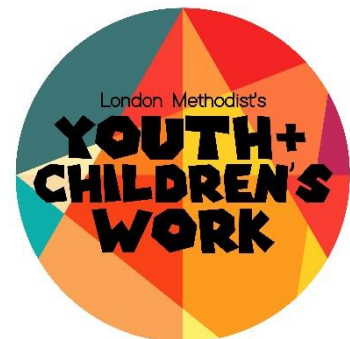




Tune In Session Guide #2: Being the Body of Christ



What is 3Generate 365?

3Generate 365 is a year-round process of engagement with children and young people in their local setting to enable them listen to God, discern what God is saying, deepen their faith and be confident in being evangelists sharing their faith with others.

Following 3Generate 365 the intention is that children and young people will attend the event in 2021, which they will have had the opportunity to co-create. This will be a culmination of their listening and discerning and their experiences of responding to God's call.

The 3Generate 365 Theme:

3Generate 365 will explore topics of prayer, being one body in Christ, prophecy and covenant.

Tune In! God is always speaking and is always there and we are 'tuning in' to what God may be saying to us. We can only have an authentic prophetic voice by noticing what we are seeing and hearing from God.

We will then be 'in Tune' for the 3Generate 2021 Assembly, where we will explore what it means to be in tune with each other and with God and how we all have a part to play as members of the Body of Christ.

How to Use these guides:

These 'Tune In' session guides are designed to be used within your own pattern of meetings with children's and/or youth groups. So, you will not need to organise and attend an additional meeting, just use this hours' worth of material, when you usually meet with your children's and/or youth groups.

I am producing six standalone session plans in total, with the first one being available to download from the beginning of March. With the second one coming out the beginning of April and so on for May and June. July's session will be linked to the London District Theme of Woven: God's Story, Your Story, Every Story. Plus, an additional session plan entitled 'On the Margins' where the young people explore what it means to be 'on the margins' of church and society, who is on the margins and what is God calling you to do about it? The idea being that each month you will run the 'Tune In' session with your children's or Youth group (or both) at a time suitable for you (they are crafted so they can be run online or face2face). If you would like me to facilitate one of the online 'Tune Ins' you are planning on running, then please do let me know and I'd be happy to attend.

They are created in such a way that you hear the voice of the children and young people. You then make a note of what the children and young people said during the session. these 'voices' are then e-mailed to me Brian Smith – Brian@MethodistLondon.org.uk They are then forwarded to the 3Generate Planning team for use at the 3Generate 2021 Youth Assembly.

These guides are based on the material available in the Toolbox section on the 3Generate 365 website and can be found here: <https://www.methodist.org.uk/our-work/children-youth-family-ministry/3generate/3generate-365/3generate-365-toolbox-for-group-leaders/>

Session #2: Being the Body of Christ

Ice Breaker Introduction:

Choose one of the games below that best suits your group. This session is all about what it means to be the body of Christ. This starter activity will open up the idea that messages can be hard to hear or understand.

Option 1: Church in pictures

You will need photographs or pictures of different churches and participants will need paper, pens and pencils. Ideally the photos should be a mixture of the outside and inside of church buildings, as well as worship and other activities that take place in church buildings. (Google Images might be the best place to start)

Show the young people the photographs of the churches. Give them one minute to look at the photographs and then remove the photographs from sight. Invite the group to draw what they can remember.

Next, ask everyone to share their drawings with the whole group. What aspects did they focus on and why? Draw out the fact that people often regard the church as being a building. Whilst the buildings are of importance, the church is actually about the Christian believers who gather there, church being the people not the building.

Option 2: Perceptions of Church (for older groups)

Take a large piece of paper; draw a line down the middle to divide it in half and then draw the outline of two churches, one in each half. (You could use one piece of paper and drawing for the whole group to focus on, or alternatively each young person could draw their own).

Around the drawing of the first church, ask the young people to write words that might describe what the general public think church is (particularly people who never go to church). Inside the other church drawing, write words that church-goers might use to describe church. Then discuss with the group what they think is correct, incorrect and what might be missing.

Note: If you are using Zoom then use the Whiteboard feature to do this activity.

Opening Activity:

This section will draw out that the Church is a community of Christian believers. Each person has a role to play, everyone supports the other members of the community – no one is more important than another, but without working together and playing their part the work of the Church will not be done.

Home-made orchestra:

Encourage the children/young people to create musical instruments from some everyday rubbish that either has been gathered beforehand, or that they have lying around at home, such as margarine tubs, elastic bands, cardboard tubes, old saucepans, tin foil, pens that click – anything that would make different noises.

Alternatively, instead of creating instruments, invite the group to produce a musical accompaniment by using body percussion, for example stamping feet, patting legs, clapping, clicking, or an array of sounds that could come from the mouth!

Allow them time to practice playing their instrument or making their noise. After the count of three they all make their noise or play their instrument for one minute. (It might produce a terrible sound – that's ok!)

Then ask the group to start with one person playing and then everyone gradually joins in, one at a time, listening to the sounds and the rhythm and trying to complement that rhythm. Hopefully by the end there may be a better sound than there had been first time round.

Follow up with a discussion:

- Were all the sounds different?
- Did everybody play at the same volume?
- What does it mean to play in harmony?
- Would it have mattered if everyone had chosen the same instrument or sound?
- The Church could be described as being like an orchestra. How could an orchestra and a church community be similar? What could a church learn from an orchestra to help them flourish?

Bible Study: One Body, with many members:

Read Together 1 Corinthians 12 v 12-31 from the Message Version. So, ensure everyone can see the text, if using Zoom then you can screen share the text in the appendix. Alternatively, If you have a young person who can 'dramatically' read this out, that would work well.

12-13 You can easily enough see how this kind of thing works by looking no further than your own body. Your body has many parts—limbs, organs, cells—but no matter how many parts you can name, you're still one body. It's exactly the same with Christ. By means of his one Spirit, we all said good-bye to our partial and piecemeal lives. We each used to independently call our own shots, but then we entered into a large and integrated life in which he has the final say in everything. (This is what we proclaimed in word and action when we were baptized.) Each of us is now a part of his resurrection body, refreshed and sustained at one fountain—his Spirit—where we all come to drink. The old labels we once used to identify ourselves—labels like Jew or Greek, slave or free—are no longer useful. We need something larger, more comprehensive.

14-18 I want you to think about how all this makes you more significant, not less. A body isn't just a single part blown up into something huge. It's all the different-but-similar parts arranged and functioning together. If Foot said, "I'm not elegant like Hand, embellished with rings; I guess I don't belong to this body," would that make it so? If Ear said, "I'm not beautiful like Eye, transparent and expressive; I don't deserve a place on the head," would you want to remove it from the body? If the body was all eye, how could it hear? If all ear, how could it smell? As it is, we see that God has carefully placed each part of the body right where he wanted it.

19-24 But I also want you to think about how this keeps your significance from getting blown up into self-importance. For no matter how significant you are, it is only because of what you are a part of. An enormous eye or a gigantic hand wouldn't be a body, but a monster. What we have is one body with many parts, each its proper size and in its proper place. No part is important on its own. Can you imagine Eye telling Hand, "Get lost; I don't need you"? Or, Head telling Foot, "You're fired; your job has been phased out"? As a matter of fact, in practice it works the other way—the "lower" the part, the more basic, and therefore necessary. You can live without an eye, for instance, but not without a stomach. When it's a part of your own body you are concerned with, it makes no difference whether the part is visible or clothed, higher or lower. You give it dignity and honour just as it is, without comparisons. If anything, you have more concern for the lower parts than the higher. If you had to choose, wouldn't you prefer good digestion to full-bodied hair?

25-26 The way God designed our bodies is a model for understanding our lives together as a church: every part dependent on every other part, the parts we mention and the parts we

don't, the parts we see and the parts we don't. If one part hurts, every other part is involved in the hurt, and in the healing. If one part flourishes, every other part enters into the exuberance.

27-31 You are Christ's body—that's who you are! You must never forget this. Only as you accept your part of that body does your "part" mean anything. You're familiar with some of the parts that God has formed in his church, which is his "body":

apostles

prophets

teachers

miracle workers

healers

helpers

organizers

those who pray in tongues.

But it's obvious by now, isn't it, that Christ's church is a complete Body and not a gigantic, unidimensional Part? It's not all Apostle, not all Prophet, not all Miracle Worker, not all Healer, not all Prayer in Tongues, not all Interpreter of Tongues. And yet some of you keep competing for so-called "important" parts.

But now I want to lay out a far better way for you.

1 Corinthians 12: 12-31 Message

Some things to think about...

What do we mean when we talk about the Church? For many the word 'church' refers to a building where Christians meet together. But the true meaning of the word is something far more exciting. The Church is made up of everyone who has decided to put their trust in and follow Jesus as the Son of God. So if you're a Christian, you're part of a Church that has around 2.5 billion members around the World.

It gets better. This famous passage from 1 Corinthians compares God's Church to a body, and says that each one of those 2.5 billion Christians around the world has an important role to play as part of that Body. That includes you: you are just as important as anyone else in the Church. The Bible makes it clear that every person has special gifts and abilities, and we can use those to come together and do amazing things. No one is unimportant to God.

Questions for reflection:

- What do you think is your most important body part? What would you miss if you lost it?
- What happens to a hand or a foot if it is removed from the rest of the body? Why, then, do you think it might be important for us to be in relationship with other Christians?
- Do you treat everyone in your youth group/Sunday school/local church with equal importance? Do you feel you have equality with everyone else?
- How does it make you feel to know that you are important to God?
- There are several places in the Bible where Jesus is described as the head of the Church – or the head of the Body. What happens when your head is chopped off? Why, then, do you think it is important for us to pray, read our Bible and do other things that help us to have a relationship with Jesus?
- Is there something that you feel God would like you to do, that you could ask for help with from others in the Church?

Activity: Retelling the Bible:

After reading 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 from the Message version of the Bible. Invite/Challenge the group to retell the passage by creating their own rap, poem, Twitter post; drawing out a message about what it means to be the church together.

Share these with the whole group if they want to.

Our Responsibility:

In the New Testament the Greek word 'ecclesia' has generally been translated in two ways. The first is by the term 'assembly', and the second is by the word 'church'. Church is about assembling together; community is at the heart of the church.

Select an activity (or more than one) from the options below that best suit your group and context.

Activity 1: What we think of church:

Copy each of the following sentences onto separate pieces of paper. Write the sentence at the top of the page. If using Zoom then you could use the whiteboard feature or split them into breakout rooms to discuss the questions and then feedback.

- I think meeting with other Christians is important because...
- I think people need to help in church because...

- The worst thing about church is...
- The best thing about church is...
- Our church is important to our community because...
- The word that describes how I feel about church is...

When everyone has had chance to write their responses, share them and discuss with the group. What do they notice?

Activity 2: Church MOT

Every year cars that are over three years old have to undergo an MOT where they are checked by mechanics to ensure they are road worthy and safe.

Imagine that you were doing a similar process for your church to check that your church is a healthy community.

Using the following questions, break the children/young people into small groups (using breakout rooms if meeting online) to have time to reflect upon them and then take some time to discuss their thoughts.

- Do you think that your church works well as a community of Christian believers? If so, why? If not, what needs to change?
- Does your church welcome new members? Do I welcome new people?
- Do you feel a part of the different communities within your church?
- Does your church set a good example to people who live nearby but who do not go to your church? Do you set a good example to others?
- Your local church is one part of the Worldwide Church. Does your church connect with other churches in the world, the global Christian community?
- Would you let your church pass its MOT?
- What can I do to help the church become an even healthier community?

What Do You Give/Receive?

Ensure each person two sheets of paper (if using Zoom then the whiteboard feature would work just as well).

On the first write: 'What I can *give* to my Christian community...'

On the second write 'What I'd like to *receive* from my Christian community...'

Invite everyone to write their ideas on the paper/whiteboard and then discuss the responses and circle the three that the group considers to be the most important.

Please feedback the 'What Do You Give/Receive?' conversation back to me at Brian@methodistlondon.org.uk

Personal Reflection and Challenge:

Reflect on the role that you play in your church, or in your children's/youth group. What other role could you play that would make a difference to that community? When you have thought of something, have a go at it and see what happens.

Pray to Close or what about getting a child or young person to close in prayer

Material adapted from *Partcipate!* (The Bible Reading Fellowship, 2012). Used with permission.

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