

the  
**Message**  
of  
the **Cross**

# Helping children know and encounter God

# Perspectives of Children from Scripture

- **Gifts of God and sources of Joy**

Genesis 21:6-7, John 16:20–21, Psalm 127

- **Sinful Creatures and Moral Agents**

Romans 3:9-10

- **Developing Beings Who Need Instruction and Guidance**

Proverbs 22:6, Ephesians 6:4, Deut. 6:4-9, 31:12–13, Psalm 78

- **Fully Human and Made in the Image of God**

Genesis 1:27

- **Models of Faith and Sources of Revelation**

Matthew 18:2–5, 21:14-17

- **In Need of Justice and Compassion**

Psalm 82:3, James 1:27



# Discuss:

**Where have you seen an emphasis on any of these pictures – how does that play out in church life?**

**How would placing emphasis on any one of these perspectives without the balance of others affect the way we do ministry with children?**





# Knowledge and Encounter



“Faith cannot be taught by any method of instruction... Faith can be inspired within a community of faith, but it cannot be given to one person by another.”

**John Westerhoff**



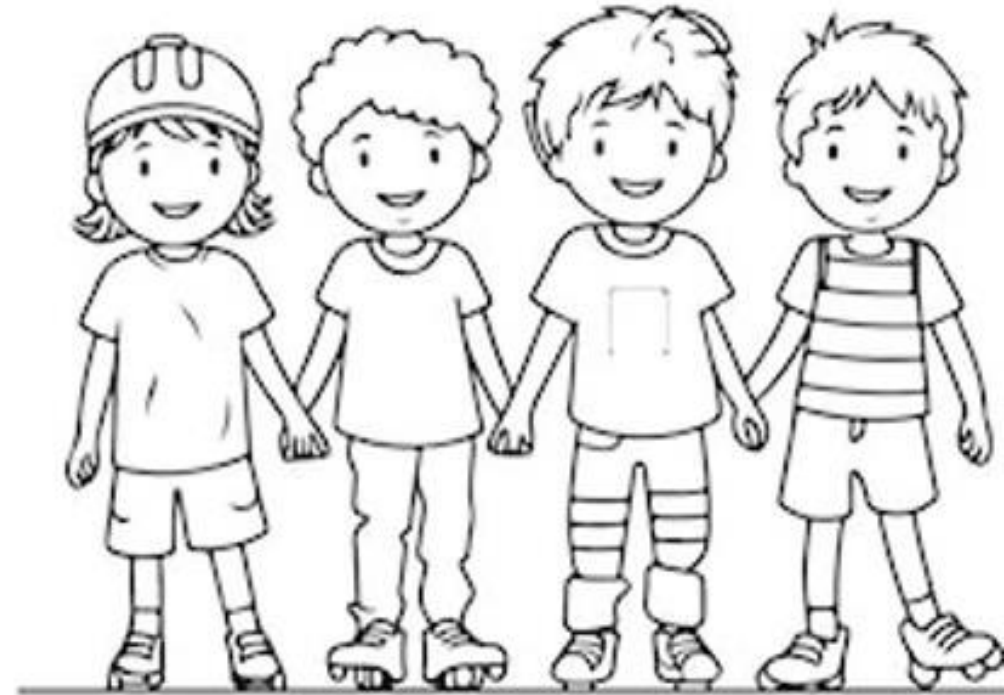
“Our work is not to pour information into our children, but instead to open a space for each child to discover their own understanding of God.”

**Tanya Campen**



"Children are not colouring books. You don't get to fill them in with your favourite colours"

From the novel 'The Kite Runner' by Khaled Hosseini







# Encountering Jesus

- Samaritan Woman
- Zaccheus
- Paul

# Practical Considerations

- Space
- Questions



# Wondering Questions

Genuine wondering questions are those that that we don't know the answer to.

“I wonder what your favourite part of the story is?”

“I wonder if there anything in the story you don't like or you don't understand?”

“I wonder what this story tells us about God?”



# Practical Considerations

- Space
- Questions
- Listening



Young people most commonly feel a sense of belonging when interacting with others rather than being recipients of a ministry or programme.

Church communities need to shift focus from seeing themselves as a child's programme provider to a community that shapes a child's experiences and is shaped by a child's participation, as we are all formed in faith together.

**Rachel Roche**





