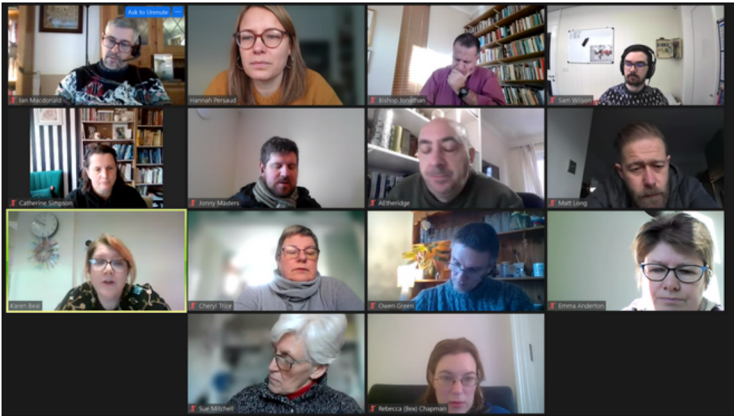


LISTENING & RESPONDING TO CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE

Reporting back on Network Meeting 4

15th Dec 2022

PERMISSION, PLATFORM, POWER.



Our breakout rooms today considered what it looks like to empower children and young people to participate. We were honest about the *inconvenience* that truly putting CYP first can cause, and the need to embrace that! Colleagues gave helpful examples from their own ministries, and Matt Long (Leicester Diocese) summed up our responses by saying we need to give younger people *permission*, we need to give away the *power*, and we need to provide them with a *platform*. Jonny Masters (Diocese of Chester) challenged us to ask, "*How are we currently disempowering young people?*" and Bishop Jonathan spoke about *giving space to people who advocate for children and young people*.

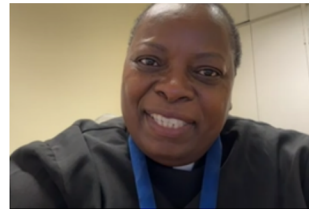
TODAY'S BIG QUESTION



How do we empower children and young people to participate?

*Can you think of an example of when someone has empowered you to participate? What happened?
How did you feel?*

WE HEARD FROM...



Revd Martha Mutikani joined us from Chichester Diocese. Martha is an Associate Vicar, Foundation Governor, Assistant Dean of Women's Ministry, Racial Justice Officer and Regional Representative for Deans of Women in the Church of England.

Revd Martha kindly and passionately shared the personal, professional and theological underpinning of her work on racial justice with young people. She inspired us with the journey she's on to raise up Young Racial Justice Ambassadors in Year 6 classes in all Church of England schools in her diocese, and how this will impact secondary schools and the wider community. We were encouraged to hear how many people have worked together to enable this to happen - the bishop, clergy, school staff and diocesan colleagues as well as the young people themselves have each had a part to play. This helped us to reflect on the importance of the many different roles and areas of influence which are represented in our network, and how we are all needed in order to make progress.

PRAYER



Bishop Jonathan Frost, Bishop of Portsmouth, prayed this beautiful blessing over us all - those who were in the meeting today, and those who couldn't be with us:

"Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you, and scatter the darkness from before your path, and make you ready to meet Him when He comes in glory; and the blessing of God almighty, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. Amen."

BIBLE REFLECTION...

"You are the body of Christ. Each one of you is a part of it."

1 Corinthians 12: 27

What does this verse mean to you?

EXCITING NEXT STEPS FOR THIS NETWORK!

In September, we committed to four meetings and said that in December we would review and make a plan for practical action for 2023. The last four months have been essential in guiding our next steps, but we did not want this network to be one which talks and doesn't act!

One of the main findings of the network so far has been the difficulties that adults face around some of the issues which younger people and their families particularly care about. These have been expressed as a barrier to connection, and ultimately, to young people's experience of belonging.

We have reflected that rather than answers, CYP need us firstly to listen, secondly to find ways to nurture their contribution, and thirdly to model how our faith shapes our life. By journeying with them in these issues, we offer experience of God's faithfulness and an example of faith as an ongoing, relevant and communal journey. Our faith moves us to unity in love, even (and especially) when we don't have answers or when we disagree on specifics.

"Compassion compels us to find a way"

We therefore propose that this network in 2023 will move from discussion to action, into a CYP-led, intergenerational network of adults (from church, home and school contexts) and children and young people. It will meet termly and have themes chosen by the CYP. Adults who join this network will be asked to ensure that they facilitate an equal or higher number of children to attend, from their context.

We are in the process of working out the logistics of this, and colleagues in the network have been given an opportunity to co-shape and facilitate the network, and to support the involvement of their children and young people involved.

We're really excited to see this work blossom into the next season. Please pray! If you'd like to be involved in co-shaping this work, do get in touch!

Would you like to be part of this network? Share this information with your teacher, chaplain, parent or church!

YOU'RE INVITED!



The Church of England Education Office's 5th National Conference will take place on Friday 27th January 2023 and feature a fantastic range of keynote speakers, practical workshops, networking and collaboration.

The topics for the Streams and Workshops are representative of the work the Church of England Education Office undertakes and includes a wide range of topics, including **Growing Faith**, Racial Justice, Leadership, and Curriculum.



Alison Kriel
Author and Speaker



Lord Boateng
Chair of the Church of England's Racial Justice Commission

Dr Krish Kandiah
Chair of Adoption and Special Guardianship Leadership Board



Dame Rachel de Souza
Children's Commissioner for England



Dame Alison Peacock
Chief Executive, Chartered College of Teaching



Mary Myatt
Author and Speaker

The Most Revd Stephen Cottrell
Archbishop of York



Sonia Thompson
Headteacher and Director of Research School, St Matthew's Church of England School, Birmingham



The Rt Hon Gillian Keegan MP
Secretary of State for Education



NEWS FROM THE GROWING FAITH FOUNDATION...

The Growing Faith Foundation has a new website! As we develop research, programmes, networks and hubs, we will be updating this page with relevant information.



If you'd like to sign up to our approximately-monthly, concise, informative newsletter, please click [here](#).

If you'd like to join our AMAZING group of praying supporters and receive a short, entertaining and informative prayer request email each Monday, please click [here](#).

GET IN TOUCH!



Hannah Persaud is the Networks Lead at the Growing Faith Foundation.

She facilitates this network.

Hannah would love to hear from you!

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