Party On Together: Multi-Age Worship Resources & Bible Studies

By Beth Barnett & Keith Dyer

Reviewed by Darren Cronshaw

When asked what they liked about the worship and Bible engagement ideas of Party On Together, my children replied:

“It made for the best service ever. The kids were not just up the back with sheets but doing activities with all the adults, especially the Jelly Bean prayers [where we gave a jelly bean to people we prayed for].” (Emily)

“It was yummy.” (Ben)

“I like when it involves all the kids, because it makes me feel we are not here just because our parents are here.” (Jessie)

As a parent and pastor, I am a biased user and advocate of this resource, because I am passionately eager to see people of all ages, backgrounds, faith-stages and intelligence types engaging the Bible and encountering Jesus. I long for our churches to champion discipleship from our youngest children through to our oldest and still valued members, and to learn from one another. But I am hungry for ideas and inspiration.

Party On Together offers a collection of helpful resources. It includes background and principles for multi-age worship, worshipping and learning together rather than in age-segmented groups. And it delves into the Gospel of Luke with 6 sample multi-age services, 6 children’s talks and dramas, 7 Bible studies and a host of creative and musical ideas. It has helped me freshly encounter Jesus who was criticised for being too joyful and hospitable by people who were too seriously trying to impress God.

A friend of mine came to faith through an Alpha course several years ago, appreciating it as a place he could ask questions, any questions. But now in church he feels like he is not allowed to ask any questions. (Marketers call that ‘bait and switch’; signing you on to something and then changing the product). Beth and Keith encourage us not to be afraid to ask the hard questions, even ‘dumb’ or ‘doubting’ questions. And they encourage worship leaders and Bible teachers to use all sorts of colourful creativity to invite people on the adventure of discussing and experiencing the Bible. That’s a party invitation I welcome.