

# ZION'S FAITH AT HOME MINISTRIES NEWSLETTER

## theParentLink<sup>SM</sup>



November 2010

### Encourage Year-Round Gratitude

November may be the month when we focus on being thankful, but that's an attitude we can express each day. Even during tough economic times or family hardships, we all have many blessings for which to be grateful. God gives us life and takes care of us. He loves us and sent his Son, Jesus, to die for us. He puts many special people, including our children, into our lives.

Let your children know you're grateful for them—and also that they can show gratitude to you, to other people, and to God. Here are some ideas for cultivating thankfulness throughout the year:

**Live out your thankfulness.** Gratitude is contagious. When your kids see you giving thanks in all circumstances, they'll learn to do the same. Remember to thank your children for everything from helping around the house to helping you grow in your own faith.

**Highlight Biblical examples of thankfulness.** Scripture is full of "great gratefulness." Hannah was grateful that God blessed her with a child (see 1 Samuel 2:1). Jesus forgave and healed many people, most of whom were thankful in return. Paul's letters often begin and end with thankful messages, and many psalms overflow with gratitude to God. As you worship with your children, point out all the ways that God's people give thanks.



**Lead children in thank-you activities.** Together, brainstorm people in your community or church who'd appreciate an unexpected thank you. Then come up with creative, meaningful ways to say thanks joyfully. Children can deliver thanks with cards, a prayer, a skit, a song, or even a PowerPoint presentation. Be sure to thank kids for their enthusiasm and contributions.

PowerSource



#### Ask God:

1. To show your children the many reasons they have to be thankful.
2. To help your children express gratitude through their words and actions.
3. To help your family be grateful at all times.



### Zion's Christmas Program

December 19<sup>th</sup>  
at 11:00.  
All youth will be  
rehearsing  
December 12<sup>th</sup>  
during the  
Sunday School hour.

Preschool-1<sup>st</sup> Grade will be the  
angel choir

2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Graders will be shepherds,  
angels and Mary and Joseph

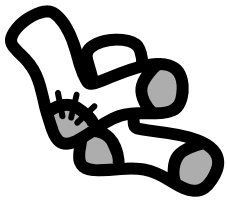
6<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> Graders will be readers,  
ushers, acolytes and musicians

Senior High will be preaching and  
assisting with worship

# Elementary Youth

## November Sunday School Offering Focus

We are collecting socks for the men that we serve



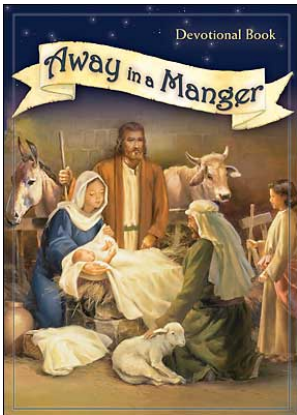
through  
Kent's  
H.O.M.E.  
Project.  
Please

donate new, white men's  
gym socks.

## Advent Devotions

This year our Christmas program is a worship service called "Away in a Manger". Concordia Publishing House has devotions available that correspond with the service. To purchase one of these devotions please go to

www.  
cph.org.



## Family Experience: Pictures of Thankfulness

Use these creative ideas to provide a "snapshot" of what your family is thankful for this Thanksgiving.

- **Gratitude Newsflash**—A week before Thanksgiving, give each family member a disposable camera (or take turns using a digital camera). Then have them take photos of people or things they're thankful for. (A parent or older sibling can help young kids.) Try to take photos when no one is looking. Come up with creative ways of doing this, such as taking a picture of a person's photograph. Develop the pictures and then share them with one another after your Thanksgiving meal.



- **Memorable Montage**—Create table decorations to use as a Thanksgiving discussion starter. First, have family members each select several photographs for a place mat. (To protect originals, make copies ahead of time.) For each place mat, you'll also need one 12x18-inch sheet of construction paper, scissors, glue, and clear Contac paper. Have family members cut and arrange their photos to create a collage on one side of their construction paper. Glue the photos to the paper and allow to dry. To protect the place mats, carefully cover both sides with Contac paper. At your Thanksgiving meal, use the place mats to share memories you're thankful for, to reminisce about fun family activities, and to let family members know how much you appreciate them.

## Parenting Insights

Turn on children's "gratitude lights" with these tips from *Children's Ministry Magazine*:

1. **Encourage the language of thankfulness.** If children neglect to show gratitude, prompt them with words such as "What can you say to your friend for sharing?"
2. **At unexpected times, give small gifts.** Let children know you think of them often and always thank God for them.
3. **Affirm children's feelings of gratitude.** When you observe physical demonstrations such as eyes that light up, say, "I can see how much you're thankful for that."
4. **Model thankfulness in the little things.** Thank your children for picking up something you drop or for being patient with a sibling.

## Offer Teenagers Positive, Age-Appropriate Discipline

Like many aspects of parenting, discipline can get trickier as children turn into teenagers. Although your kids are outgrowing timeouts or the loss of television privileges, they haven't outgrown the need for loving, healthy boundaries—and consequences when they mess up.



Discipline methods may change as kids age, but the goal is the same: shaping them into responsible, respectful Christian adults who internalize God-honoring boundaries and good behavior.

Even when teenagers have more say in their rules, parents still have important roles to play. You clearly communicate and enforce the expectations and limits. You stand your ground when teenagers challenge your authority. You discipline (and follow through) in a calm, consistent way. You're present during good and bad times, assuring teenagers that you love them even when they mess up. Finally, you model good behavior, showing how loving obedience yields rewards.

Parenting expert Jim Burns says the goal of discipline is to teach kids responsibility, not to evoke obedience. "Our job is not to always prevent our children from making mistakes but rather to make certain they learn from their mistakes," he says. This needs to be done in a relaxed, respectful way, and it's the parent's job to establish this tone. "Shame-based parenting, when parents attempt to influence their kids' behavior through shaming, nagging, and negativity, simply doesn't work in the long run," Burns says.

### *What's Up* With Kids

At [SimplyYouthMinistry.com](http://SimplyYouthMinistry.com), youth ministry author **Doug Fields** shares his insights about the necessity and value of discipline.

1. **Expect good behavior.** Set a tone of positive expectation. Be genuinely surprised when you don't see it.
2. **Communicate clearly.** Don't waste rules. Teenagers will remember and follow only a few. Also, clearly communicate about consequences. It isn't fair to surprise kids by disciplining them with measures they're unaware of.
3. **Enforce lovingly.** The consequence for not following the rules is worthless if not enforced, and to enforce means you need to follow through.

Use these three steps with grace and truth. Our goal is always a desire to help kids, not to demean them in any way. If you ever feel like you're disciplining in anger, hold off and act at another time.

## Living Word

The focus of *Living Word* is to make Jesus the center of your life.

We can do that through:

**inWord: Digging** deeper into God's Word,  
**upWord: Living** life in daily worship and prayer,  
**outWord: Serving** others in Christ's name and  
**forWord: Sharing** Jesus Christ with other people.

Sunday School Hour: During the month of November we will be learning more about Creation and The Human Condition followed by the Flood. Thank you to teachers for teaching this month!

November 7<sup>th</sup>: **The Amazing Race!** Join us as we race from house to house and discovering things about different parts of the world and different religions.

**HOME PROJECT!** Each small group is helping with a part of the HOME project this year. Please check with your youth's guide for more information.

Mark your calendars- January 28<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> Middle School Plugged IN! Weekend at **Lutherhaven**



## Focus on Prayer

### PRAY THAT:

1. God will guide your decisions about boundaries and consequences.
2. Your teenagers will recognize that your discipline is motivated by love and concern for them.
3. God will give your teenagers an obedient spirit, accompanied by respect for you and all authorities.
4. Your teenagers will develop self-discipline and internalize the guidelines you set for them.

**"God's discipline is always good for us, so that we might share in his holiness. No discipline is enjoyable while it is happening—it's painful! But afterward there will be a peaceful harvest of right living for those who are trained in this way." (Hebrews 12:10-11)**

### FIRST MISSION TRIP MEETING!!!!



When: November  
14th  
Where: Faith Cafe  
Time: Noon  
Lunch provided

## Senior High Youth

### High School Series in the Faith Café

November 7<sup>th</sup>: "Am I Happy"? Searching for Happiness in Relationships. Happiness means different things to different people and some of these things make no sense at all. We will read Judges 16 and Ask: How much do you seek people's approval?

November 14<sup>th</sup>: The Search for Happiness in Accomplishments. Have you done anything good this week? Readings are from Philippians.

November 21<sup>st</sup>: Searching for Happiness in Appearances. Can you learn things about people from their clothing? Scripture: 2 Corinthians 10:4.

November 28<sup>th</sup>: Thanksgiving Break. What are you thankful for? Share your thoughts this holiday season.

December 5<sup>th</sup>: Searching for Happiness Despite Circumstances: Bible Scriptures are Matthew 5, the Beatitudes and Psalm 142.

**Any questions, please contact Berit Wright.**



**November 5<sup>th</sup>:** Sceptic's Quest Rally at Showare with Josh McDowell. Adult donation is \$10, kids under 18 are free!

**November 7<sup>th</sup>:** Living Word Amazing Race!

**November 14<sup>th</sup>:** Mission Trip Meeting

**November 24<sup>th</sup>:** Thanksgiving Worship at 7:00PM

**November 28<sup>th</sup>:** Thanksgiving Weekend, No Sunday School Classes

**December 12<sup>th</sup>:** Christmas Caroling from 12:00-3:00 PM

**December 19<sup>th</sup>:** Christmas Program- Away in a Manger 11:00 AM