporate into their ministry and missional practices in order for effective faith nurture to occur. These have come as the result of many years of learning, practice and observation.

In 1 Kings 5:17 Solomon called for special stones to be hewn as the foundations for the temple in Jerusalem. In the same way that these stones were crafted to be the foundations for the temple, we see the foundations we outline as underpinning your children and family ministry structure and context. Your faith community does not look like any other and your people and their circumstances will call for a contextual solution, so decide which this will look like in practice for you, based on these foundations.

We have based these foundations on what...

- ...Scripture teaches
- ...theologians and key voices are saying
- ...research shows
- ...current best practice indicates.

The diagram on the following page gives a pictorial interpretation of how these foundations are to underpin your ministry and mission practices. Whether you are a small, large, urban or rural church your foundations can still be

the same. It is in how you create and develop your ministry and mission that differences will develop.

This booklet gives a brief overview of the four foundations, the underlying basis for each, along with links to relevant resources. It is designed to be a starting place for further discussion and a catalyst for renewed action.

We see this as a living document that will change as God challenges and moulds us. We look forward to many years of adapting these concepts with our faith communities as you seek to grow lifelong disciples.

For more detailed information, or a list of books and research papers, please email [childrensministry@baptist.org.nz](mailto:childrensministry@baptist.org.nz).

**“At the king’s  
command they  
removed from the  
quarry large blocks  
of high-grade stone  
to provide a  
foundation  
of dressed stone for  
the temple.”**

**1 Kings 5:17**

# foundations STRUCTURE

## YOUR MINISTRY & MISSION CONTEXT



*excellence*  
IN CHILDREN'S  
MINISTRY & MISSION



*church  
& home*  
PARTNERSHIP



*inter-  
generational*  
COMMUNITY



*integrated  
strategy*  
FOR FAITH  
FORMATION

## THE FOUNDATIONS

### VISION

### BELIEFS & VALUES



The diagram on the left shows how faith communities can use these foundational areas as the basis for contextualised ministry and mission. It outlines a four stage process:

- **Beliefs and values**—these underpin all that we do as churches.
- **Vision**—the vision of the church will grow out of its beliefs and values and will be the driver of ministry and mission.
- **The Foundations**—each of the four areas are based on the vision of the church; i.e. in some contexts certain foundations will be favoured over others.
- **Context**—the outworking of each Foundation will be dependent on the context of the church and will be personalised to fit their needs.

## THE FOUNDATIONS UNPACKED

### 1. Excellence in Children's Ministry and Mission

Children are precious to God and need the best we can give them.

### 2. Church & Home Partnership

The church acknowledges the home as the primary place of spiritual nurture.

### 3. Intergenerational Community

The church intentionally facilitates ways for intergenerational spiritual formation and relationships to occur.

### 4. Integrated Strategy for Faith Formation

The church is a place where all ministries, alongside the family, work together with the same end in mind—faith formation.

It is important to remember that the outworking of each of these areas is contextualised to fit the people and communities to whom each church is called. This means that no two churches will look or be the same. They may also favour some areas over others for certain seasons. For example, a church that has few families and children may want to give extra focus to intergenerational relationships. A church with a lot of young families may want to focus on the partnership between the church and the home. A church with a disconnection between children's ministry and youth ministry may want to focus on developing an integrated strategy.

The following pages give further details on each Foundation and provide extra links, resources and information.



# excellence

IN CHILDREN'S  
MINISTRY & MISSION

## FOUNDATION 1

### Scriptural basis:

Matthew 18:1-14,  
John 21:15,  
Mark 10:13-16,  
Luke 18:15-17,  
Psalm 139:13-18



Children are precious to God and need the best we can give them. This involves churches giving and encouraging training, financing, staffing as needed, and profile in the adult congregation to those that lead these ministries, whether they are church, community focused or a missional initiative. By encouraging excellence in children's ministry and mission we are affirming the place of children in the faith community, and in our missional initiatives. They can be at risk of being either forgotten or sidelined; by giving focus to children we make them both visible and valued.

Excellence can be subjective so this should be seen as an aspirational goal. The purpose is to give the best we can to our children.

To achieve this goal the Children's Ministry (CM) will have:

- A balanced approach to teaching knowledge of God and faith, and behavioural expectations, alongside nurturing the development of a personal relationship with God.
- Opportunities for children to connect intimately, personally and regularly with our Triune God.
- A set of lenses through which ministry choices are made: what do you believe about children and how does that impact what you do? These potential lenses could be: We believe that children need...
  - To personally connect with God—in order for faith to grow deep roots.
  - To have opportunities to flex their spiritual muscles (through service, applying faith, prayer, worship).
  - To belong to an intergenerational community of faith.

- To develop a healthy Christian worldview and theological understanding in the context of God's Big Story.
- To have others who nurture their faith development.
- Missional initiatives that ensure the church is reaching children in the local community with the gospel message e.g. ICONZ.
- Scripture taught within the meta-narrative of God's redemptive plan and our response to it (the 'God's Big Story' approach).
- A positive peer community.
- An intentional approach to spiritual nurture within each community outreach group and an emphasis on seeing a church and community interface (an integrated strategy).
- Opportunities for children to serve in mission (both local and global) and respond with compassion.
- Peak experiences for both ministry and missional purposes—these may be camps, special Saturday programmes, holiday programmes, concerts etc.
- A robust Safety Management System—see BCFM Safety First manual.
- A strong volunteer training and nurturing value.

**A shepherd was asked how he managed to raise such a fine looking flock of sheep.**

**“That's easy,” he said.**

**“I just take extra good care of the lambs!”**

# DEPENDING ON YOUR CONTEXT AND SIZE THIS MAY INCLUDE:

## MINISTRY

- Sunday programmes—either church or community based.
- Weekday programmes—either church or community based.

## MISSION

- Both traditional and non-traditional forms of gathered church; e.g. Messy Church.
- Child evangelism and community outreach events: ICONZ, IFG, mainly music, holiday programmes, Light Parties, International Children's Day, before/after school care, programmes at local schools, playgroup, Toy Library etc.

## THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Are the 'tribes', or groups where people have belonging (e.g. mainly music, playgroup, children's ministry) overlapping so that relationships are developing? This is especially important if you want connections between families to make connections with church families.
- Inconsistent church attendance and the impact on spiritual nurture; e.g. split families, sport on Sundays.
- Overlaps between children's and family ministry; e.g. pastoral care.



## SUGGESTED READING

- Starting Out in Children's Ministry - *Alison Mitchell*
- Children's Ministry in the Way of Jesus - *Ivy Beckwith and David Csinos*
- Changing Lives: The essential guide to ministry with children and families - *Mark Griffiths*
- Bridging Theory and Practice in Children's Spirituality - *Mimi Larson, Robert Keeley editors*
- Children Matter - *Scottie May et al*
- Resilient: Child Discipleship and the Future of the Church - *Valerie Bell*
- Formational Children's Ministry - *Ivy Beckwith*
- Dreaming of More for the Next Generation - *Michelle Anthony*
- Children's Spirituality - *Rebecca Nye*
- Shaped by God - *Robert Keeley, editor*
- "To Such as These": The Child in Baptist Thought - *Andrew Goodliff*

## OTHER RESOURCES

- Safety First manual—available, alongside training, through your regional Children and Families Coach or email [childrensministry@baptist.org.nz](mailto:childrensministry@baptist.org.nz).
- BCFM has developed a set of Faith Formation charts and posters, designed to illustrate what is needed at each age and stage for the child, family and the church as a whole. You can view these on our BCFM website.
- Resource Library—books, DVDs, training material and curricula are available for loan. See BCFM website.
- Contact the Regional CFM Team for information on regional coaching, cluster groups and training in your area.
- Carey Baptist College offers courses in both Children's Ministry and Family Ministry. You can check the courses and qualifications they offer at: [carey.ac.nz](http://carey.ac.nz).

## WEBSITES:

- [baptistcfm.org.nz](http://baptistcfm.org.nz)
- [here2stay.org.au](http://here2stay.org.au)
- [growministries.org.au](http://growministries.org.au)
- [strandz.org.nz](http://strandz.org.nz)
- [athomeandchurch.org.nz](http://athomeandchurch.org.nz)
- [sunz.org.nz](http://sunz.org.nz)
- [max7.org](http://max7.org)
- [childrensministry.com](http://childrensministry.com)
- [orangeblogs.org/orangeleaders](http://orangeblogs.org/orangeleaders)
- [nzcmmn.org.nz](http://nzcmmn.org.nz)
- [barnabasinchurches.org.uk](http://barnabasinchurches.org.uk)

**“Children are nurtured most effectively in communities where they feel a sense of belonging, where they are able to participate in its life and ministry and where adult members model a vital faith.”**

**Dr Scottie May**





# CHURCH & HOME partnership

## FOUNDATION 2

### Scriptural basis:

Deuteronomy 6,  
Deuteronomy 32:44-47,  
Joshua 24:15,  
2 Chronicles 20:13,  
Psalm 78,  
Ephesians 6:1-4

**T**he family is the most powerful influence in the faith formation of children and teenagers. Parents are the first educators of their children and provide the foundation for spiritual life. As congregations and leaders our mandate is to help strengthen and expand that faith formation. Family life has changed significantly in recent decades and it is important that we move forward and rethink how we can assist and encourage families to continue growing in their faith together.

When the church and the home partner together two things happen, the church acknowledges the home as the primary place of spiritual nurture and families value the importance of the faith community in helping to nurture that faith. They work together to see children grow spiritually, develop mentoring relationships and learn to take an active part in the life of the faith community. The church's role is to provide support and nurture to families as they undertake these tasks. It also provides a community to which the whole family can belong, share in, and live out the Christian faith. This partnership sees spiritual nurture as something that is home-centred and church-assisted, rather than church-centred and home-assisted. This is a shift in mindset from how we have often operated in the past.

Not all children in a faith community will come from homes where faith is nurtured. Children who are coming from non-churched families can be incorporated and included into other families within the church community, who will then look upon these children as part of their 'spiritual' family. This will require training and valuing.

The aim of a church and home partnership is to align the church and

the home so that we are accomplishing God's design for generational discipleship. This means that faith is integrated into family identity and practice. "Faith practised at home says this is not just something we do on Sundays, but equally, faith practised in the context of the church says this way of faithful living is not restricted to only our family."<sup>1</sup> Together the faith community and family can intentionally enable children to experience what it means to be a disciple of Christ. As Ivy Beckwith says, "A church program can't spiritually form a child, but a family living in an intergenerational community of faith can."

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1. Goodliff., "To Such as These", 4:65.

**"Most certainly  
father and mother are  
apostles, bishops  
& priests  
to their children, for it is they  
who make them acquainted  
with the Gospel."**

Martin Luther

**"Parents are the primary  
faith teachers,  
mentors &  
role models  
for their children with the  
church as a reinforcement—  
not replacement—of the  
parent's duties."**

Rich Melheim

# DEPENDING ON YOUR CONTEXT AND SIZE THIS MAY INCLUDE:

## MINISTRY AND MISSION

- A faith at home focus; e.g. Faith@Home or similar events.
- Rites of passage or age milestone celebrations.
- A Sunday curriculum component that involves the home.
- A set of lenses through which ministry choices are made: what do you believe about families and how does that impact what you do?  
*Potential lenses could be:*  
*We believe that families need...*
  - To personally connect with God.
  - To have opportunities to flex their spiritual muscles.
  - To belong to an intergenerational faith community.
  - To have a growing and developing theological understanding.
  - To have others who nurture their faith, and journey with them.
- Intergenerational/family home groups/life groups.

- Service opportunities and mission trips where families can serve together and develop their 'faith muscles'.
- Spiritual parenting courses.
- Parenting courses; e.g. Toolbox, Alpha's The Parenting Children Course, Parenting for Faith.
- Marriage courses; e.g. Family Life, Alpha Marriage.
- Pastoral care of families; e.g. divorce recovery, blended families.

## THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- Ethnic diversity—the differing needs and issues of migrant families.
- Spiritual parents for children from non-churched homes.
- Different shapes and forms of family; e.g. grandparents raising children, blended families, families with parents who are not married, homosexual couples with children.
- Family breakdown and dysfunction.
- Irregular attendance or connection with a faith community.



## SUGGESTED READING

### Books for Leaders

- Church + Home, Take it Home  
- *Mark Holmen*
- Think Orange - *Reggie Joiner*
- It Takes a Church to Raise a Parent  
- *Rachel Turner*
- Parenting as a Church Leader  
- *Rachel Turner*
- Family Ministry Field Guide  
- *Timothy Paul Jones*
- The Legacy Path - *Brian Haynes*
- Shaped by God - *Robert Keeley*
- Dreaming of More for the Next Generation - *Michelle Anthony*
- Connecting Church and Home  
- *Tim Kimmel*
- Family Ministry: A Comprehensive Guide - *Diana Garland*
- Welcoming Children  
- *Joyce Ann Mercer*
- Families at the Center of Faith Formation - *John Roberto et al*

### Books for Parents

- Parenting Beyond Your Capacity  
- *Reggie Joiner and Carey Nieuwhof*
- Parenting Children for a Life of Faith Omnibus - *Rachel Turner*
- Spiritual Parenting - *Michelle Anthony*
- Becoming a Spiritually Healthy Family - *Michelle Anthony*
- Sticky Faith - *Kara Powell*
- Mark Holmen's Faith at Home series
- Holding Your Family Together  
- *Rich Melheim*
- Graced Based Parenting  
- *Tim Kimmel*

## OTHER RESOURCES

- BCFM has some resources for families to use in the home. View these on the BCFM website.
- We have created a set of three age stage posters designed to help parents with faith formation at home. These can also be viewed on the BCFM website.
- We have a variety of parenting courses and resources available for download or loan that can be used in either small groups settings or classes:
  - Faith@Home - *BCFM*
  - Parenting for Faith - *Rachel Turner*
  - Raising Faith - *Care for the Family*
  - Spiritual Parenting  
- *Michelle Anthony*
  - Active Discipling the Family toolkit

## WEBSITES:

- [baptistcfm.org.nz](http://baptistcfm.org.nz)
- [parentingforfaith.org](http://parentingforfaith.org)
- [here2stay.org.au](http://here2stay.org.au)
- [growingfaith.com.au](http://growingfaith.com.au)
- [theparentingplace.org.nz](http://theparentingplace.org.nz)
- [faithbox.co.nz](http://faithbox.co.nz)
- [stickyfaith.org](http://stickyfaith.org)
- [orangeparents.org](http://orangeparents.org)
- [familyministry.co.uk](http://familyministry.co.uk)
- [kitchentable.org.uk](http://kitchentable.org.uk)
- [skylight.org.nz](http://skylight.org.nz)
- [parentingforfaith.org](http://parentingforfaith.org)

**“Of all the things you do as  
a leader in Christ's church,  
is anything more important  
than helping to bring  
Christ & Christlike living  
into the centre of  
every home?”**

Mark Holmen





# inter- generational COMMUNITY

## FOUNDATION 3

### Scriptural basis:

OT and NT faith communities -  
see Deuteronomy and Acts,

Exodus 10:7-11,  
Joshua 8:34-35,  
2 Chronicles 20:13,  
Nehemiah 12:43,  
Psalm 148:12-14,  
Luke 2:41-52

Faith communities take seriously the inclusion of all in the body of Christ. We are all made in the image of God. That means that we value each other; through our presence and through our contribution. We begin with the understanding that our faith is shaped by those younger and older than us—all are welcome. We anticipate that God will speak to us through the community of faith, not just its adult members. An intergenerational faith community recognises that we can all learn and grow together. It declares that we all have something to contribute for the benefit of the whole. We are members of the body of Christ as described in 1 Corinthians 12, regardless of age.<sup>1</sup>

Faith communities are one of the few places where all generations can come together on a regular interactive basis. Yet, the societal trend toward age segregation has also entered churches. Age-based classes and separate worship services for adults, teens and children tend to separate age groups from each other, so that many people experience their faith as age-segregated throughout their lives. While, at times this is appropriate and needed, it has been at the detriment of intergenerational relationships and engagement.

Scripture presents coming to know God, as both a family and community-based process. God's directives for his people in the OT clearly identify the Israelites as a relational community—children were not just included, they were drawn in and assimilated into the whole community with a deep sense of belonging. The directives for feasts and celebrations illustrate this point

best. All of Israel participated, from the youngest to the oldest. The purpose was to remind them of who they were, who God was, and what God had done for his people in ages past. As children and teens danced, sang, ate, listened to the stories, and asked questions, they came to know who they were and who they were to be.

The early church was also a multigenerational entity. All generations met together, worshipping, breaking bread, praying, and ministering to one another in the context of the home (Acts 2,4,16). The Ephesians are an example of people who engaged their children in the life of the faith community (Ephesians 6:1-3).

Today we are still called to be this type of community. A place where children, teens and adults know each other and value generational relationships. This will involve initiating intergenerational opportunities in both weekend and weekday life. Being in the same building or multigenerational room is only the first step. For relationship to develop, all ages need to be able to contribute, interact, share, serve and lead.

As children are assimilated with a deep sense of belonging into the body of Christ, they will make sense of their experiences with God. They will see their parents and others worship, pray with and for each other, minister to others, and be ministered to. They will come to see that all things in their lives are under God. They will be privy to the normal Christian life as lived by the significant adults in their lives. And they will come to know God better.<sup>2</sup>

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1 Osborne, Annette – Connect article, May 2016

2 Catterton Allen, Holly, Reversing Age Segregation web article

# DEPENDING ON YOUR CONTEXT AND SIZE THIS MAY INCLUDE:

## MINISTRY AND MISSION

- The development of a culture where all ages are valued and welcomed—this may require a DNA change!
- Regular times and events where all ages are mixing together, learning together, worshipping together and serving together. This may include:
  - Regular all age worship times either on a Sunday morning or at other times during the week. Keep in mind that children and adults:
    1. Belong together at the feet of Jesus.
    2. Need to gather together for worship on a regular basis.
    3. Need to work together to order their worship in ways that reflect and enhance their mutual belonging and togetherness in Christ.
  - Intergenerational home groups.
  - Social events, family camps, Passover dinners, picnics, hospitality.
  - Mentoring/life coaching relationships.
  - Service projects and opportunities where all ages are present.
  - Mission trips and events.
  - Messy Church services.
- Your current culture and its response to generational mixing.
- Siloed church ministries.
- Ethnic diversity—what can we learn from other cultures who mix together more naturally?
- The de-centralisation of Sunday morning as the main focus of our community's life and interaction—how could we be doing life together outside of Sunday morning?
- An awareness of how healthy intergenerational relationships should look.
- Re-imagining traditional forms of church to be age inclusive.
- **Remember, this is counter-cultural and will not be easy or quick to change.**

## SUGGESTED READING

- BCFM booklet, "Helping Your Church Become More Intergenerational" - *available on our website*
- Intergenerational Christian Formation - *Holly Catterton Allen & Christine Lawton Ross*
- Faithfull Generation - *Children Matter*
- Collide: Exploring Intergenerational Ministry - *Tammy Tolmen*
- Generations Together - *John Roberto*

## THINGS TO CONSIDER:

**“Intergenerational ministry is a philosophy of ministry rather than a programme—a way of being rather than doing.”**

Grow Ministries

*et al*

- Shaped by God - *Robert Keeley, editor*
- InterGenerate - *Holly Allen, editor*
- Messy Church Theology - *George Lings et al*
- Children, Families and God - *Lynn Alexander*
- Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey - *Catherine Stonehouse*
- Engage all Generations - *Cory Seibel, editor*

## OTHER RESOURCES

- Along with the booklet mentioned on the previous page, there are also a variety of websites, books and resources available on developing an intergenerational approach and running all-age services. See the website or email: [childrensministry@baptist.org.nz](mailto:childrensministry@baptist.org.nz).
- Messy Church—see the Messy Church website or visit a local church that is running Messy Church services.

## WEBSITES

- [baptistcfm.org.nz](http://baptistcfm.org.nz)
- [messychurch.org.nz](http://messychurch.org.nz)
- [strandz.org.nz](http://strandz.org.nz)
- [muddychurch.co.uk](http://muddychurch.co.uk)
- [growministries.org.au](http://growministries.org.au)
- [intergenerationalfaith.com](http://intergenerationalfaith.com)
- [barnabasinchurches.org.uk/all-age](http://barnabasinchurches.org.uk/all-age)
- [lifelongfaith.com/intergenerational-faith-formation](http://lifelongfaith.com/intergenerational-faith-formation)







# integrated strategy

FOR FAITH  
FORMATION

## FOUNDATION 4

### Scriptural basis:

Matthew 28:16-20,  
1 Corinthians 12:12-27,  
Ephesians 4:1-16,  
1 Peter 2:1-5,  
Hebrews 5:12-14,  
Philippians 1:9-11,  
Colossians 1:10

**P**artnering with God in his mission and ministry in the world is the task of faith communities. By faithfully valuing each other, being committed to one another's faith formation and by serving and being in unity, all those connected to and impacted by the church will know Christ's love.

The best approach to develop this is to support families through the different ages and stages with a strategy that works seamlessly throughout childhood and teen years (and hopefully through to adulthood, once you have this established). It means that we seek to understand what faith formation looks like from birth through to death.

Having an integrated strategy for faith formation means that we know and understand what is needed at each age and stage of life. We pray, read, talk about and plan what faith formation looks like and requires e.g. what preschoolers need to know, understand and experience about God, his world and our place in it, is different to what 9 year olds, or 14 year olds will need. Having an integrated strategy means that as a leadership team we work together to understand what is required and how each stage feeds into, aids and compliments the other. It also means that we look closely at how we transition children and their families from one ministry area to the next i.e. from Children's Min. to Intermediate Min., from Intermediate Min. to Youth Min., and from Youth Min. to adult church. This seamless transitioning will help children, youth and adults alike to feel that they are still welcomed, connected and valued.

The development of this type of strategy will ideally involve children's, youth and other ministries working in harmony and

as a team, with each still holding their own area of expertise and responsibility. They will have frequent conversations and will seek involvement, where possible, with each other's ministry area. This approach should expand to a level where each ministry values each other and is working at breaking down the disconnect that can develop. When ministry teams value and work for the good of each other, they are more likely to achieve the end goal to which they are all working—growing life-long followers of Christ.

Establishing an integrated strategy for faith formation will have the long term benefit of supporting the faith formation of children, teens, their families and other adults and also demonstrate the model of love and unity to which we are called.

**“If the church is haemorrhaging young people, we have to ask ourselves if it's because we address the issue of discipleship too late. Is the spiritual nurture we provide for our young people neither consistent enough nor rigorous enough to provide them with the means to have a strong & stable faith in a time when there are many challenges to the authenticity and relevance of our beliefs?”**

**Jason Gardner**

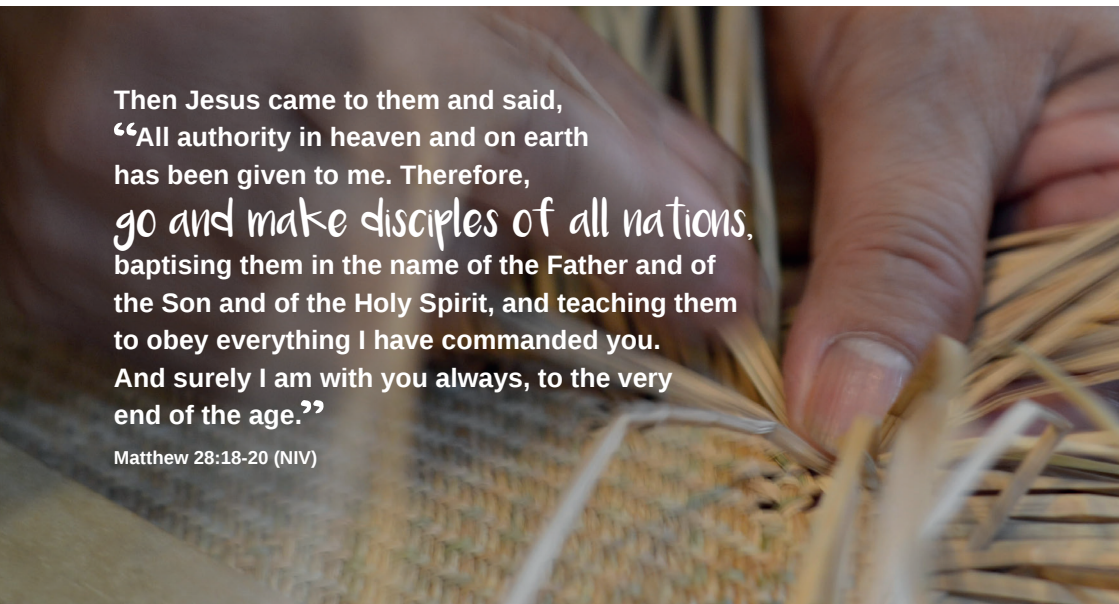
# DEPENDING ON YOUR CONTEXT AND SIZE THIS MAY INCLUDE:

## MINISTRY AND MISSION

- Pastoral staff and ministry leaders meeting regularly to develop and grow a strategy for lifelong faith formation, to encourage partnerships between ministries and to pray together.
- Developing an intentional partnership between youth and children's ministries so that faith formation is integrated.
- Designing a plan for faith formation that takes into account all ages and stages, ethnic diversity and learning capabilities.
- A strategy for how to transition people from one ministry to the next.
- Youth and children's leaders taking an interest and investing in each other's ministries and planning and running events together as appropriate, rather than competing for resources such as leaders and space.

## THINGS TO CONSIDER:

- How could you take into account different learning needs and abilities?
- In what ways does ethnic diversity impact faith formation?
- How frequently should leaders meet together?
- Who takes responsibility for the partnership?
- How do you get all ministry teams on the same page?
- Transitioning between children's and youth ministries.
- How to include non-churched families into our ministries.



Then Jesus came to them and said,  
“All authority in heaven and on earth  
has been given to me. Therefore,  
*go and make disciples of all nations,*  
baptising them in the name of the Father and of  
the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them  
to obey everything I have commanded you.  
And surely I am with you always, to the very  
end of the age.”

Matthew 28:18-20 (NIV)

## SUGGESTED READING

- Re-imagining Faith Formation for the 21st Century - *John Roberto*
- Resilient: Child Discipleship and the Future of the Church - *Valerie Bell*
- Families at the Centre of Faith Formation - *John Roberto et al*
- The Seasons of Adult Faith Formation - *Ed Gordon et al*
- Think Orange - *Reggie Joiner*
- Lead Small and Lead Small Culture (two books) - *Reggie Joiner et al*
- The 7 Habits of Highly Effective Churches - *Andy Stanley*
- Shaped by God - *Robert Keeley, editor*
- Growing Young - *Kara Powell*

## OTHER RESOURCES

- BCFM has developed a set of Faith Formation charts and posters, designed to illustrate what is needed at each age and stage for the child, family and the church as a whole. You can view these on our BCFM website.
- For ideas on ways that you can help children transition from children's to youth ministry contact your Regional Coach or email: [childrensministry@baptist.org.nz](mailto:childrensministry@baptist.org.nz).

## WEBSITES

- [vibrantfaith.org](http://vibrantfaith.org)
- [lifelongfaith.com](http://lifelongfaith.com)
- [faithformationlearningexchange.net](http://faithformationlearningexchange.net)
- [legacymilestones.com](http://legacymilestones.com)
- [stickyfaith.org](http://stickyfaith.org)
- The Think Orange Group:  
[thinkorange.org](http://thinkorange.org) | [leadsmall.org](http://leadsmall.org) | [theparentcue.org](http://theparentcue.org)

**“When we use the phrase integrate strategy, we are suggesting that your plan of action should synchronize with that of others. It implies that you are combining multiple influences, primarily those in the home and church, working off the same page for the sake of what you want to accomplish in the hearts of the next generation.**

**An integrated strategy means that leaders and parents are  
leading with the same end in mind.”**

Think Orange



# next STEPS

Our hope is that after reading this booklet you will be inspired to take action, however, we know that working out where to start can be daunting so we have listed a few recommended next steps:

## 1. DISCUSS & PRAY

Discuss this document with your Children's Ministry/ Children & Family Ministry leader/pastor, or if that is you, with your senior pastor. Pray together about the next steps.

## 2. WRITE

If you don't already have one, think about, pray, discuss and write up a vision for the children and families in your church and local community. Page 6 has some great ideas. This vision will become the bedrock onto which you place your foundations and build effective ministry and mission.

## 3. EVALUATE

Look at the four foundations and evaluate each one for your faith community. Be honest—there are no report cards! The Health Gauge on the following page is designed to give you a quick starting point. Once you have done this yourself, do the evaluation exercise with other invested leaders or pastors. Remember, ministry is a combined effort and you want everyone to be on board.

## 4. PLAN

Based on these evaluations decide which foundation you think is either the easiest to begin with or the one most needed, then make a plan for how you will start to build or further develop that area. At this point you may like to talk with others—the local Regional Coach (see website for details), another local church. Don't journey alone; we are all in this together.

## 5. SHARE

Share the plan with your team and your faith community. Then when you are ready, start thinking about and planning which of the other foundations you could begin to build on or further develop.

# HEALTH gauge

Assessment is an important part of moving forward. Use the gauge below as a quick tool to help you evaluate how well you think your faith community is currently doing in each of the four foundational areas—the key gives an idea for how to score each area. But remember this is just a starting point; you will need to do plenty of thinking and talking about each foundation in order to accurately rate your ministry.

For extra information to help with the evaluation process and for one page assessments for each foundation email [childrensministry@baptist.org.nz](mailto:childrensministry@baptist.org.nz).

## GAUGE KEY

0 Not happening

40 Making some progress

80 In high gear

20 Getting started

60 Steadily moving

## SCORE EACH FOUNDATION SEPARATELY

## SCORE

1 EXCELLENCE IN CHILDREN'S MINISTRY & MISSION	
2 CHURCH & HOME PARTNERSHIP	
3 INTERGENERATIONAL COMMUNITY	
4 INTEGRATED STRATEGY FOR FAITH FORMATION	

Once you have completed this assessment we recommend that you either start with the steps on the previous page, or make contact with a Regional Coach or email below.

We are committed to journeying with you as you seek ways to grow life-long disciples. We offer a variety of services that can assist you as you take these next steps in building effective ministry and mission. These services include: coaching, consultancy, training, resourcing and networking.

The BCFM Regional Team details are on our website [baptistcfm.org.nz](http://baptistcfm.org.nz) or send an email to [childrensministry@baptist.org.nz](mailto:childrensministry@baptist.org.nz).

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Tenth edition | October 2021

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