

# Pop-up small groups leaders' information

Thank you so much for joining us. Our vision for pop-up small groups is that they build community and provide a safe place for people to listen, ask, discuss and find their next step... without much prep required from you. If you can provide coffee and community, we'll provide the content to get people talking!

We are not trying to give definitive answers or 'how to's in these evenings, but want to start a thought-provoking discussion which gives people ideas and helps them to find their next step. **Our approach** is to recognise that every family is unique and that parents and carers are the experts in their own children. By using the **Key Tools**, every parent and carer can help their child connect with God as a normal part of everyday life.

Church plays a really important role in this, by being the supportive community that encourages and equips parents and carers along the way. We ask people to think about the next steps for their child or family rather than searching for a 'right answer'. You can support your group by using this language and approach too. This should help people feel able to share their thoughts and ideas, without fear of getting it 'wrong'.

Exploring these big issues in community is really helpful, as it allows people to share ideas and learn from each other before considering what they think. Pop-up small groups aim to be a safe space where that can happen. You can support people by setting a culture of journeying together and guiding people to listen well, love well and encourage each other.

## In advance

- Decide how you want to gather people – this could be at church, in a home or homes, or getting individuals to watch on their own but with a video call for the discussion time.
- Spread the word so everyone knows they are welcome and when and where you are meeting. We have a shareable image with the details available on our social media and website that you can use in your own social media, emails, WhatsApp messages or websites.
- You might also choose to print or send copies of the handout in advance.

## On the night

- **7.30/7.45 pm** – If meeting in person, gather people for coffee and to catch up.
- **8.00 pm** – We will go live on the **Parenting for Faith Facebook page**. You'll see the video appear at the top of the page. If you don't, try refreshing the page and scrolling down. You can watch on a phone, a smart TV (click on Facebook) or link a laptop to a TV or projector. People may want to have the video playing on their phones (muted) so they can do this individually. The video will be available afterwards so you are welcome to run this event at a different time.
- **8.30 pm** – We'll take questions and respond to them, and then stop the live broadcast. Encourage people to chat (in person or online) about what stood out to them, what they agreed or disagreed with and what the next step for their family might be. You can use the discussion questions on the handout to guide you.
- **9.00/9.30 pm** – Wrap up and go home. You might want to follow up with an email or text.

# Helping kids engage with Christmas

*with Anna Hawken*

Welcome to this Parenting for Faith pop-up! At Parenting for Faith, we believe that you, the parents and carers, are the best people to help your children and teens meet and know God. We have **five Key Tools** to help you do this as a normal part of everyday life. This evening, we'll be talking about how to help our kids engage with God throughout the Christmas period. Listen to the discussion on **Facebook Live** and add your comments and questions. Then explore your next steps by discussing this with the people around you.

## The Facebook Live discussion

**Helping our kids engage well with Christmas can feel challenging.** Amongst the excitement and parties and presents, we want our kids to engage with God at Christmas, connecting with him and going deeper than a story about a cute baby. We'd love them to get to grips with what it means for them that God came to earth as a human just like us. We'd love to suggest some tools and ideas to help you find your way to help your kids do this.

Every family is different! Anna Hawken, part of the Parenting for Faith team, will share three ideas to help you discover what might be right for your family.

- **Don't try to do everything.** You don't need to do something just because others are, or because you've always done it. We can ask ourselves questions to help work out whether it's right for us this year like 'Will doing this thing bring more peace or more stress into our home?'
- **Be led by your kids.** Every family is different and as your kids grow and change, their interests will change too. What was powerful and popular last year might not be doable or as effective this year. So think about what your kids are interested in right now, and help them connect with God through that.
- **Ask what would help you?** Christmas can feel overwhelming as parents or carers and it's easy for us to neglect our own relationship with God at this time. Think through what you need to stay grounded, peaceful and communicating with God in this season. 'If you 'create windows', letting your child see or hear how you do this, you're also equipping them with ideas that they might like to try, now or in the future.

## Further links

- [Key tools at Christmas](#) - a free download of ideas to help families connect with God at Christmas
- [Getting through Christmas when it's hard](#) - if Christmas feels hard for your family this year, some ideas to help you coach your kids through it and figure out what's best for your family this year.
- [Advent: Growing gratitude in our kids](#) - in a season of gifts and giving, how can we spark a real sense of gratitude?
- [Advent as a season of intercession](#) - how one family uses advent to pray for others
- [How do we decide how to approach Father Christmas?](#) Ideas to help you think through the part Santa will play or not play in your family's Christmas.

## Discussion question ideas

- Looking ahead, how are you feeling about helping your family connect with God over Christmas?
- What would help you connect with God this Christmas?
- What do you do or have you done that helps your family focus on and connect with God at Christmas?
- What are your kids interested in right now? Could you use that to help them engage better this year?
- What are your family's next steps?