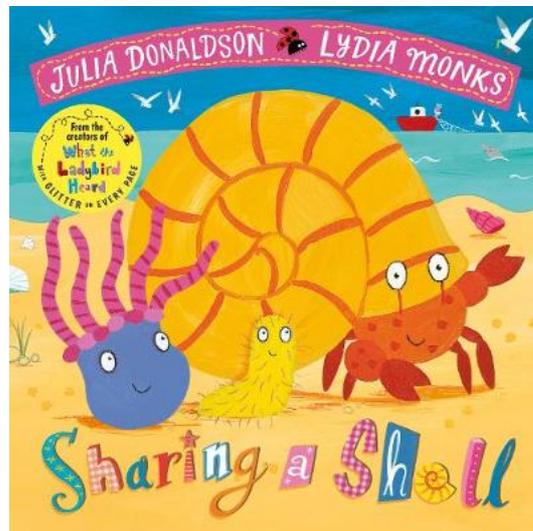
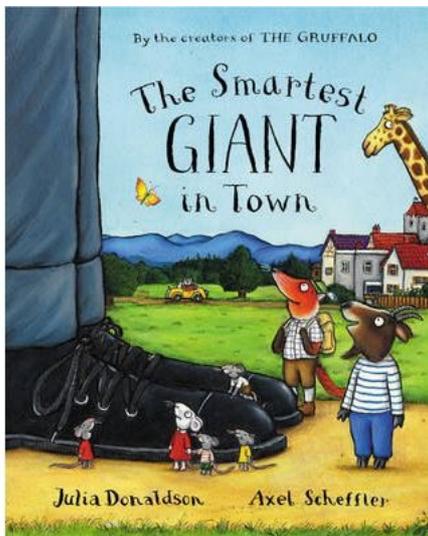


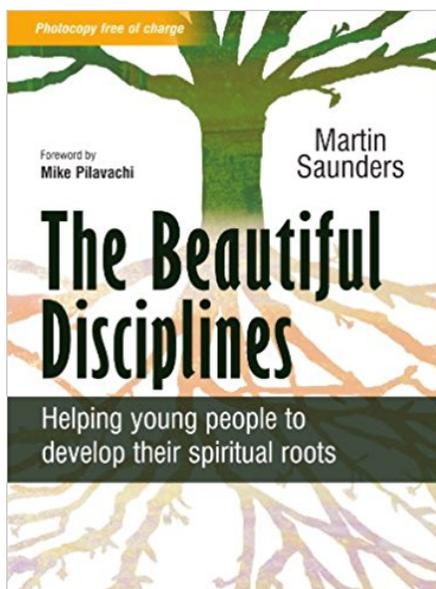
Holy Habits Session 4: Sharing

Resources for children Under 11



Two great books by Julia Donaldson, which communicate the importance of sharing what you have with others. The rhymes are infectious and the pictures are colourful and vibrant.

Resources for 11-18 year olds



Martin Saunders book looks at ten of the disciplines from Richard Foster's seminal book "Celebration of Discipline". Each chapter looks at a specific discipline and includes games, discussions and challenges. There is a whole chapter dedicated to "Simplicity" which explores the theme of generosity and sharing.

Resources for 18-25 year olds



YFC have produced a resource called “Sync” which, through daily e-mails and videos, seeks to help young people share their faith with those around them.

“Young people are the most extraordinary evangelists. Most people who become Christians do so under the age of 18 and peer to peer relationships are often crucial in a young person’s journey to faith. This is the most connected generation in history and it is incredibly exciting to think of the potential of every Christian young person equipped and inspired to share their faith with those around them. That could change the world. That is what Sync is about.”

YFC Sync Website

Check it out at <https://yfc.co.uk/sync/>

Reflection

John 1: 1-18

At the time of writing, "Black Panther", Marvel Studios latest solo superhero movie has grossed over \$1.3 billion. The film focuses on the African hero "Black Panther" and the fictional African country Wakanda and the cast and crew of the movie are predominantly African. The film is an unrivalled success and the highest grossing solo superhero film of all time. The reviews have been universally positive but what stands out more are the personal responses.

For the first time, children of African descent can go to the cinema and see a hero who looks just like them. As a white straight male, I cannot begin to understand how that must feel. I have always seen people like me on the big screen. I can pretty much pick any movie at the cinema and see people like me as heroes. But imagine if that wasn't the case and suddenly there was a superhero who looked just like you, who

cares about their heritage and who were actually more advanced than the "white" people. How would that make you feel?

Recent studies have shown that only 4-5% of children and young people attend a church service at least once a month. That means 95% have no connection to church life. Another recent study has shown that teenagers don't care about the big questions such as "does God exist?". It's not just that they don't have an opinion, it's that they don't care enough to have an opinion.

The hard truth is that most of our church services would be alien to young people. How we "do church" will be alien to most children. It's easy to make up excuses about why they don't come to church on a Sunday but the truth is that even if family life wasn't more hectic on a Sunday with sport or shopping, they probably still wouldn't come.

In the incarnation, we find a God who made himself like us so that we could connect again. God could have stayed behind the veil but instead God tore the veil. We had to see God as flesh and blood in order to bring about a new covenant. Maybe we need to do the same with how we reach out to children and young people.

People are connecting with "Black Panther" because they can see a world like theirs. They are connecting because they can see a hero who looks like them. What can we do with our churches, services and outreach so that children and young people can find something they can relate to? Just like the apostles at Pentecost, how can we help them experience God in ways that are relevant to them? That is the exciting challenge that lies before us.

Good News Story

In one area of our Synod there are three churches in close proximity that have two or three young people each. They all used to run youth groups but no longer can because of low numbers (and a shortage of volunteers).

The possibility has now arisen for a gathered youth group ie. running one youth group that brings the young people from the three churches together. This is really exciting as it helps the young people to see that there are more young people who are Christians than just those they see on a Sunday morning and it also helps to share the resources and volunteers from each of the churches.

Rather than looking at the negatives (not enough young people in the church to run a youth group) the leaders have seen the potential of a joint group which will support the young people across the area and create exciting possibilities for the future.