



change

Hands up everyone who lives in a household with someone who started school or highschool this year. Ok – lots of us. That’s change. Keep your hands up if there were tears during first term? Really? Would you look at that! Ok, well, keep your hands up if it was **you** that cried... Indeed! I’m going to put my hand down now and you can all put your hands down too.

Big changes are often accompanied by tears.

There are frustrations, it’s taxing, physically and emotionally. There is a natural sense of anxiety and plenty of stress. Most of us who have tracked alongside kids starting school or a new school, recognise that the hard emotional, cognitive and physical work of change is tough, and we aren’t too surprised when the edges of otherwise blissful family life get frayed. We know the value there is to keep loving in that time. To support and encourage, show compassion, cop it sweet a bit, but also to keep following through. Whatever argy-bargy went on in our house in the first weeks of my son starting Year 7, the last thing that would have helped would have been for me to say –

‘Mate, you’re really being knocked around by High school – it’s tough; those early starts, the masses of homework, all the new faces and routines – I think you just better go back to primary school for a bit.’

No. This was the time for some courage – all round. Me and him.

In the church, there are prophetic voices calling for change. We have a sense that if as the church we are the body of Christ, we should be constantly dynamic and changing – as much as a body changes constantly. I wonder how much courage we show for this. In between the tears and stresses, the adjusting, a few phrases of criticism “mum what were you thinking?”- in the midst of all of this I have been incredibly impressed by my son’s courage for the process of change.

Top Opportunities for Training

See links to BUVA Website Children and families page for details and downloadable flyers and registration forms for these events.

<http://www.buv.com.au/ministries/children-a-families/events>



Playgrouping Victoria events: Steve Biddulph
April 28 Raising boys (Glen Eira)

May 11 Secrets of Happy children (Ivanhoe)
Steve Biddulph is deservedly a big name in the parenting scene. How could your church use these opportunities to offer connection, encouragement and help to families in your community?



BOOST

Children and Families Ministry Training Days
May 1: Frankston and Greensborough
An amazing array of resources and presenters at two locations on the same day.



Stories of Childhood Playgroup Conference
May 29: Centre Theology and Ministry (Parkville)

Lots of early childhood specific elective
Key note speaker : Beth Barnett



BUVA Leadership Development Day AND Children’s Ministry Network Training Day
June 19: Warrnambool
Separate Streams in the morning, shared range of electives after a common lunch.



At no point has he said , “This is too exhausting and challenging – can’t I go back to Grade 6?”

I wonder if the church has this kind of courage – the courage of a twelve year old – to endure some tears and frustrations, some disorientation, some stress and risk.

There’s an insidious philosophy that suggests that if a path is the right thing to do, it will be easy and ‘natural’ and the path of least resistance.

I hope this is easily recognisable as a non-biblical philosophy. I can hear Abraham, Leah, Moses, Rahab, Jeremiah, Hosea and Esther, Mary, Nicodemas, Barnabas and Chloe and all laughing themselves to pieces at the idea.

Many churches balk at the first sign of stress, fatigue, or disorientation. Our adaptive threshold needs to be exercised a little. That’s what life takes.

When Christopher and I wrote our marriage vows to each other, we promised to be faithful to one another ‘through all the changing circumstances of our lives’ . At the time we had a vague sense that life would probably bring changes to us and require reshaping of us. We actually had no scope on what we were really promising, and a good thing too.

I would like to think our churches are able to commit to that kind of faithfulness – yes to God, but also as a practical expression of that, to our children. That through all the changing circumstances of our life as a church – through all the change that is required of us as the world turns and spins off centre and we are whirled around with it – that we would cherish times of eyeball to eyeball with our kids, times to really listen to them, that we would keep investing in telling the stories of faith, and give some space for the change that God may be wanting to make in us. Our children are natural catalysts for the energy, imagination, critique and hope that this kind of mission calls for.

2 Cor 3:18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

Beth Barnett

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New Resources on the BUV Website

<http://www.buv.com.au/ministries/children-a-families/caf-resources>



Prayers for Growing Justice



Prayers that Feed our understanding of Justice

Creative prayer resources for developing a culture of compassion, action, advocacy and prayer for the needs of the world amongst all ages.



Answering Team 4's Questions

This is a little resource to encourage every CRE teacher or parent or Leader who has been asked a really curly question.

This book is a collection of the toughest questions my 100 grade 5 and 6 (Team 4) CRE classes could muster. We spent several weeks exploring how useful questions could be, and how questions often lead to or hide other questions, and what to do about that.

Then I wrote some answers to their questions, and gave them all a copy of this little book.

Beth Barnett
Children & Families Facilitator
Baptist Union of Victoria
M: 0425 756 996
E: beth.barnett@buv.com.au

Level 1, 1193 Toorak Road
Camberwell Victoria 3124
PO Box 377
Hawthorn Victoria 3122

www.buv.com.au



Baptist Union of Victoria