

On Your Hearts

Autumn 2016

Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

HEBREWS 12: 1-3 (NIV)

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.

Deuteronomy 6:5-6

On Your Hearts

Official publication of the
Board for Child, Youth
and Family Ministry of
the Lutheran Church of
Australia

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Family Ministry

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**Don't lose
heart or
grow weary,
look to Jesus
for your
strength.
He loves you
and walks
with you.**

I 'found' this passage (Hebrews 12: 1-3) again yesterday and as I reflected on it, it gave me great comfort. It is especially timely as we have just travelled through Easter once again. I wanted to walk through it with you and encourage you.

The first verse reminds us that we are not alone, even though it feels like it sometimes. Whatever journey you are on at this time, whatever your circumstances, people before us have fought the fight and won through Christ! There are many that have walked a path similar to ours and the LORD was faithful – just as He is to you and me.

We are also told that our race has been marked out for us. God has a plan, and keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, we will make it through. Look at what he endured for us on that cross, the shame and ridicule, why would someone go through all of that only to leave us at our darkest hour? It doesn't make sense, he doesn't and won't. Look at those words – 'for the joy set before him'. He knew what would come after he walked up that hill to Golgotha, that's what kept him going – the joy of what was to come.

Therefore, we too walk in that joy. No matter what we go through in this life the joy we have is that we know, because of what Jesus has done (and continues to give to all who call on Him) we will have eternal life in heaven. That, my friends, is the end goal! Don't lose heart or grow weary, look to Jesus for your strength. He loves you and walks with you.

Blessings,

Vicki ☺



GIFTS & TALENTS

A Guiding Word

Please feel free to print and distribute, single copies are available by contacting growministries@lca.org.au



SHARE



In what ways are young people involved in expressing their gifts and talents in your congregation?

Does your congregation have a resource that helps people discover their personal gifts and talents?

Can a young person really lead? How?

READ



Romans 12:4-5

A body is made up of many parts, and each of them has its own use. That's how it is with us. There are many of us, but we each are part of the body of Christ, as well as part of one another.

TALK



Romans 12 begins by saying that no matter how young or old we are, each one of us has had our need for a renewed heart, truth and life met by the same good news of Jesus our saviour. This is what propels the generations into joyful service.

Compare that to the person coming to you saying, 'I've got a few gaps I have to fill on the roster; everyone is saying no - can you please help me out and I'll owe you one?' It's the difference between an encounter with Jesus that causes your heart to leap and sends you out with a desire to share and an encounter with a person at your church trying to get a favour out of you to help themselves. One breathes life and the other makes people want to run the other way. How do we move forward?

Just like your body uses all its parts to function every day, so all the gifts given to children, young people and adults work together for the good of the church and the wider community. It's not about role status, it's about matching people's gifts with the right opportunities to lead and serve. That takes a gospel-humility and letting go in all of us. It also keeps the eyes of every generation upon the cross which has not only saved us, but also those we might struggle with in the community.

- How has God equipped you? And where is He calling you to share your gifts to bring His love and blessing to others?
- What role does the community play in helping you figure out where your passions meet the needs of others? Where might there need to be a letting go of the reigns?
- What gifts do we see in our young people? Are there roles in our context where adults could be mentoring young leaders?

PRAY



Pray for each other, your congregation and the world.

BLESS



Bless each other with these words: (Name), child of God, God has gifted and called you in this place. Amen.

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

#8

Children and young people are given opportunities to discover and express their gifts and talents, including being involved in leadership.

FAITH 5



GrowMinistries
LOW KEY • POLITE & FAMILY FRIENDLY



EQUIPPING

encouraging young people in our church



Grow leadership

Following the overwhelmingly positive response to the National Youth Forum that was held in April last year, Grow Ministries was invited to develop a new training initiative. This initiative will provide continuing and sustainable leadership development for young adults of the Lutheran Church of Australia that includes a regular National Youth Forum and Christian formational leadership training called Cultivate Leadership Program.

Beginning in January 2017, the Cultivate Leadership Program will require a part-time commitment for 12 months. We are looking for 12 young adults from the LCA to participate as well as six young adults from our International Mission partners.

The Purpose

- To grow young people in the Gospel of Jesus
- To grow servant leaders through hands-on experiences
- To grow young people who can connect theology to everyday life
- To grow young people who have a strong sense of belonging in the Lutheran Church of Australia
- To grow a sense of Christian calling in a post-Christian culture
- To grow in intergenerational relationships
- To connect young people deeply with their local church

The Plan

To facilitate a faith journey that includes:

- Training intensives
- *Stretch and Grow* experiences – partnering with LCA International Mission
- Regular mentoring
- Theological reflection
- Congregational participation and leadership opportunities

Our Partners

Districts of the LCA
LCA International Mission
LCA Local Mission
Australian Lutheran College and
Grassroots Training
Lutheran Education Australia
Church Worker Support
Department



If you are interested in knowing more about Cultivate – please contact:

Grow Ministries Director
Jodi Brook
email: jodi.brook@lca.org.au



GIFTS & TALENTS

Fact Sheet



Grow Ministries
LCA CHILD YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY

Guiding Principles for
Effective Child, Youth &
Family Ministry

GUIDING PRINCIPLE #8

Children and young people are given opportunities to discover and express their gifts and talents, including being involved in leadership.



A body is made up of many parts, and each of them has its own use. That's how it is with us. There are many of us, but we each are part of the body of Christ, as well as part of one another. Romans 12:4-5

When different generational cohorts come together in service, intergenerational relationships begin to form as young and old learn from one another and begin to appreciate each other in the context of growing in faith.

When Jesus sent out his disciples to share the Good News and engage every generation in his name, they were living out and experiencing God's presence in and through them as they used the gifts and talents they had received through the Holy Spirit. This means every part of the body, regardless of their age, appearance or skills, has both value and purpose in God's plan.

Encouraging Intergenerational Leadership in Congregations

Encouraging intergenerational leadership in our congregations involves acknowledging that each generation has a broad range of gifts and talents to offer. In acknowledging this, our role is to help identify the gifts and talents of each person in our congregation and

encourage all generations to be involved in decision making and leadership in our context. Though ideal and necessary, good intergenerational leadership is not easy to establish and maintain, as it takes time and a high level of commitment.

HOW CAN WE EFFECTIVELY PROVIDE A SAFE SPACE FOR GROWING INTERGENERATIONAL LEADERSHIP?

- Recognise that all generations have something to offer.
- Be prepared to trust God's calling and equipping of younger leaders.
- Give young people an opportunity to voice how they would like to see events/ministry occur. This may be different to how it 'has always been done', but allowing open conversations may birth new ideas that can have a lasting impact. Willing mentors can walk alongside the young people to guide and direct, sharing experience where necessary.
- Do not be afraid of change but understand that it may be difficult for some, and they may feel a sense of loss for the 'old' way of doing things.

- Help young people understand that not all 'old' things are bad and that everything 'new' is not necessarily right and good. Compromise will need to be reached and an understanding of the past is important in looking towards the future.
- Planning for a shared future. Leaders of all ages should plan to spend time together spiritually. Studying the biblical characteristics of a good leader will be important as you journey together. The example of Jesus, who modelled servant leadership as described in Philippians chapter 2 might be a place to start. Or you might prefer to discuss the Fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23.

Encouraging Intergenerational Leadership in Homes

Besides the wide range of ministries in a local congregation, there are opportunities for young people to lead and use their gifts at home. A young person can lead their household through devotional times such as:

- Taking Faith Home, including creative response or suggesting an intergenerational service opportunity.
- Faith5, sharing highs and lows, reading the Bible, reflecting on God's word, praying, receiving and blessing others.

In doing this they are developing leadership skills for life while being immersed in the richness of God's grace and love.

Children and young people are gifted and talented leaders among their friends, families and church communities. Their child-like faith displays and invites every generation to approach God with a daring boldness – just like a child approaches a loving parent.

Read more in *Guiding Principle #2 Fact Sheet*.



**TAKING
FAITH
home**



share
read
talk
pray
bless

FAITH 5

For more information about Taking Faith Home, or the Faith5, contact the Grow Ministries team.

www.growministries.org.au

e: growministries@lca.org.au





This resource is recommended by **GrowMinistries**

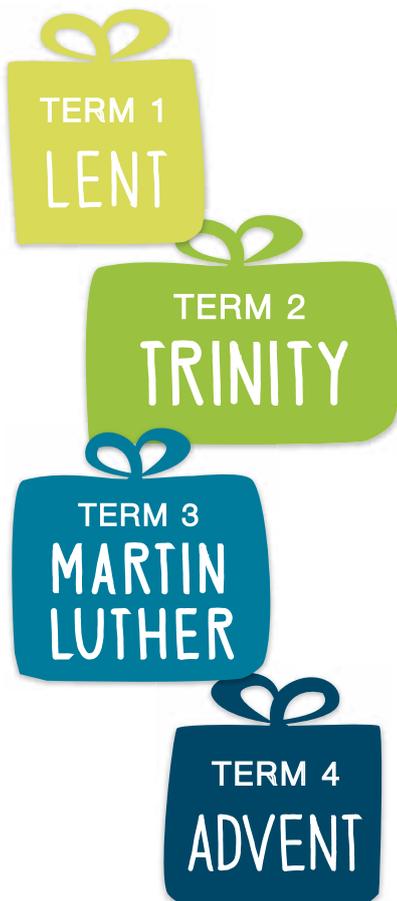
Passing on the Christian faith involves a partnership of generations, individuals and families within the Christian congregation.

GIFT

is the acronym for

GENERATIONS **I**N **F**AITH **T**OGETHER

GIFT events provide an opportunity for people of all ages to explore God's love for them through activities and fellowship by sharing the gift of each other and the gift of faith. We encourage congregations to host a GIFT event once a term. We have developed a kit of suggested activities and templates that you can use with your congregation. For 2016 the themes include Lent, Trinity, Martin Luther and Advent. You can also purchase Baptism, Prayer and Pentecost kits created in previous years.



TERM 1 – LENT

The Lent GIFT event encourages generations to share their Lenten rituals and traditions, as well as spend time together making resources that can be used at home during the weeks of Lent.

TERM 2 – TRINITY

Our one true God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit - three distinct Persons in one God. The Trinity GIFT event will help people of all ages explore the mystery of the Trinity and how each Person serves us in different ways.

TERM 3 – MARTIN LUTHER

Who is Martin Luther and why is he so important to Lutherans? This GIFT event will help all generations to learn about Martin Luther and the Lutheran Reformation in an interactive way.

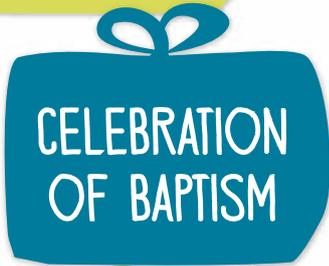
TERM 4 – ADVENT

Advent is the time when we reflect on and count down to the coming of Christ. This GIFT event provides a time to share the Advent rituals and traditions that have been passed down through many generations, and to make new ones.



PRAYER

The Prayer GIFT event offers an opportunity for people of all ages to come together and learn about the importance of prayer in our Christian lives. This resource will provide an opportunity for participants to discover the origins of prayer and practise some fun, simple ways to pray through drama and activities. Together you will discover that talking to God is easy!



BAPTISM

We live as baptised people of God every day. A Baptism GIFT event provides an occasion to remember the promises of baptism and to share and celebrate the new life we have in Christ through baptism.



PENTECOST

Pentecost is an exciting time of the church year when we celebrate the gift of the Holy Spirit. A Pentecost GIFT event is an opportunity to have a party to celebrate the birthday of the church and offers activities based around how the Holy Spirit lives in us and guides our lives.



Grow Ministries specifically likes GIFT because it ticks many of our guiding principles for effective child, youth and family ministry.

1. Children, young people and their families are nurtured for life in Jesus Christ through vital engagement with God's Word and the rituals, traditions and practices of Christian faith.
2. Faith is integrated into family identity and practice.
3. Children and young people have multiple adult mentors of vital faith.
4. Children and young people are engaged in meaningful intergenerational church experiences in which they are valued.
5. Children and young people are given opportunities to express their gifts and talents including being involved in leadership.
6. Children and young people are encouraged to participate in acts of service in the name of Jesus Christ.

Langmeil Lutheran Church, Tanunda, SA has been using the GIFT resource to encourage their congregations. Here is what members had to say...

"In a church where we encourage all ages to feel part of the ministry, the GIFT resource has been instrumental in helping us with tools, activities and service layout support that is meaningful, interactive and an encouragement for all generations to participate in." - Joanne

"The GIFT resource is engaging, simple to use and helpful in worship planning. It encourages interaction between generations and helps children to feel included in the worship." - Tash



The GIFT ministry resource has been developed by **Grow Ministries**
For more information, please contact us: email growministries@lca.org.au
or visit our website www.growministries.org.au





HOW TO ...

encourage gifts & talents

A body is made up of many parts, and each of them has its own use. That's how it is with us. There are many of us, but we each are part of the body of Christ, as well as part of one another. ROMANS 12:4-5

Belonging to something bigger is something that God hardwired into each of us. One of the fastest ways to help someone begin to feel like they belong is inviting them to contribute. Children and young people are no different. When a church genuinely creates space for children and young people to find a serving role that uses their gifts and talents, they can truly begin to know they belong.

But how do we do this?

How do we help all people build a connection and sense of belonging through leadership and allow all people to share their gifts and talents?

Perhaps this starts with some new ideas about children's (and young peoples') involvement in our congregations. Ivy Beckwith, in her challenge to rethink children's ministry, points out –

'The key to inviting children to use their gifts and talents in the service of the community is being intentional about identifying them and then asking the children to put those gifts to use for the good of the community. Too often we think of children's ministry as doing something for our children. We need to expand our thinking to see that it is also working with our children and allowing them to minister to the adults. But we need to take the time to think creatively about what it is our children can contribute and then find ways to make that contribution meaningful for them and for the other generations of the community.

Some examples might be...

- children make something that will contribute to the worship of all who are attending that service
- 'we are praying for you' cards – given to members of the congregation, church leaders etc.



Allowing children to serve the church with their gifts and talents cements them to the faith community and gives them a solid base of people who know and love them. This can reap enormous spiritual benefits when the children reach adolescence and young adulthood. These opportunities promote that feeling of belonging to the faith community, which is so important for children's spiritual growth. And adults grow spiritually when they accept gifts from children and allow children to serve them. It is a reminder of what being a person of faith is all about.'

How can we help children and young people to recognise their gifts and talents?

Here are a few things you can do to help encourage them to celebrate their unique God-given talents:

- Read a classic Bible hero story like the story of Noah, Joseph, or Esther. Talk about what these great men and women of the Bible possessed as their special talents, and how they used them to do great and mighty things.

- If your family has multiple children, write each child's name on a large piece of paper and tape it to the wall – a piece for each child. Throughout the week, encourage everyone in the family to write (or draw if they are too little to write) something they admire about that family member, or what they think their unique gifts are. At the end of the week, read the posters aloud at your family devotion time. This is a great way to encourage your family members and let them see just how amazing everyone thinks they are!
- Find an activity that will help your child use his or her talents or even grow them. It could be a volunteer or ministry opportunity like visiting a local nursing home once a month and taking them homemade goodies and cards. It could be playing a sport, or acting in a play. There are so many options when it comes to activities for children. Don't be afraid to let them try a few things (as time and money allow) to find the one that's perfect for them!
- Read a storybook or watch a children's DVD that has an encouraging message like ***I Will Trust God*** from the *Hermie & Friends* series. This DVD has two powerful stories that will help children learn about embracing their uniqueness and trusting God even when it's hard to be different.
- Find verses that will encourage them and lift them up, and print them out on cards that you can place on the wall in their room or somewhere they will read it often. Remind them daily that they are loved by God!
- Pray! Pray for all people in your congregation. We will all struggle at times and our prayers can help others move through the seasons of life and onto a more clear and confident path to becoming the amazing person that God wants each of us to be!

As congregations we also want to encourage...

All generations that they have something to offer

- Do you share a vision for welcoming and uniting all generations?

Trust in God's calling and equipping of younger leaders

- How are the different generations catered for in each of your ministry teams?
- Do you regularly pray for people of all generations to share their gifts and talents within the congregation?

Young people to be given opportunities to voice how they would like to see events/ministry occur

- Where are there opportunities for this to happen in your congregation?
- How are mentors guided to facilitate supporting young people into new roles and positions within the congregation?

The planning of a shared future together

- Where are there opportunities for leaders of all ages to plan to spend time together spiritually?
- How could you develop this further? Perhaps studying the Bible characteristics of a good leader will be important as you journey together. The example of Jesus, who modelled servant leadership as described in Philippians 2 might be a place to start. Or you might prefer to discuss the Fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23

God has given each of you some special abilities; be sure to use them to help each other, passing on to others God's many kinds of blessings. 1 PETER 4:10 (TLB)

Excerpts taken from Guiding Principle # 8

Children and Young People are given opportunities to discover and express their gifts and talents, including being involved in leadership - Ivy Beckwith 'Postmodern Children's Ministry; Ministry to children in the 21st century' 2009

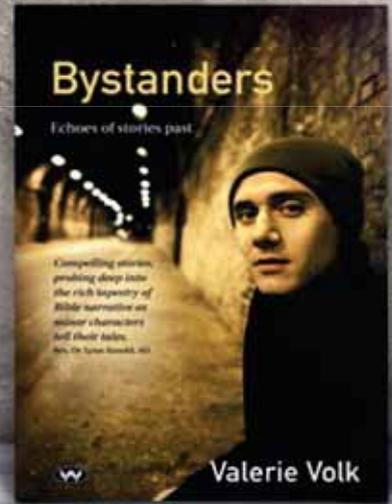
For more information contact the Grow Ministries team

e: growministries@lca.org.au p: (08) 8267 7300 www.growministries.org.au

Bystanders

BOOK REVIEW

Who remembers the onlookers on the sidelines of big events? Who recalls bystanders such as the deposed queen Vashti, the blood-stained murdering grandmother Athallah, the bluff soldier in King David's army, or the desperately searching mother Phoebe? In *Bystanders* Valerie Volk has created fifteen absorbing characters on the edges of familiar biblical events. With psychological insight and compassion, she gives a new perspective on stories we thought we knew.



MY THOUGHTS Vicki Rochow

I love books! I have large piles of 'must reads' throughout my house and office. There just never seems to be enough time to read them! *Bystanders* made its way onto the pile after I attended the Adelaide launch last year. Finally, I made it a priority to ensure I finished it so that I could share it with you for this edition of *On Your Hearts* - there's nothing like a deadline to get you going - and I'm so glad I did. Once I started I couldn't put it down.

Every tale focuses on a 'bystander', people just like you and me watching major biblical events unfold. These bystanders are given an opportunity to share their perspective on the events. People such as Sarah, Abraham's wife as he sets out with Isaac; Pontius Pilate's wife watching over her husband during a most difficult time in his life and one of my favourites, Martha's servant girl who watches the death of Lazarus unfold.

I really enjoy learning about the times that the Bible was written, and *Bystanders* does this very well. At the beginning of each story, Valerie gives you valuable insight and information into the context and background of each particular tale.

As I read, I felt compelled to have my Bible open in front of me so that I could read the story again and gain a better understanding of the subject matter. Every page draws you into the story in a way that really gets you thinking, not only about the character but about how you might have reacted in that situation.

I would highly recommend *Bystanders* as a great read and also an encouragement to dive into your Bible to find out what other stories are there! Available at all good bookstores or from Valerie's website www.valerievolk.com.au

Bystanders includes an appendix of questions on each story, which would be highly suitable for church small groups, home study discussion sessions, senior school students in Christian Studies, Religious Education, Language Arts, History, and classes in ethics or social/moral issues.

Don't just take my word for it... here is what other readers thought...

'Valerie Volk takes us on a different journey of understanding, through the intensely plausible thoughts and words from minor biblical characters ... This book deserves a place not just for enjoyable reading but also as an aid to better understanding of Scripture.'

- Rev. Dr Lynn Arnold, A0

'Reading *Bystanders* was like attending a reunion of people I used to know when I was a child ... The characters in Volk's collection of stories were present at pivotal times in history and are richly and skilfully evoked.'

- Jude Aquilina

'*Bystanders* takes the reader into the lives of individuals who make fleeting appearances in the Bible, looking on as events swirl around the main characters ... Volk's prose is beautifully written and she exhibits a very clever ability to use a "stream of consciousness" dialogue to tell a story.'

- Kym Boxall, SM

'A refreshing, innovative perspective on the biblical passages. The discussion notes and questions are very helpful to use by a teacher or youth minister, or by any reader or study group for ongoing reflection.'

- John McGrath, National Catholic Education Union

'A valuable resource in throwing new light on familiar stories.'

- Colin Ames, Together

'The reader comes away from the book with a greater understanding not only of the characters, but of the pressures of social expectations of the time.'

- Alison Platt, War Cry

GENERATIONS IN FAITH TOGETHER



SHARE QUESTIONS

On Trinity Sunday, print this page and cut out each question (you may need a number of copies). Give one question to each person who comes to worship and invite them to share their answer with someone. You may like to do this during worship or following during your fellowship time.

HOW DO YOU THINK GOD FELT WHEN YOU WERE BORN?

TELL ABOUT A TIME YOU FELT CLOSE TO GOD.

WHEN DO YOU SEE GOD?

HOW IS YOUR FAMILY'S LOVE LIKE GOD'S LOVE?

PRETEND YOU'RE GOD AND YOU JUST FINISHED CREATING THE WORLD. WHAT'S THE FAVOURITE THING YOU MADE?

WHAT'S SOMETHING ABOUT YOU THAT MAKES YOU SPECIAL?

HOW DO YOU KNOW GOD LOVES YOU?

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT WHEN YOU SEE A CROSS?

IF YOU WERE AN ANGEL, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO DO?

WHAT DO YOU WONDER ABOUT JESUS DYING ON THE CROSS?

HOW DO YOU THINK JESUS' FRIENDS FELT WHEN HE ROSE FROM THE DEAD?

IMAGINE THAT JESUS WILL HAVE A MEAL AT YOUR HOUSE TODAY. WHAT WILL YOU TALK ABOUT? WHAT FOOD WILL YOU SERVE?

WHAT IS SOMETHING YOU WISH GOD HADN'T MADE? WHY?

TELL WHAT YOU KNOW ABOUT THE DAY YOU WERE BAPTISED.

PRETEND YOU'RE WRITING A LETTER TO JESUS. WHAT WOULD YOU SAY?

WHERE IS GOD?

COMING EVENTS

FIND OUT WHAT'S HAPPENING IN YOUR DISTRICT WITH CHILD, YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY

Victoria

LYV - The Lutheran Youth of Victoria



11-13 June | LYV Lizards compete in State Youth Games
 27 June – 1 July | Christian Life Week Blue
 28-30 October | LYV 50th Anniversary Celebrations
 @ Tandara Lutheran Camp, Halls Gap

www.vic.lca.org.au/child-youth-and-youngadult-ministry
 Check out the LYV website : www.lyv.org.au



LYV LIZARDS (2015 team)

Queensland



Lutheran Youth of Queensland

www.lyq.org.au

Luminate
A Discipleship Gap Year

Discover more about yourself, your world and God

What's involved?

1. Study and Discipleship Complete a Certificate IV through ALC Practical Ministry Training
2. Ministry Placement Serve in local church ministry Be mentored in ministry
3. Shared Ministry Experiences 2 week Mission Trip to PNG Lead on 2 LYQ Holiday Camps

Luminate is an exciting new discipleship gap year for young adults (aged 17-25) ... twelve months of growing in God's word, discovering your gifts, serving in ministry and creating life-long memories with new friends. Enquire now for 2017
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CHRISTIAN LIFE WEEK CAMP

OUR CHRISTIAN LIFE WEEK IS A POPULAR FIVE DAY LYV-16 CAMP EXPERIENCE FILLED WITH FUN, FRIENDS, GOD WORSHIP, CHALLENGE, ACTIVITIES AND GROWTH.

WEEK 1: 27 June – 1 July 2016
 (Dandenong Ridge A, Coobee, Berrin Lidgee and Koolberrin A)

WEEK 2: 4 July – 8 July 2016
 (Coobee B and Koolberrin B)

WEEK 3: 26 Sept – 30 Sept 2016
 (Tarraville Berrin JJJ)

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Christian Life Weeks

Barossa | July 11-15
 Riverland | July 11-15
 Metro | July 11- 22

Mid North / Yorke Peninsula | July 13-17
 Hills | July 13-17
 Lower Murray South East | July 18 – 22



Grow Ministries
Pinterest

REMEMBER TO CONNECT TO OUR PINTEREST PAGE FOR LOTS OF EXCITING IDEAS AND RESOURCES

www.pinterest.com/growministries

Grow Together
GROW MINISTRIES FAMILY NEWSLETTER

OUT NOW

A brand new resource full of inspiration and ideas to encourage families to share faith at home.

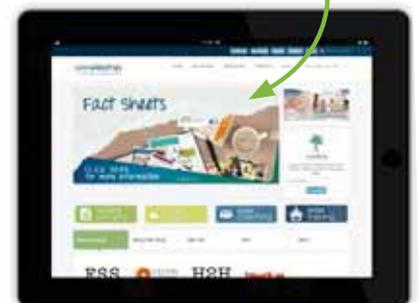
AVAILABLE NOW

GENERATIONS IN FAITH TOGETHER

GIFT TERM 2 TRINITY

PLAN AN INTERGENERATIONAL EVENT THIS TERM.
 All you need is provided in the resource kit.

Everything you need to know about Grow is at www.growministries.org.au



Order now from the Grow Ministries Store
www.growministries.org.au