



# GROWING UP *together*

Intergenerational  
rituals to mark  
rites of passage  
in the lives of  
children and  
young people



An intergenerational  
resource for multi-age  
households, small groups  
and communities of faith  
committed to growing  
up together in worship,  
witness and service

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# Rituals and Rites of Passage

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We all want to be loved, taken seriously, connected to a bigger story and know we belong<sup>1</sup>. Times of significant growth and change can be exciting, difficult, painful and challenging. There is a mixture of loss and new opportunities, no matter how old or at what stage of life we are.

For children and young people, in particular, these points of transition are often associated with changes in the relationship between the young person and the significant adults in their lives. Rites of passage, and rituals that recognize and affirm these changes, play an important role in healthy human flourishing.

## Why do young people need rituals and rites of passage?

Marking the stages of growing up is especially important for assisting children and young people transition into healthy adults. The teenage years, in particular, are a time when young people need to differentiate themselves from their parent/s, a time when they may benefit from a deeper connection with their faith community as they start looking for other role models to help them navigate life.

Whilst young people often express a strong desire for a peaceful world and a world where there are opportunities for them to exercise freedom, most young people do not strongly identify with a religious belief system or a philosophy.

In the absence of a consistent meta-narrative agreed upon by Australian young people in terms of what the cosmos is about, whether there is a God or not and what the purpose of life is, the Christian Research Association has coined the term 'midi-narrative'. Young people often

embrace a personal narrative (their midi-narrative) that identifies the essence of what life is all about as being their friends, family and fun<sup>2</sup>.

Rituals, associated with rites of passage, that take place in communities where young people feel safe and valued, can affirm the experience of the young person, strengthen relationships with-in the community and deepen the connection of the community, and the individuals with-in it, with the bigger God-story.

## What is a Rite of Passage?

Strictly speaking, there are three core elements to a Rite of Passage:

### Separation

separation from your community

### Transformation

the second stage when you go into a 'container' and experience a transformation

### Return

Coming back to your community and bringing your new 'status' into the community. The transformation is witnessed and recognized by your community.

To greater and lesser extents, we naturally go through these stages at points of major life change, such as birth, puberty, marriage, childbirth, significant age milestones, becoming an elder and death.

## What is a Ritual?

This resource is a collection of rituals designed for use by faith communities to mark and recognize that a rite of passage has taken place.

Rituals help us mark time and enter into something that is bigger than we might fully comprehend in that moment. Dorothy McRae-McMahon<sup>3</sup> puts it this way:

Gathering up our special life moments in ritual can be about having someone to take you through a caring journey of reflection when much of the rest of the world does not seem to have noticed the significance of a particular time in your life. ... The strength of rituals also lies in their structured style. We are given boundaries for the entry into our grief and pain and a special solemn joy in celebration.

Each ritual in this resource contains elements that assist in recognizing in a symbolic way the rite of passage that has taken place. These elements include:

- An invitation to reflection before and after the rite of passage
- A public gathering which involves the young person's wider community of multiple generations
- An experiential moment, recognising a rite of passage is an embodied experience
- An opportunity to tell stories about who we are, which enables us to develop our inner spiritual lives and find meaning in life
- An opportunity to connect with the larger story of God's good creation and God's desire for renewal, reconciliation and hope for us

## What about Baptism and Confirmation?

Many churches already have a rich tradition around Baptism and Confirmation (Reaffirmation of Baptism). This resource seeks to complement the practices and traditions we already have by recognizing there are other times in the lives of children and young people we can also mark as a faith community. Most of these rituals will touch something in older people as well. Whilst the resource has been written with children and young people in mind, you are encouraged to invite older people to enter the ritual as appropriate.

## How to use this resource

This resource is for leaders of faith communities who have young people in their spiritual care. God's people gather in a variety of intentional ways, so these rituals may take place in a household setting as part of a regular family event or as part of a church service, small group or camp. Imagine, create and adapt the rituals to be relevant to the young people in your context.

There are five separate rituals designed for whole community gatherings to mark particular points in a young person's life. These include:

- A new sibling
- Starting school
- The first job
- From adolescence to young adulthood
- Leaving home

Each ritual has been designed to encourage intergenerational engagement, but you may find other ways of encouraging sharing, learning, growing and serving across generations. As much as we can all 'do life' together in a spirit of equality and reciprocity we will all benefit.

### A note on terminology

Families are made up of a range of care-giving arrangements and whilst we have used the term 'parents' in some instances, it is assumed this can also refer to other significant adults in the young person's life.

### A note on age inclusivity

This resource focuses on rituals and rites of passage for younger people. Subject to appropriate resourcing being made available, future resources are envisaged that cover significant life changes for older people as well.



<sup>1</sup>Hugh Mackay, *What makes us tick? The Ten desires that drive us*, Hachette, Sydney 2013.

<sup>2</sup>P. Hughes, *Educating for Purposeful Living in a post-traditionalist age*, CRA, 2017, p.26

<sup>3</sup>D McRae-McMahon, *Rituals for Life, Love, and Loss*, Jane Curry Publishing, Edgecliffe, N.S.W. 2003



# A New Sibling

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## Introduction

The arrival of a new baby in a family is a time of mixed emotions – excitement, anticipation, hope, anxiety. It is also a time of change and transition as each family member adjusts to the new dynamic, whether it's the first or second child or another of many. This ritual is both to welcome and celebrate the arrival of the new baby and to acknowledge the change, sense of loss and need to let go by those who are already part of the family or couple.

## Our story

Invite people in your family or congregation to share what they remember of the birth of a sibling, or what it may have been like to be an only child. Hearing from parents and grandparents or others in the congregation about the arrival of their brothers and sisters enables us to hear the bigger human story. There will likely be someone who has a story of profound loss such as the death of a baby or a baby given up for adoption. There may be stories of babies who have been born differently to what their parents had initially hoped. Be prepared that this ritual may create a space that brings this loss to the fore.

## God's story

In the birth of Jesus we witness the desire to honour and celebrate that which comes with the birth of a child. In the narrative, the animals, the wise men, the gifts, the shepherds, angels, parents, even the star are all part of a community that wants to celebrate.

God also understands the tension that can exist between siblings and parents and our desire to belong, be loved and be important in our family. In the Bible story of the two brothers Jacob and Esau, Jacob is his mother's favourite and Esau is his father's. This alignment leads to the two brothers becoming estranged from each other for over twenty years before they are reconciled. Families grow and change and sometimes it takes a lifetime or beyond before things can be made whole. Sibling rivalry is also a part of the stories of Cain and Abel, of Joseph and his brothers. In each of these stories, we see how important the dynamics of families are in our lives and also how they can change over time. God's desire for us is life, but life in all its fullness including the mixed feelings we might have about our families and our brothers and sisters.

## Experiential Rite – Gifts of Hope

Invite each person in the family of the new baby (including extended family or significant friends if this is appropriate) to bring along a symbol of something they hope for this new baby. If their sibling is very young you might ask them what they'd like to give the new baby. These gifts are used as part of the liturgy on the next page.

## Liturgy

L: We give thanks for (name) and for their family  
We welcome (name) into our lives  
in their new family  
into this faith community  
*All: We give thanks for (name)*

L: With new life, there is also change  
As our lives open up to (name)  
Make way for their presence  
We honour their gift of being  
Created in the image of God  
*All: We give thanks to God*

L: We have many hopes for (name)  
We look forward to:  
(invite any siblings to name things they look forward to)  
We worry about:  
(invite any siblings to name things they are worried about)  
We offer these things to them:  
(place the symbols on a table or their cot, if at home, or pram,  
invite people to say something if they'd like to or simply just offer the object.)

L: We also acknowledge that our lives  
Have changed irreversibly  
That there will be hard times as well as joy  
That there may be times when we wish our brother or sister was not born  
We offer all of ourselves to God  
*All: We give thanks for God's ongoing love*

*All: In saying yes to the life abundant that God promises  
We celebrate this new creation  
A new dawn and a new day  
With (name) a part of our family  
We give thanks for new life.  
Amen.*

## Blessing

L: Loving God  
Bless this family and the arrival of (name)  
May you be with (name)'s siblings as they become a big brother / sister  
And their parents (names) as they become parents of (no.) children  
*All: May they find joy in feeding, nappies, and sleep  
May they find love in neighbours, food and rest  
May they find delight in eyes, fingers and toes*

L: We give thanks for all that (name) will bring  
As a child of God, blessed and loved  
Part of God's good creation.  
*All: Amen.*



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## Suggestions for parents

Invite extended family to write or draw their hope in a journal or special book or on separate sheets of paper that can be compiled together. Young children might need you to ask them how they are feeling and write this down for them.

The book can then be added to over the years or kept and given to your young person at a later date such as their 18th birthday.



# Starting School

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### Introduction

Starting a new school or moving schools is a significant time of transition. Each movement from kindergarten, to primary and secondary school then, perhaps, to TAFE or University marks a time of growing up and the beginning of something new. For others, moving schools part way through the year may be a time of upheaval and change. Moving into VCE can also be an important transition to mark.

### Our Story

Hearing from parents and grandparents or others in the congregation about their first days at school enables us to hear the bigger human story. Invite someone much older or from the year above to share what it was like on their first day of Kinder, Prep or Year 7. Invite a parent and a grandparent to share a memory of their first day at school.

### God's story

Learning can be one of the great joys throughout our lives. As babies we learn to use our legs and our hands, as children we can run, jump, swim. Our brains grow and we begin to reflect more and wrestle with what an ethical response might be in situations. We master skills, develop knowledge and grow in faith as we learn about ourselves, others and the nature of God.

As a boy, Jesus sat among his teachers and listened to them and asked them questions. (Luke 2:46) Jesus "grew in wisdom" as He grew "in stature" (Luke 2:52). This was his grounding for a life of learning. School is often the place where we form views about how the world is and who we are. Later in life we might re-visit these views and see them in a different light, but they will often still define us in some way.

We learn about the nature of God through creation, through each other, through reading and re-reading Scripture and through our life experiences. As we open ourselves up to God, the teachings we have in the Bible and the leading of God's Spirit, our understanding of God's wisdom deepens.

### Experiential Rite Crossing the Threshold

Set up an archway to symbolize the journey of crossing into something new. This can be done in a number of ways:

- two people (or a series of pairs) join their hands together above their heads to make a tunnel
- purchase an arbor frame from a gardening supplies store. This has the advantage of being able to add flowers or prayers or symbols as part of the ritual.
- use a door through which people can walk through between two spaces
- set up a series of chairs or obstacles for the person to climb over
- make up your own!

## Liturgy

*The young person stands ready to enter the archway. Appointed people gather around to support them or receive them on the other side. As part of the liturgy the young person will cross the threshold. As they leave one space have a uniform or bag or something from that time they can leave behind. As they emerge into the new space have ready something to symbolise their entry into this new time – this could also be a uniform or a bag of things to support them on their journey, such as stress balls, tokens or symbols, notes or letters of support from family or people in the congregation.*

L: God is a God of new beginnings and new creations. In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. God blessed this new life and called it good.

*All: We give thanks for new beginnings*

L: God of new beginnings, walk with (name) as they leave behind their kindergarten / primary school/ old school and enter into a new year / time, a new path with new opportunities.

*All: Walk with them as they make new friends and have new teachers*

*Walk with them as they are tested and measured*

*Walk with them as they learn and discover*

L: Walk with them as they play and experiment

Walk with them as they grow and develop

*All: We give thanks for new beginnings*

(The young person places the symbols of release down and walks through the archway, where they are presented with new symbols and welcomed by other members of the congregation – children who are already at primary or secondary school)

## Prayer

*(Invite people from different generations to say parts of this prayer)*

1: God of growth, we give thanks that no matter what our age we can still enjoy learning.

2: God of grace, we give thanks for the teachers in our lives, at school, in our families and in our communities.

3: God of justice, we pray for those who will struggle at school, for those who cannot go to school for reasons of war and poverty, here and overseas.

1,2,3: God of diversity, we pray for those who struggle with the school system, who have different learning abilities and needs.

*All: God of unconditional love, we give thanks for Jesus who taught us what it means to live a life of searching and understanding.*

Amen.

## Blessing

L: Loving God

We gather to celebrate the new school year

May you journey with us as we learn and grow

*All: Give us hope in our challenges*

*Give us courage to take risks*

*Give us delight when we do well*

*May your light guide us and your love surround us*

*Amen*



## Suggestions for parents:

On your child's first day of kinder or school, take a photo in a particular place such as the front door of your house. Each year you can then replicate this moment. Even if the front door changes for

different houses, the repetition reinforces the importance and becomes a 'touchstone' that they can look back on and mark their growing up. You may also like to have a special breakfast and say a prayer or blessing for them as they leave.



The  
First

# Job

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## Introduction

Entering the world of work for the first time can signify to a young person they are being taken seriously in the adult world. Ideally, they see they have a meaningful contribution to make, a contribution that is valued in a way they may not have experienced before. Having some money of their own means the young person also has to make decisions about what to do with that money and how that is going to reflect who they are in the world. They face new responsibilities in turning up to work at a particular time, completing tasks and meeting expectations. They gain some financial freedom, but lose discretion over some of their time.

## Our Story

The first day at work is usually a memorable experience for people. We are juggling so many things; we want to be seen as capable, we want to be liked by our colleagues, we want to figure out the culture, the power dynamics, the process of how to actually get the job done, how to navigate break times and getting paid. Invite people in the congregation to reflect on and share a story about their first experience of paid work or something they value about their time working, paid or unpaid.

Alternatively invite three people from different generations to talk about an aspect of their work that they find meaningful or that gives them a sense of purpose. Ask them to bring along something that symbolizes this for them. After each person has spoken and placed their symbol on the table, the people respond:  
*We give thanks for your work.*

## God's story

In Genesis 1:1-15 we see God at work in a courageous creative act, bringing each aspect of the universe into being and delighting in its goodness. On the seventh day, God rests. Work and rest/reflection go hand in hand. Without work it is hard to appreciate rest and without rest we cannot see the goodness of our work.

Many stories in the Bible reflect the experiences we might encounter at work – the workers in the vineyard struggle with what is fair, Zaccheus struggles with the ethics of his work as a tax collector, Jesus questions the authorities of the day and who we serve with our work. We are called to do inner spiritual work on ourselves and then express this work outwardly in the world.

Psalm 19 says the skies proclaim the work of God's hands - the nature of God is revealed through work. Work can reveal something about ourselves too - it shows our character, what we care about, what drives us and what we can do.

Writing on vocation, the Presbyterian minister and writer Frederick Buechner says, "The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet." There is a place for all of us to do the work God is calling us to.

## Experiential Rite – navigating the workplace

Many of the skills needed in a workplace are about being part of a team and showing respect for others' skills and contributions as well as having your skills recognized and celebrated.

Set up a small obstacle course by putting a range of objects on the ground such as chairs, small tables, pot plants. Put a sign on each of them with things they might encounter in a workplace

like: 'the difficult colleague', 'getting to work on time', 'technology or equipment breakdown'. Blindfold your young person and tell them they need to work out how to move through it and get to the other side. They are allowed to ask five questions from members of their family or congregation along the way. See if they can get through to the other side without hitting an obstacle.

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## Liturgy

*You will need a bowl of warm water and a towel*

Invite the young person to place their hands in the water for the following blessing and their parents or a significant adult to hold their hands.

L: As the skies proclaim the work of God's hands, we now honour the hands of (name) as a symbol of the work they will offer to the world.

*All: In the beginning,  
God created the heavens and the earth  
And rejoiced in what was created*

L: In the beginning  
We were formed in our mother's womb  
And grew as creative beings

*All: We are made in the image of God  
Together we create and are creating  
The world in which we all live*

(take their hands out of the water and invite the parents to dry them)

## Blessing

*You may like to invite parents / significant people to lay hands for the blessing*

L: Today we celebrate (name)'s entry into the world of work

*All: May you use your gifts to serve others*

L: May you discover and build on your talents

*All: May you relish the sense of a job well done*

L: May you know the joy of contributing to God's world

*All: We give thanks for (name) and their work in the world  
Amen*



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## Suggestions for parents

Your child will possibly need a tax file number or an ABN, a bank account and, if it is more than a part time job after school, they will need to complete a tax return and learn which documents they need to keep. These things in themselves are

rites of passage and opportunities to celebrate their entry into the adult world of work. Celebrate your child's first pay day and ask them questions to encourage them to reflect on their values around work, recognizing that the world of work shifts significantly between generations.



## From Adolescence to Young *Adulthood*

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### Introduction

The transition from adolescence to young adulthood involves the growth in maturity and responsibility in the young person, physically, intellectually, emotionally and spiritually. This ritual marks this development in the life of the young person and the wider community's role in supporting them through this transition in forming their own identity.

For a young person to grow up, they need to differentiate themselves from their parents and their parents need to let go in order to allow this to happen. To develop spiritually, young people need skills in reflecting on their inner life and making sense of their experiences. It's a time for parents to listen and gently question, rather than control and give advice.

A younger child may believe they are at the centre of the universe, whereas a healthy adult recognizes they are part of a community, aware of others' needs and that their actions affect others<sup>4</sup>. This ritual symbolises the transition of the young person into this wider faith community. Baptism may be something the young person also chooses at this time.

### A note on timing

The trigger for this will be unique to each person. Ideally, it will build on other significant immersion experiences such as a long hike or outdoor camp, an exposure trip overseas or within another culture here in Australia or as part of an organised Rites of Passage experience. The Uniting Church offers immersion experiences through Yurora (formerly NCYC), the About FACE program and Volunteers in Mission experiences. Many schools also offer these sorts of programs in years 9 & 10. Recognising these in a faith context can build on

the transformation that may have taken place. It is important that the faith community provides space with-in the community for the young person to reflect on, and have opportunities to integrate, their experiences beyond the community.

For more information on adolescent Rites of Passage see:

<https://ritesofpassageinstitute.org>

<http://www.ignite.org.au/mentoring>

<http://pathwaysfoundation.org.au>

<http://here2stay.org.au/8pillars/anchors/>

For more on understanding adolescent development, The World Health Organisation has developed a useful chart, which may also help the faith community discern when the right time is to offer this particular right of passage for the young person.

[http://apps.who.int/adolescent/second-decade/section/section\\_2/level2\\_2.php](http://apps.who.int/adolescent/second-decade/section/section_2/level2_2.php)

### Our Story

Invite the parents / significant adults in the young person's life and faith community to write them a letter. The intent of the letter is to allow the parents and other people in the community to acknowledge and recognise that the young person is growing up. If there are a number of young people in the faith community, gather their parents together for a time of prayer and sharing (without the young people present) so they can start to get in touch with what this change means for them.

Offer some suggestions to include in the letter such as:

- What would you like to say to your son/daughter at this point in their life? This may be an acknowledgement that they are changing or stepping up.
- What do you want to acknowledge about him/her?
- What do you value in your relationship?
- You might like to thank them for particular things - what special memories do you want to share with him/her?
- What are your hopes and aspirations?
- What do you want to affirm in him/her?
- What aspects of faith do you want to share?

Ask the parents to give the letter to you so you can post it or give the letter to the young person, either as part of an immersive experience or at a time when the young person has some time alone for reflection.

### God's story

If Jesus is our role model, Paul the Apostle is our guide to the struggles of living a faithful life of discipleship. In Paul's letter to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 13) he talks about the nature of agape love – God's divine love. Growing in faith, witness and service is an ongoing process, whatever age we are. To grow up well is to grow in love for God and the people and world around us – to become whole people. Whatever age we are, in Christ, "When completeness comes, what is in part disappears."

This letter is Paul's letter to us, the sharing of his story of growing in faith and his desire for us to always be growing in love for God, ourselves and others.

### Experiential Rite – Cutting of ties

The process of letting children go begins from the time they are born, when the umbilical cord is cut. It is necessary for this to happen so the baby can enter the next stage of life on their own.

#### You will need:

- approximately 3 meters of light-coloured cotton tape (or something you can write on)
- green permanent marker
- black permanent marker
- a pair of scissors strong enough to be able to cut the tape

On one end in **green** marker write the following words in order, leaving at least a 5cm gap between, so you can cut them.

Independence  
Wisdom  
Hands off  
Influence

On the other end write these words in black marker in the following order:

Dependence  
Rules  
Hands on  
Control

You should now have a piece of tape with words at either end, and a blank space in the middle.

Wrap the end with the green words around the young person's waist and ask a parent to hold the end with the black words so they are standing facing each other but side on to the gathered community. Ask another trusted adult to hold the scissors and stand between them (facing the community) ready to cut the tape.



## Invite the parents to say the following:

We accept that you are growing up and becoming more independent

We release you into this next stage of young adulthood  
*(cut dependence)*

We accept that as the adults in your life what we have to offer now is wisdom rather than rules  
*(cut rules)*

We accept that we can no longer shield and protect you  
Even though we might still long to  
*(cut hands on)*

We accept that you need to step into being the person God has created you to be, not as we might want to shape you.  
*(cut control)*

We release you now into the world  
Held by this wider community of faith, love and hope  
*(Unravel the young person and hand the cord with the green words to them)*

## On accepting the cord, the young person responds:

I accept that I am becoming more independent and need to make my own decisions  
I am thankful for the guidance you have given that will allow me to think through the consequences of my actions on others  
I am grateful for all the love and care you have given so that I may know how to love and give to others  
I accept that I am loved and made in God's image and will seek to reflect this love in the world  
I am ready to enter this next stage.

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## Blessing (laying of hands by significant people in the young person's life)

L: May God who creates us  
and calls us into relationships of wholeness  
release you (name) from the ways of childhood  
and welcome you into the community in a new way

*All: As one who is growing in independence  
as one who is developing in wisdom  
as one who learning the ways of adulthood  
as one who is ready to enter the world anew  
Amen*



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## Suggestions for parents

Spend some intentional one-on-one time with your young person. Focus on really seeing and honouring them as the person they are growing up to be. Some ways you might do this are:

- Go on an overnight hike / camping trip
- Invite significant adults (same gender) to go away for a weekend to a holiday house

- Share stories of their life around a campfire
- Go out to dinner and intentionally celebrate their growing up - share photos (or create a photo album) and tell stories of birth, toddlerhood, childhood, teenage years etc.



# Leaving home

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## Introduction

Leaving home is not always a one off event. Young people may move out of home for work or study only to return on weekends or for longer periods. Sometimes the work is temporary, they might move back in to save money in order to travel or buy a house or they might only have work during semester breaks. There might also be a significant relationship in the mix.

The skills a young person needs in order to live out of home are numerous. They include negotiating with real estate agents, planning and budgeting, cooking, cleaning and negotiating shared housing or living arrangements. They must also make their own decisions about how they want to live, which can create tension if they are still in the family home for periods of time. Parents need to treat their young person more as they would another adult, whilst still providing the support they need. It is often a crucial time for the young person to think about their faith and what they believe.

## Our story

Invite people from a range of ages to share their experiences of leaving home. What prompted the move? Did they live in a shared house or get married or go and live with their partner? Can they remember learning something significant about the process of moving out of home? What was it like to return home?

## God's story

The Bible is full of stories about leaving home and returning. It is such a fundamental part of growing up that many of the contemporary movies and stories that shape the culture we live in also grapple with what it is to leave and return home. Luke Skywalker and Harry Potter both leave their homes in order to discover who they are and what their purpose is.

In the Parable of the Lost Son (Luke 15:11-12) we see the two brothers take different paths in life and the father's joy and boundless love when the lost son returns home. In the story of Ruth and Naomi, we see the strong ties of family that can hold us together throughout adversity and the desire we have for a place to call home.

## Experiential Rite

This rite might be conducted in the home the young person is leaving\* and/or the new home they are going to. Invite the church community and other significant people to be part of the blessing.

A very old Christian tradition is to bless a house by sprinkling water in each room as the occupants walk through. Water is also the symbol of new life in baptism.

Carry a small bowl of water with you as you move through each room. With your fingers flick some water into the room as a blessing. Invite people to share some memories to honour the place that room has had in the young person's life. If you can't be in the home, blessing the young person themselves with water as you say the following blessing can be done instead. Ideally, arrange for multiple people who are of significance to the young person to share in the sprinkling of water and speaking of blessing. If the person is moving into student accommodation, you may need to adapt or delete the rooms to suit.

*continued next page*

\*=this rite may also be adapted for the situation in which the young person may be leaving their church "home". For example, memories could be shared and water sprinkled at different places across the church site.

**Experiential Rite continued**

As you (Name) leave this house / community / place.

We want to bless you on your journey as you move to (new home)

We want to bless you in the kitchen as you eat with others (sprinkle water)

We want to bless you in the bathroom as you prepare for each day (sprinkle water)

We want to bless you in the lounge room as you share your life (sprinkle water)

We want to bless you in the laundry as you clean and renew (sprinkle water)

We want to bless you in the bedroom as you sleep and rest (sprinkle water)

**Liturgy**

L: At best our homes are places of deep belonging.

All: *We can sing and dance like no one is looking*

We can wear our pyjamas all day if we want to

L: We can sulk, make mistakes and be angry

We trust we will be forgiven

All: *We give thanks for the gifts of home*

L: Sometimes our homes are temporary

All: *We are at a point of transition*

We are searching, longing, learning

We explore freedom, we come and go

L: We find home in unexpected places

All: *We give thanks for the surprises of home*

All: We grieve for those who have no home

We long for them to feel safe and belong

L: We desire for them what we desire for ourselves

comfort, warmth, shelter, protection

A world where all have a place to call home

All: *We yearn for the gifts of home for all*

L: In God's house there are many rooms

And a place prepared just for us

All: *May we strive to make our homes*

places of welcome, love and peace

L: Where all can find belonging

All: *We give thanks for the gift of home*

Amen

**Blessing**

Bless this house and those within,  
 Bless our giving and receiving,  
 Bless our words and conversation,  
 Bless our hands and recreation,  
 Bless our sowing and our growing,  
 Bless our coming and our going,  
 Bless all who enter and depart,  
 Bless this house, your peace impart.

Source for the blessing:

[http://www.faithandworship.com/blessings\\_for\\_a\\_house.html#ixzz5OEbBbLtj](http://www.faithandworship.com/blessings_for_a_house.html#ixzz5OEbBbLtj)

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**Suggestions for parents:**

The following is a list of things that will equip your young person to be able to leave home and look after themselves. Consider using this list as a way of helping them see their progress and acknowledge each milestone.

- cook at least three nutritious meals
- clean a bathroom properly
- sew on a button
- iron a shirt
- grow herbs or look after a garden
- paint a room, organize belongings
- basic filing and organization of important documents – for tax, voting, passport applications
- basic budgeting
- manage phone plans, paying bills
- change a tyre, basic car / tools / electronics
- cope with etiquette relating to dining, dating, writing letters
- dress well – tie a tie, polish shoes
- converse well, exercise social behavior
- manage personal hygiene and health

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