**‘Blessing of the Kids’ 2017**

**Play ‘ehills value slideshow’ as people arrive.**

**Welcome**

Annual celebration of the kids –Welcome you all as part of the community these kids are growing up in.

**Opening Prayer**

**Invite a child to open in prayer or read the following:**

Jesus took children in his arms and blessed them.  
Father God we come to you, running, skipping, crawling, or being carried.  
May your Spirit of love fill us like breath in a balloon  
May you talk to us through your scripture today  
May our faith grow up towards our Lord Jesus. Amen.

**Worship or Communion**

**Communion with a focus on Kids**

Jesus always had children in his crew. I am sure there were kids around when Jesus was at the table and they would have had a great time together. One time when he was eating with his closest friends he said that soon he would die at we wouldn’t be able to see him anymore. He asked us to always remember him by having a special meal together. We are going to have that meal called ‘communion’ now.

We are going to have communion together now.

**Bread**

The bread reminds us of Jesus body, that he was a real person as real as this bread. Jesus showed us that God loves us and how to live a life of love for others.

Let’s eat and as we do remember Jesus and how much he loves us.

**Juice**

The juice reminds us of blood. That Jesus died but God has bought him back to life in his forever body and that we will all drink with him again one day!

Lets drink and look forward to the sweet time when we will all drink together with him.

**Annual Community Blessing of the Kids**

***Invite the kids one by one and give them a certificate with the meaning of their name and a verse.***

Everyone please stand and all the babies join the kids. I am going to ask all the adults a question and they can answer ‘we will’.

To all the friends and family gathered here, I ask:

Will you, who form the community of love in which these kids will grow, keep these families in your hearts and prayers, offering them your support and sharing with them your hope and love? Will you welcome these kids into the common life of discipleship and prayer in this church, so that they might grow up knowing the love of Christ?

WE WILL.

**Confetti/bubbles of Blessing (Some adults blow bubbles)**

We are going to pray a special prayer for you now and as these confetti/bubbles fall on you, so do our blessings.

If people would like to say a sentence of blessing, encouragement or prayer please do and I will close.

May you kids grow strong and happy. May truth be found on your words, stories, songs and games. May faith, love, hope, compassion, justice and mercy be found in your heart. May you be a blessing to those around you and bring honour to God in your unique ways. May the Light of the World lead you in peace and joy to a full and wonderful life in Jesus. Amen.

**Offering – play slide 1**

**Announcements**

As a church community we share our money to make church possible and to support lots of wonderful projects.

This week we have Streets of the East Wednesday, Hangout at the Public Brewery Thursday, Freedom riders Xmas party Saturday and our first Advent service Sunday. Please check the Xmas party RSVPS.

**Bible Story Intro – Tol**

A few sentences of context for the story of Paul in prison.

**Story – Acts 12:1-19 The Message**

**Slide 2** [**http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-F5SD7EYhaB0/VloGg1Kn\_5I/AAAAAAAABbo/AudV8FKKe-I/s1600/1.%2BPeter%2Bjailed.jpg**](http://1.bp.blogspot.com/-F5SD7EYhaB0/VloGg1Kn_5I/AAAAAAAABbo/AudV8FKKe-I/s1600/1.%2BPeter%2Bjailed.jpg)

**12 1-4**That’s when King Herod got it into his head to go after some of the church members. He murdered James, John’s brother. When he saw how much it raised his popularity ratings with the Jews, he arrested Peter—all this during Passover Week, mind you—and had him thrown in jail, putting four squads of four soldiers each to guard him. He was planning a public lynching after Passover.

Slide 3 <http://media.freebibleimages.org/stories/FB_Peter_Prison/overview_images/003-peter-prison.jpg?1436947749>

**5**All the time that Peter was under heavy guard in the jailhouse, the church prayed for him most strenuously.

**6**Then the time came for Herod to bring him out for the kill. That night, even though shackled to two soldiers, one on either side, Peter slept like a baby. And there were guards at the door keeping their eyes on the place. Herod was taking no chances!

Slide 4 <http://media.freebibleimages.org/stories/FB_Peter_Prison/overview_images/004-peter-prison.jpg?1436947749>

**7-9**Suddenly there was an angel at his side and light flooding the room. The angel shook Peter and got him up: “Hurry!” The handcuffs fell off his wrists. The angel said, “Get dressed. Put on your shoes.” Peter did it. Then, “Grab your coat and let’s get out of here.” Peter followed him, but didn’t believe it was really an angel—he thought he was dreaming.

Slide 5 <http://media.freebibleimages.org/stories/FB_Peter_Prison/overview_images/005-peter-prison.jpg?1436947749>

**10-11**Past the first guard and then the second, they came to the iron gate that led into the city. It swung open before them on its own, and they were out on the street, free as the breeze.

Slide 6 <http://www.freebibleimages.org/illustrations/peter-prison/>

At the first intersection the angel left him, going his own way. That’s when Peter realized it was no dream. “I can’t believe it—this really happened! The Master sent his angel and rescued me from Herod’s vicious little production and the spectacle the Jewish mob was looking forward to.”

Slide 7 <http://www.freebibleimages.org/illustrations/peter-prison/>

**12-14**Still shaking his head, amazed, he went to Mary’s house, the Mary who was John Mark’s mother. The house was packed with praying friends.

Slide 8 <http://www.freebibleimages.org/illustrations/peter-prison/>

When he knocked on the door to the courtyard, a young woman named Rhoda came to see who it was. But when she recognized his voice—Peter’s voice!—she was so excited and eager to tell everyone Peter was there that she forgot to open the door and left him standing in the street.

Slide 9 <http://www.freebibleimages.org/illustrations/peter-prison/>

**15-16**But they wouldn’t believe her, dismissing her, dismissing her report. “You’re crazy,” they said. She stuck by her story, insisting. They still wouldn’t believe her and said, “It must be his angel.” All this time poor Peter was standing out in the street, knocking away.

Slide 10 <http://media.freebibleimages.org/stories/FB_Peter_Prison/overview_images/010-peter-prison.jpg?1436947750>

**16-17**Finally they opened up and saw him—and went wild! Peter put his hands up and calmed them down. He described how the Master had gotten him out of jail, then said, “Tell James and the brothers what’s happened.” He left them and went off to another place.

Slide 11 <http://www.freebibleimages.org/illustrations/peter-prison/>

**18-19**At daybreak the jail was in an uproar. “Where is Peter? What’s happened to Peter?” When Herod sent for him and they could neither produce him nor explain why not, he ordered their execution: “Off with their heads!” Fed up with Judea and Jews, he went for a vacation to Caesarea.

**Wondering Questions – Toli**

Peter lived in a time when… and he still managed to fall asleep. What stops people from sleeping well? Why do you think Peter was able to sleep?

God’s angel comes with power into this situation. What did you think was interesting about the way the angel acted?

What was Peter’s church community doing for him? What did they think when their prayer was anwered? What sort of things can we come together to pray for? I wonder when you have seen answers to prayer lately?

God is still helping Christians when they are under pressure or in danger. Do you know of any stories?

**Prayer paper chains or Bunting - Toli**

We are going to pray together now, on each piece of paper/bunting you can write or draw a prayer for God to bring his power and rescue to someone or somewhere we care about.

Make chains in groups. When you are finished drawing and writing, pray a sentence for each piece in your group, link together it together and hang it up.

**Grade six Graduates - Toli**

We are celebrating today, the special milestone that a few of our church family have come to this season.

Aaron and Luke are finishing their primary school education and becoming teenagers.

*Welcome them to the front.*

This is an exciting time of discovery, challenge and stepping out.

These young men are at the age where they will make decisions for themselves about what they believe, what subjects they will study, what passions they will pursue, how they will spend their resources and the sort of people they want to be at home, in school, in work, in the car, on the sports field, in cyberspace, with friends and at church.

When Jesus was twelve years old his parents lost him at a festival. He got in a lot of trouble! When they found him he was in the temple, spending time with the leaders. He was asking questions tying to nut out what he was really all about. Jesus realized it was a new time in his life. One where he needed to figure out and embrace what life was all about for himself.

We want to celebrate this special season today as you graduate from primary school and kids church to High school and Youth. We look forward to seeing you engage with the world, we look forward to the ways you will share with us here.

**Gift and Prayer (Strawberry plant)**

We are going to give you a gift that comes with our prayer.

*God we ask that you will grow these people before us, may each day bring them into a fuller awareness of your love and a greater respect for who you created them to be.*

We give you each a plant with our prayer that you will grow deep in knowledge, strong in body and great in faith. This fruit represents our prayer that love and mercy will be the marker of your life, a sign to everyone that you are a friend of Jesus.

**Closing Prayer**

We believe in God, the creator and giver of life, who brought all creation to birth, who mothers and fathers us, protecting, nurturing, and cherishing us.

We believe in Jesus Christ; God born among us as a fragile baby, embodying both love and the need for love, and calling us to rest in God as trustingly as a tiny child.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, breathed into us at our birth, always drawing us to be born again, encouraging, exhorting, comforting, nourishing our growth and inspiring our living.

And we believe that each new child is a glimpse of the face of God, a sign of the life to come, and a call to live in peace and celebrate living together. Amen.

<http://jmm.aaa.net.au/articles/14335.htm>