



## Facilitators Guide – Rites of Passage

This workshop was created by Rev. Steve Dixon (Team Leader – Youth & Young Adults Baptist Churches of NSW & ACT).

In this workshop Steve will look at the opportunity we have to acknowledge and celebrate with children and young people through Rites of Passage. The opportunity to celebrate growth and change intentionally and amongst the church community.

Whether it be getting your license having an 'O' birthday or getting married there are a number of rites of passage amongst our broader community. This is true for our faith community also. Whether it be baptism or stepping into leadership or a ministry team for the first time there are times when a shift or change has taken place. Steve unpacks why these are opportunities not to be missed especially in the life of children and young people.

There will be some biblical reflection and some personal stories in this workshop which will frame for us why we need to consider intentionally making space for rites of passage in our ministry context.

There will also be some time exploring church-based rites of passage. The focus from Steve is church based ministries and programs. However there might be the opportunity to think about the end of the year in an SRE context in the second part of the first discussion time (the one asking what rites of passage do you see in the lives of young people). This could be something you already know happens or perhaps something to be explored with the classroom teacher for the end of this year.

At the end of the workshop presentation there is the opportunity to practically apply this material through designing a rite of passage together.

It is a video presentation with an opportunity to pause and discuss together as a group. At the end of the video is space for designing a rite of passage as a practical application of what has been presented. Try to ensure the earlier discussions don't go overtime this will enable enough time for this activity.

### Resources:

- Download video from website
- Provide blank paper for people to make notes and to design the rite of passage together

### Workshop Outline (1 hour)

- **Your intro:** let people know this video only has 1 opportunity to pause and discuss before practically applying the workshop by designing a rite of passage together. This means the first half is more listening and engaging with the video presentation by Steve and the second half is diving in together in discussion and creativity. Everyone will receive a link to the video to watch it again and share with their team. **(max 2minutes)**

### What is a Rite of Passage?

- Steve introduces a rite of passage as a marker of a new season to come which happens when a shift or change has taken place. Where we look back to where we have been and note the growth/development that has led to this point today and we look forward to the new that is to come.



- They are memorable times of celebration, acknowledgment and recognition of who this young person is and who they will become in the future.
- [Pause & chat 10:55](#) An opportunity to ask and share about rites of passage you and those in the room with you have experienced. *As this discussion time has a storytelling focus you may want to consider breaking into smaller groups or pairs to allow more people to share.* After about 6-7mins you might consider coming back as one group and trying to list some rites of passage you see in the life of young people (**up to 10 minutes**)

### What does the Bible say about this concept?

- Many passages call on people to remember what God has done and look forward to what is to come.
  - Revelation, Deuteronomy 15:5, Isaiah 46:9, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26
- This is not just remembering so we don't forget, but this kind of remembering spurs action. Sometimes it is because we have forgotten to do something and we remember and we then act, but it is also about bringing it to the forefront of our minds, reflecting on it and then being spurred into action. The things we have in the forefront of our minds are the things that are going to most shape our actions and attitudes.
- One of the most significant ways we can remember God and His goodness is through the concept of rites of passage.
  - We stop -> we remember -> we act/live in a new way of being
- [The Rites of Passage Institute](#) describes it this way:

*A Rites of Passage is a process that transforms you from one stage in life to the next. For thousands of years, Indigenous and Traditional communities recognised the importance of these transitions for the growth, connectedness and health of an individual and community. In modern society we have lost most Rites of Passage and instead we see young people trying to create their own, often with disastrous consequences. The need for programs that help equip young people with the confidence and tools to tackle the adventure and challenges that lie ahead are more critical than ever.*

- 3 key areas of a rite of passage:
  - **Separation** from what was
  - **Transition** into a new way of being
  - **Integrating** the new way of being into who we are becoming

### What about specifically Christian rites of passage?

- **Romans 6:5-11**
  - Here and elsewhere the Apostle Paul describes a marker in time centred on Jesus where the old has gone and the new has come
- **Baptism** is a rite of passage centred on Jesus. An intentional, communal opportunity to look back at what God has done and look forward to what he has promised.
  - *Consider who in your ministry area could you prompt to explore expressing their faith through baptism.*
- There could also be particular camps or retreats that act as a rite of passage or transitioning from one ministry program to the next.



### Designing a rite of passage together

Together as a group you will now design a rite of passage. Doing it together as a whole group will be most beneficial as it gives everyone the opportunity to listen to the voices and perspectives of others. Collaborating together is an important skill that we all need to practice often.

Importantly this time is an opportunity to apply what we have just heard

- [Pause & Chat 25:55](#) Because rites of passage are intentional moments (they don't just happen because some change has occurred) as a group you are going to now design a rite of passage.
- This is the end of the video presentation however you will still need to pause the video to keep the slide on the screen for reference.

The context for this is: The young person is finishing their involvement in a program due to their age. Either finishing a primary aged kids program and joining a youth ministry program or finishing a youth ministry program and joining an emerging adults program or group.

- **Key elements to include:**
- **Reflection** – how will you reflect on what God has done in the finishing season?
- **Celebration** – how will you celebrate what you have noticed in this individual? How will you mark the moment?
- **Looking forward** – how will you capture and express what God might be leading this individual into

**Please use what time is remaining to complete this activity together.**

**Thank you for leading this workshop for your region!**