Notes from Planning Session: Children

*What were you doing before the Pandemic? Can it be continued virtually, whether in a Zoom call or a pre-recorded way? Sometimes continuity is the best route when everything else around them is different.

Recent Statements from Commonly Used Approaches in Our Diocese:

Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

https://www.cgsusa.org/homepage/covid-19-response/

- **St. James', Jackson**
- **The Domestic Church**

Godly Play

https://www.godlyplayfoundation.org/official-statement-from-the-godly-play-foundations-board-of-directors/

https://buildfaith.org/godly-play-on-zoom-why-it-works/

Weaving God's Promises

We can give permission to post it on Facebook. You would need to quote the source as well as the copyright. The post would need to be removed after two weeks of posting.

Illustrated Ministry

*The Beatitudes
*Compassion Camp
*Written with a digital audience in mind. Easy to have others help - sound theology, inclusive language, non-screen component, way to connect back to community (tweens lead!?)

Check-Out & Consider Doing:

(found on their website or facebook pages - not an exhaustive list, but some good examples)
Mediator, Meridian OR St. Paul's, Meridian (Sunday School Video)
All Saints in Waterloo Way of Love Sunday School
St. Columb's, Ridgeland (Movie Stars of the Bible through Sparkhouse's Holy Moly)
St. Philip's Growing in Grace
Children's Chapel Video (St. Paul's, Fayetteville, St. John's, Montgomery, Christ Cathedral, Mobile)
Children's Compline Video (Candle Walk, also St. John's Montgomery)
Tucked In: Bedtime Stories with Episcopalians and Others

Tips and Tricks Learned Thus Far...

- **Synchronous v. Asynchronous** *(or simply, all together v. on your own)* are being used a lot and were new words for me, and maybe they are for you, too! So now we know!
    - **On-Demand/Click & Do/At Your Own Pace Activities** - scheduling and being 'camera ready' for families is sometimes the biggest challenge
- **Shorter than in-person gatherings/videos/time to fill** - expect attention spans to be half of what they were in-person (normally each year old = one minute)
- **Ingredients are the same, tools are different.** Can still have cake for dessert, but pick a no-bake recipe.
- Children have LOVED receiving notes in the **mail or small packages** with supplies/activities
- **Offerings don't have to be weekly! You also don't have to select on-screen or off, you can create a hybrid plan.** It also may be challenging for your volunteers/leaders or your families to access what you are providing within a week…consider bi-weekly or monthly lessons.
    - Or, **consider a monthly rotation of engagements** that can be compliments of each other or stand-alone:
        - **1st Week of the Month (LEARN):** Record and premiere on Facebook or email your families a lesson with activities they can do on their own at home (maybe mail the materials home or have a drop-off of the supplies!)
        - **2nd Week of the Month (PRAY):** Encourage children/families to pray. Consider providing materials to make prayer beads or instructions for drawing a labyrinth on the driveway, or simply have children record themselves ahead of time reading part of compline and edit the clips together so they can "do compline together" (Candle Walk is a great book that tells compline as a children's story)
        - **3rd Week of the Month (OUTREACH/MISSION):** Ingathering for an outreach ministry (collect newspaper or bleach for local animal shelter) or a challenge to begin/do something at home that helps others (Good News Garden)
        - **4th Week of the Month (FUN/COMMUNITY):** encourage a post-card campaign and have children write/send postcards to a pen pal in the church (maybe a homebound parishioner? a friend they wish they could see!? Or someone new to the church?) Or challenge families to take pictures of themselves doing a particular thing and tag the church so everyone can see each other and 'connect'

Scavenger Hunts that can be adapted to be done on your church property - it gives families a new way to spend time "at" church:
Love Hunt from Episcopal Relief and Development
Creation Scavenger Hunt from St. John's, Wake Forest, NC