

## **Festival Teesside Assembly 'Community'**

*For use in Secondary Schools across Teesside in the lead up to Festival Teesside  
Ideally in w/c 3<sup>rd</sup> June if possible, but if not, any time in May would be appreciated*

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*\*\*Please adapt the assembly to suit the time that you have and the young people you are speaking to.*

*Words in red indicate where there will be a slide - please see accompanying assembly PowerPoint*

*[Title slide]*

*Introduce Yourself* [Please adapt to suit you]

Good morning everyone, it is so great to be with you today. For anyone that doesn't know me, my name is [Name] and I'm the [Title] at [Church/Organisation], which is just down the road. I spend a lot of time encouraging young people in their Christian faith and just generally supporting them in life too! So in this assembly hopefully I'll just share a few things that will make you think and also encourage you as you go off into your day.

*Introduce the Theme*

I want to start off today by showing you a **short movie clip**:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8sqb-xEbaQM> [From Paddington - Play from 0:45-2:13]

In that clip Paddington was chasing after the man to try and return what he thought was his wallet to him, however we discovered it was actually stolen. I don't know about you but I think lots of us love a good chase scene in a movie! And actually, I think that most of us are *chasing* after something in life too.

Some of us are chasing; **popularity**. We want the most followers on Tiktok or the most likes on our posts.

Some of us are chasing **success**. Maybe we just want to do well so we can get a great job and earn lots of money.

Some of us are chasing after **purpose** - we want to know the reason that we're here on the earth in 2024!

But something I think that most of us humans have in common is that we are chasing a sense of **belonging**. We want to feel like we belong to something, that we're a part of something that has meaning and most importantly, that we've been accepted, valued and welcomed in.

And so today I want to talk to you about the idea of 'community'.

I wonder if you feel like there's a particular community you belong to?

A community is a group of people who share something in common. So for example, you might be part of the Scouts, or a netball team, the choir, a drama group, you might be part of a gaming community, a cheerleading squad, an engineering group, a church or a rowing club\*. These are all types of communities that we can belong to. But I want to think about what is it that makes a community great?

*\*If you have a group that engages well, you could ask them to share which communities/groups they are part of.*

As I already said, I'm a [title for a church/name of organisation] so when I come here I'll often share a bit about my Christian faith with you. This is never to pressure you - you can absolutely make up your own mind about what to believe but it will hopefully make you think a little bit.

*Community is important to God / God wants us to live in community*

As a Christian I believe that community is really important to God. So much so that He actually *is* community. Christians believe that God is one God but made up of three distinct and equal parts that interact with each other; Father, Son and Holy Spirit - you might have heard about that in RE! So just by being who He is God is showing us that community is important to Him.

I like to think about it a bit like **FC24**. Does anyone here like to play FC24? The main mission in the game is to build a great team and win football games. Imagine you wanted to create the ultimate 5-a-side team. According to FC24, this might be what your team would look like:



You select players for their skills and abilities and they play a specific role in making the team successful. Once you have your team, you play them in the positions that best suit what they are good at.

FC24 can teach us just how important team or community is because if they work well together a team can achieve great things in the game! Jesus picked His team when He was on the Earth and we call them His disciples, which is just a word for people who followed Him and tried to live like Him. The difference with Jesus though, is that He chose ordinary people with ordinary abilities but with His help they became an extraordinary community of people. I guess it is similar to a world class manager taking a group of average players and them winning the league. Jesus didn't live life alone, but He chose to live in community with this group of people. I think He wants us to do the same because He wants what's best for us.

Personally I believe I have found that type of community in the church and I wanted to share these words from the bible with you that I love:

**When others are happy**, you should be happy with them. And when others are sad, you should be sad too. Live together in peace with each other. [Romans 12:15-16]

Lots of people think that the church is a building, but it's actually not. A church is just a group of people who have the common goal of trying our best to follow this guy called Jesus and be a bit more like Him. **Church** has been like family to me for many years now, and what I love about it is that if someone is sad the church will share that sadness with them and help them through it. If someone is happy they will celebrate with them too. It's a really special thing and a place where absolutely anyone can belong.

But the other thing that I love about the church is that it is a group of people who want to positively impact their local community wherever they are. This is because we believe that Jesus wants us to serve the people around us, to be kind, compassionate, loving, generous and to be people who bring hope and joy with us wherever we go\*.

*\*At this point, if time allows, you could include some examples of amazing ways the church is blessing communities in Teesside already*

*[Festival Teesside Promo]*

And today I want to let you know about something so exciting that is especially for you! For over a year now over 70 local churches from all across Teesside have been dreaming about a great way to bless the community in Teesside - and we have decided to come together and put on a huge, free festival for people of all ages, called Festival Teesside - it's the biggest thing the churches of Teesside have ever done together and we'd love you to be there!

Have a look at this video to get a better idea of what it will look like! [[Show Festival Teesside video](#)]

So as you can see Festival Teesside will be happening on 8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> June at Stewart Park in Middlesbrough and you won't want to miss it! There will be extreme sports displays, fairground rides, live music, food vans, a special youth zone with graffiti cube, sports, giveaways, games, areas to hang out and so much more. You and your whole family are invited to join us! While we are there there'll be loads of representatives from amazing churches in Teesside who'd love to tell you a bit about their church community and welcome you in, if you're interested in that.

The best way to find out more information about the festival is to follow us on Instagram at @festivalteessideyouth or go to festivalteesside.com! As we lead up to the festival many local churches from literally all across Teesside are taking on projects to show God's love to our communities - it's going to be so good!

[Leave Festival Teesside promo slide up as assembly finishes and students leave]

### *Ending*

So as I finish today, I'd love you to spend some time today thinking about what community looks like to you.

- Is there anywhere that you feel like you belong? If not, could you start by talking to a teacher and asking them to help point you in the right direction?
- Is there any way you could have a positive impact on your local community? Could you join with a group of friends to do something to show love to people who might really need it?
- Finally, will you consider joining us at Festival Teesside and invite some friends? We'd love you to be there!