

## **Make a Difference Day – Follow Up Activities**

**The following activities have been created to help Jr. Youth reflect and debrief the topics presented in this year's Make a Difference Theme – "Open to God: Exploring Our Gifts." Please feel free to use and adapt these activities to best suit the needs of your Jr. Youth and church family.**

### **1. Highlighting Gifts**

Sometimes it's hard to notice our own gifts and we need others to point them out to us. This exercise will help encourage the gifts of individuals as well as help everyone get comfortable with affirming the gifts they see in others. *Have a conversation with the youth about the fact the range of gifts is broader than the Biblical list- be creative!*

Sit in a circle and hand out to each person enough small pieces of paper for everyone around the circle. Have them put one name on each piece of paper and then write/draw something they appreciate or a gift they notice in that person. Once everyone has done that, have each youth sit in the centre and have everyone read what they wrote. *Give the pieces of paper to the individual to be kept and referred to when they need a pick-me-up.*

### **2. Shining Back and Forth**

The church is called to be a place of identifying gifts in each other. This activity helps the youth think about the qualities of their congregation that shine, and then invites the congregation to notice the ways the youth shine. To start, have the youth create a mural full of words and pictures of the ways the youth think the congregation shines. Leave extra space. Pick a Sunday to display the mural somewhere people will notice, and have the youth announce to the congregation what they have done. Leave markers near the mural for the congregation to add their own words and pictures.

Under the mural, leave boxes with the names of each of the youth with pens and paper lying around and encourage the congregation to write notes to the individual youth about qualities and gifts they see... the things that shine! After a couple weeks the sponsors can put the notes in envelopes and send them to the youth. *We encourage sponsors to add notes to any boxes that don't have any before returning them to the youth.*