

## 1. Church: Show your children the importance of church.

Your children need to know that church is a place for them. They need to know that when Christ calls us to follow him he also calls us to belong to him and his church – the community of believers; and not just belong to other believers who are already similar in age, taste, race, background, sex, appearance or intellectual ability, but to belong to a church that expresses our unity in Christ despite our diversity.

This is the beauty of the church, that whatever differences there might be between us, they are considered insignificant in the light of what we now have in common: *we are united in Christ as members of his heavenly assembly, children of the same heavenly Father, partakers of the one Spirit.* When we meet together there is a deep bond generated by the gospel because of this.

Of course, there are pragmatic issues that create problems for families doing church together like intellectual distance and developmental ability, but despite the differences between children and adults, it is only fitting that families, children and adults, should have the opportunity to church together. Not least because this is an opportunity for children to witness the communal worship of their parents, but also because this is their opportunity to take part in communal worship and express their unity in Christ with the diverse range of Christians they belong to.

This is why All Saints organises the 10:15am Sunday church service so that families have the opportunity to sing, pray, hear the Bible read, and have the Bible taught together before children leave the main service for age appropriate Bible teaching in Sunday School. And teenagers are encouraged to stay and serve in church with their parents because intellectual distance and developmental ability become less of an issue in the teenage years progressing to adulthood. This is why All Saints doesn't provide a Sunday School for teenagers during the Sunday service.

We encourage young people from other churches to attend church with their family and to be actively

involved in serving at their church during the 6 short years that they attend Salt youth group, so that they will continue to serve in church beyond their teenage years and have a smoother transition into adulthood.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO? HERE'S SOME HOT TIPS!

- \* Be regular at church. Show your children this is a top priority for you and the Christian faith.
- \* Serve at church. Demonstrate to your children how to serve and contribute when the church assembles together.
- \* Encourage your children to be involved in serving at church.
  - o To do bible reading, church prayers, play in the band or sing, be on welcoming, and to prepare morning tea with you.
- \* Discuss the sermon with your teenagers, work through things they didn't understand (words, ideas, illustrations etc.), offer further illustrations, reflect on further life application.
- \* Use inclusive language about church. Although Salt is theologically a church in its own right (Christians gathered together around God's word), it'd be helpful to treat Salt as we do bible study groups and see them as a useful addition to the main Sunday church service. After all, youth group lasts for only 6 years, but church is available to everybody regardless of age for a lifetime!



## 2. Reflection & Dialogue: Take an interest in the Christian instruction your children receive away from the home.

There is a range of things that your children will be taught from the Bible at Salt (during the main Sunday gathering and also in the Salt weekly bible study groups), and your children will each have their own life experiences that they need to reconcile with the Bible's worldview. They will need your help to work through their experience of life as they are challenged by the Bible and the message of the gospel. They will need someone to help them reflect on what they've learnt and to apply it to the life situations they find themselves in.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO? HERE'S SOME HOT TIPS!

- \* Ask your children what they're learning at Salt youth group and the Salt weekly bible studies.
- \* The Salt teaching program is sent to every parent and carer at the start of each term, you might like to take advantage of this and read through the term's bible passages with your child before term begins or parallel with the program during term. At the very least, you might like to read it on your own so that you know the sort of things your child will be confronted with in the Bible teaching.
- \* Ask them about the difficulties it raises for them and help them discover concrete ways to apply what they're learning.
- \* Offer a listening ear and be a sounding board for their ideas, struggles, and opinions. Don't give them answers but gently shepherd and guide them as they discover how to work out life and faith for themselves.

### 3. **Serve:** Serve at Salt or in one of the Salt youth ministries at All Saints.

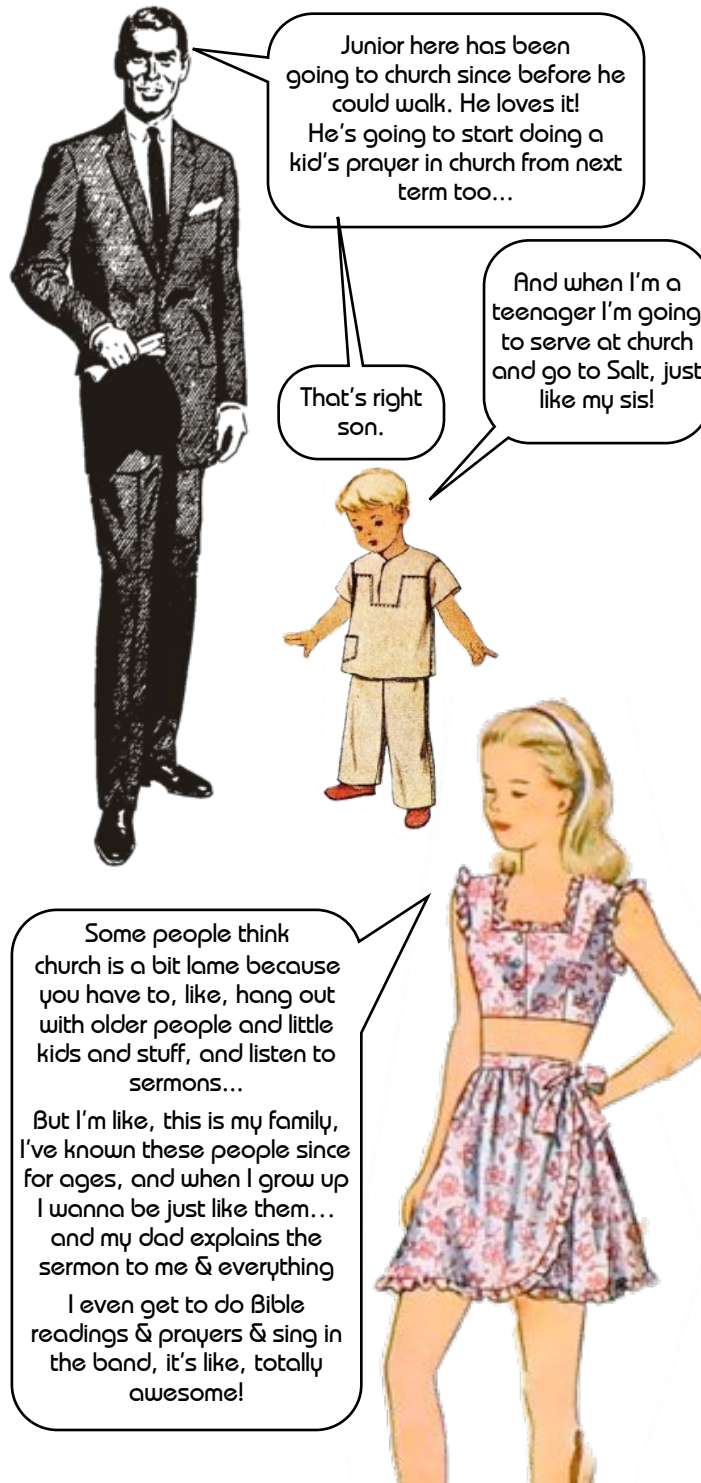
Take the extra opportunity to instruct your children and their peers in the Christian faith. "Youth Leader" doesn't mean "young leader" and there are lots of opportunities for adults to serve in youth ministry at All Saints. You may find the time to be a leader, or perhaps to run one of the weekly Salt bible study groups, or be a helper on one of the annual Salt camps...

Just because you're a parent doesn't mean you can't serve in a ministry for your children, in fact it's perhaps the reason that you should! Parents often serve in the youth ministries at small churches or in country areas where resources and people are scarce, and they do very well! Removing ourselves from interacting with our children in their church ministry groups seems to be more a product of our individualistic culture than a product of the biblical command for parents to impress the word of God onto their children (Deut. 6:4-9). The risk of "cramping your children's style" might be a risk worth taking.

## WHAT CAN YOU DO?

### HERE'S SOME HOT TIPS!

- \* Become a leader at Salt.
- \* Lead the weekly Salt bible study group that your teenager attends (or one of your teenagers attends).
- \* Offer your place to host your child's weekly bible study group
- \* Help your child organise a Salt social activity
- \* Serve the leaders of Salt youth ministry by having them over for a meal, subsidising their camps, provide or pay for their training, and pray for them.



# HOW TO MAKE THE MOST OF SALT YOUTH MINISTRY AT ALL SAINTS

**FOR PARENTS & CARERS**

We know Christian parents & carers are anxious that their children know and trust Jesus as Lord, and continue to become more like Jesus in their values, choices, priorities, attitudes, and service of others.

We desire to see this for children as well, and we recognise that God has graciously given us a Christian community so that we might raise children in the Christian faith together.

It's for this reason that we run Salt youth ministry at All Saints Petersham. We want to assist parents & carers in fulfilling their responsibility to raise their children in the Christian faith, and add to the Christian instruction and examples of godliness that they receive at home (and of course, to also provide Christian instruction and examples of godliness to young people without Christian parents).

Salt youth ministry caters for a range of young people, some of whom attend another church with their family apart from All Saints Petersham, but regardless, here's a few things you can do to make the most out of Salt youth ministry at All Saints Petersham if you're a parent or primary carer:

**all saints**  
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