

The Youth as Active Members of Our Church Community

“One body, many parts.” – 1 Corinthians 12:12–27

This year, our youth ministry has embraced the theme “One Body, Many Parts,” inspired by 1 Corinthians 12:12–27. Through this theme, we are exploring how each young person has a unique role to play in strengthening not only themselves but also the youth group, the church, and the wider community.

To help us grow in this understanding, the year has been divided into four focus areas: Term 1 centred on the role each individual plays in their own life. We discussed challenges that many young people face, including exam stress, anxiety, and depression, and explored ways to overcome these difficulties through faith, support, and resilience. Term 2 focused on how the personal growth achieved in Term 1 can be used to strengthen our contribution within the youth group. We learned how supporting one another and working together creates a stronger, more united fellowship.

Term 3 will explore how the youth can actively serve within the church and what unique contributions we can make to the life and ministry of the congregation.

Term 4 will challenge us to take the strength gained individually, within the group, and within the church, and use it to positively impact our wider community.

At its heart, the youth ministry aims to provide a safe and welcoming space where young people can gather, build meaningful friendships, and discuss the everyday challenges they face. There is great value in being able to connect with peers who understand similar experiences and who can offer encouragement and support.

The youth ministry also seeks to involve young people actively in the life of the church. Through participation in worship services, Bible readings, birthday messages, goodwill prayers, singing groups, and other ministries, our young people are encouraged to discover and use their God-given gifts.

Throughout the year, we host a variety of activities that promote fellowship and community. These

include coffee bars, Zumba evenings, talent shows, sports days, car washes, and movie nights. This year's events have already included a successful movie night in March, with a sports day planned for June, a Colour Run in August, and a possible talent show in October.

Leadership development remains an important part of our ministry. We are blessed to have five young people serving on the youth executive team. Many of our Friday evening programmes are facilitated by youth members themselves, from leading Bible discussions to organising games and activities. Young people are also actively involved in the praise and worship team, church council, and fundraising committees. Over the years, they have assisted as servers at the Elders' Christmas Lunch and played a key role in planning Father's Day gifts.

One of the greatest encouragements has been witnessing the growth of the youth ministry. There was a time when only a handful of young people attended regularly, and sometimes only two members would arrive for a programme. Today, regular attendance has grown to between 10 and 20 young people. This growth is a testament to God's faithfulness, perseverance, and the commitment of those who continued investing in the ministry even during quieter seasons.

Like many ministries, we face challenges. Maintaining consistent attendance, particularly after confirmation, remains an area of focus. Fundraising efforts can also be difficult when participation is limited. However, we remain grateful for every person who supports our events and encourages our young people. Every contribution, whether through attendance, volunteering, or prayer, helps strengthen the ministry and reminds our youth that they are valued members of the church family.

One thing young people need from the church is the assurance that their voices matter. When ideas are heard, considered, and supported, young people feel encouraged to become more involved and take ownership of their role within the church community. For those who have been part of the youth ministry over the years, it has been inspiring to witness not only the growth in numbers but also the friendships and relationships that have developed. Many connections have been formed through youth gatherings that may never have happened otherwise. These relationships continue to strengthen both faith and fellowship.

Our youth programmes are designed by young people, for young people, and we warmly welcome new members and visitors. We strive to create a judgement-free environment that nurtures faith, fellowship, and friendship. To every young person who may not attend church or youth regularly, we

extend a heartfelt invitation: come and join us for a Friday evening programme. Take that first step. You will find a welcoming community, opportunities to grow in your faith, and friendships that can last a lifetime.

As one body with many parts, each person has an important role to play—and there is a place for you.