**Study on Luke 2:41-50**

* **Every year, the parents of Jesus went to Jerusalem for the Passover Festival. When Jesus was twelve years old, they went to the festival as usual***(Luke 2:41).*
* **When the festival was over, they started back home, but the boy Jesus stayed in Jerusalem. His parents did not know this; they thought that he was in the group, *lit. the caravan,* so they travelled a whole day and then started looking for him among their relatives and friends.****They did not find him, so they went back to Jerusalem looking for him…** *(Luke 2:43-45).*
* **On the third day, they found him in the Temple, sitting with the Jewish teachers, listening to them and asking questions. All who heard him were amazed at his intelligent answers.**

**His parents were astonished when the saw him *there,* and his mother said to him, “My son, why have you done this to us? Your father and I have been terribly worried, *lit. in great distress,* trying to find you”.**

**He answered them, “Why did you have to look for me? Didn’t you know that I had to be in my Father’s house?” But they did not understand his answer** *(Luke 2:46-50).*

DVD Spot: **Growing Young: Helping young people**

**discover and love the Church**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=il1KMMwPDpI>

\* From 00:00 – 12:53

**Discussion Questions:**

1. Have you ever lost a child temporarily? Share about this, and about your anguish when you lost this child?

How did the situation resolve itself?

1. Talk together about Mary and Joseph’s situation, and their anguish is losing their 12 year old son, Jesus, *a situation that Luke describes in chapter 2 of his Gospel.*

Where was Jesus? What was he doing?

Who do you think cared for Jesus during these the three days that he was in Jerusalem?

1. The *Growing Young* authors use this story in Luke 2 to emphasise the need to fuel a warm community in our churches so that our young people and our emerging adults might be cared for and grow in their faith.

Have we a warm community here at Glynde? What are we doing well? How might we better fuel a warm community where young people *and older people, all people* might feel welcome and valued?

1. Are you empathizing with the young people in our church family and our mid-week ministries? How are you doing this? What suggestions do you have to help the young people in our midst grow in their faith?
2. What do you think of the “growing young” focus?

Do you want to be a church which is growing young?

Why? Or why not?

**Quotes:**

The following are quotes Sunday’s message on the theme: “The boy Jesus in the community”, *which is subtitled: Growing Young: Fueling a warm community”*

* Let’s look more closely at Luke’s account of what happened, andthen **we are going to think for a while about the implications from this story for us, *and in particular the implications for our care of the young people in our midst.***
* Now why are we focusing on this story, as we begin this series on GROWING YOUNG? As the writers of the *Growing Young* book put it:

**There are a few questions *relating to this passage that* we don’t often hear asked about this story, but they have the potential to be game changers for churches that want to grow young.**

**Where did Jesus sleep?**

**Who made sure he was safe?**

**And maybe most importantly, *who fed this boy?***

**Have you ever attempted to keep a 12-year-old boy fed? I (Kara) have, and it’s not a small feat!**

We can give a spiritualized answer to these questions, and perhaps God simply watched over and provided for Jesus those three days. **But *the* odds are good *that* there is also a communal answer. Our hunch is that the faith community saw this young person, embraced him, and welcomed him to their table** *(p. 177-178).*

* **I wonder whether young people today find something similar in our churches? And in this church in particular…? Do young people in our church here feel welcomed, embraced, and cared for?**
* **The *Growing Young* authors focus on six core commitments of Churches who want to grow young,** *in other words churches who want to foster having young people in their midst, and who want to grow the faith of their young people….* **This morning, we are focusing on just two of the six core commitments, *commitments that flow from our Bible reading,* namely:**
  + **Empathise with today’s young people**
  + **Fuel a warm community**
  + **Young people, *like us older people,* have three main questions:**
  + **“Who am I?” (identity)**
  + **“Where do I fit in?” (belonging)**
  + **“What difference do I make?” (purpose)**

**Our task as parents and adult mentors of the young people in our midst is to care for the young people around us, *to empathise with them,* and to help them answer these basic questions that they are struggling with, *or will struggle with.***

* **The authors of *Growing Young* note that both young people and adults value churches that they are warm and friendly.** They use words that belong to what they call “the warmth cluster” of words: *welcoming, belonging, authentic, hospitable, and caring (p. 166).*

**That’s what the boy Jesus surely experienced even when he was “lost” in Jerusalem. His parents weren’t around, but he was still fed, and cared for, and given a place to sleep. He was looked after by the faith community around him. And that’s what God wants us to do with regard to one another, and particularly the young in our midst….**

**\*So what are you and I doing to empathise with the young people around us, and to create a warm community? And what could we be doing in these areas?**