

ZION'S FAITH AT HOME MINISTRIES NEWSLETTER

theParentLinkSM



November 2011

Nurture Grateful Young Servants

November is the perfect time to transform our gratitude to God into acts of generosity toward others. These don't always have to be "big" acts. William Wordsworth said "the best portions" of a good person's life are his or her "little, nameless, unremembered acts of kindness and love."



With some support from you, the children in your life can make a big difference in the lives of other people. Here are some ideas to encourage gratitude and service:

Make serving fun. Spend an evening making and serving and eating dinner for the men of H.O.M.E or other neighbors in need. Afterwards, share dessert with your children and discuss what makes helping others feel so "sweet."

Enlist children in the Christian Secret Service (CSS). Deploy kids for undercover operations by having them serve others covertly. For example, they can leave sidewalk-chalk messages for neighbors, deliver cards at a local nursing home, or pick up trash at their favorite park.

Share your adventures in serving. During November and December, challenge family members to perform acts of giving and kindness. Then report the activities every night during dinner or family devotions. These can range from helping with the H.O.M.E. project at Zion to delivering cookies to leaving a close-to-the-door parking spot open at the mall or helping someone carry his or her packages.

Thoughts About Thankfulness

- In a poll conducted last Thanksgiving, 41% of American adults said that after family and health, they're most thankful for their religious faith. Adults over age 40 are more thankful for their religion than younger people are. (Rasmussen Reports)
- 78% of Americans think the actions of one person can improve the world. The same number also believes they're more involved in making a difference than their parents were. (Parade)

PowerSource



Ask God:

- To give your children grateful hearts for all their blessings.
- To provide opportunities for your family to serve together.
- To make service a joyful, regular habit in your home



Advent Gathering

November 20
12:00pm - 1:30pm

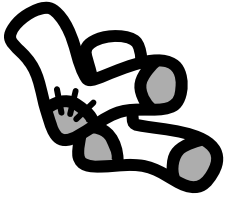
All youth and families are welcome to join us at the Advent Gathering in the Education Building.

We will share an Advent devotion, make an Advent craft & eat lunch.

Elementary Youth

November Offering Focus

We are collecting socks for the men that we serve through the H.O.M.E. Project. Please donate new, men's socks in the Education Building. Baskets can be found in the hallway.



Great Questions to Ask Your Kids

Help kids open up about talents by asking these questions:

1. What talents has God given you? Which of these might people be surprised to learn about, and why?
2. How well do you use your talents? Do you use them to serve yourself? others? God?
3. Think about a talent you'd like to work on: What would it take to further develop it?
4. What leadership qualities do you have, and how are you using them?
5. How can you make a difference with the gifts God has given you?

Family Experience: Service With a Smile

Try these activities from Group's *Hands-On Bible* to help your family members explore ways to put thankfulness into action:

Food From Heaven—Use spoons to launch small marshmallows into one another's mouths. Say: "We just fed each other in an amazing way. God fed his people in an amazing way, too." Read aloud Exodus 16:11-21. Talk about how God provided for the Israelites and how he provides for your family. Add some leftover marshmallows to dried cereal, nuts, raisins, or pretzels to make a tasty "manna mix." Ask: "What would it be like to gather your food off the ground each day? How can we help people who need food or other necessities?" Assemble a bag of nonperishable groceries and deliver it to a local food bank. Or make another batch of manna mix and give it to a family who needs encouragement. Tell this family you're praying for them and that God cares about their needs.

Follow His Example—Have everyone take off their socks and shoes. Read aloud John 13:1-15, about Jesus washing his disciples' feet. Say: "In Bible times, servants washed the dirty feet of guests. It was a lowly job, but Jesus did it to show that we should serve others." Take turns giving one another foot massages. Ask: "Why was Jesus willing to be a servant? How can we encourage each other to remember to serve?" Have family members use permanent markers to write on a light-colored towel the name of someone they'd like to serve. Hang the towel in the bathroom as a reminder to follow through on your service ideas.



A Mystery Dinner!

High School and Middle School Students

November 13th

Join us at 5:00pm in the Fellowship Hall for a mystery game and dinner. For this event you need to be signed up on the bulletin board by November 6th.

The cost for this event is \$3.



Help teenagers recognize and develop their talents

During this season of gratitude, we usually remember to thank God for our families and material blessings. But often we overlook how God, in his wisdom, has given us each unique talents and spiritual gifts. He wants us to show our gratitude for these gifts by using them to their full potential—and to his glory (see Colossians 3:17).

Throughout the New Testament, we read how people have varying gifts and capacities for using them (see Matthew 25:14-30; Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 12; and Ephesians 4). Instead of burying our talents, God wants us to hone them. Teenagers may need help recognizing their special gifts and how they can apply them for God's kingdom. Young people will lead more fulfilled lives when we help them discover and give out of their strengths.

Leadership is just one of many gifts young people may have. But leadership potential in teenagers often goes unnoticed and undeveloped. Here are five common indicators of a high leadership aptitude: 1.) Peers listen to a teenager and pursue him or her for ideas. 2.) The teenager has lots of opinions and ideas about how things should function. 3.) The teenager has already been singled out by other adults for leadership roles. 4.) The teenager isn't satisfied with the status quo and always has several projects on his or her plate. 5.) The teenager is sometimes disruptive; leaders by nature are noncompliant. Read on to discover more about helping your teenagers recognize and use their God-given talents.

These tips from the small-group Bible study *Guy Talk, Girl Talk 2* will help kids pinpoint and use their gifts:

1. **Stop comparing.** Comparison is always a lose-lose situation. It leads to either pride (when we think we're better than someone else) or shame (when we feel we don't measure up to expectations).
2. **Embrace who God made you to be.** It's hard to control the voices in our heads that whisper, "I wish I could do something other than what I'm doing" or "I wish I could be somebody that I'm not." Know yourself: your strengths, your talents, and your personality.
3. **Serve out of your S.H.A.P.E.** This acronym helps us understand the areas that make us who we are: Spiritual Gifts, Heart, Abilities, Personality, Experiences. Knowing your S.H.A.P.E. will help you find a place to serve that fits you. Sometimes finding a place to serve is like trying on a new pair of jeans: The first few might not fit, but eventually you'll find the perfect pair. Knowing and using your S.H.A.P.E. leads to fulfillment and joy. It also causes any feelings of pride or shame to quickly fade.

Living Word

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

Sunday School Hour: During the month of November we will be learning about Jesus' Nazareth Sermon, Jesus calling the First Disciples and the Beatitudes. Thank you for teaching this month!

November 13th: **Mystery Dinner** at 5:00PM in the Fellowship Hall

December 2nd: **Lutherhaven at Zion!** Lutherhaven is sending their staff to Zion for an evening full of Lutherhaven Fun!

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

Mark your calendars- January 20-22nd for the 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)

Senior High Youth

Faith Café!

Curriculum for November
"Intelligent Design"

Wednesday, November 2 Movie Night:
"Privileged Planet" 7 pm

Presents the latest information on
"Intelligent Design"

Serving amazing homemade root beer!

Brief definitions of evolution, brief history of the movement
AND a look at recent events that have been in the news!

November 6, 13, 20th

The series will end with the showing of "Expelled", a Ben Stein movie.

Faith Café serves at the H.O.M.E. Project

When: November 11 (Friday) School day off!

What: Sloppy Joes

Why: Because we can!

Where: First we cook at Zion and then we serve at the Methodist Church

Time: 4:30 pm Pizza dinner will be served-

- 5 pm we start cooking-
- 6:15 depart for Methodist church-
- 6:30 set up and serve-7:30 return to Zion.



Any questions, please contact Berit Wright.



November 13: Middle & High School Mystery Dinner 5:00pm

November 20: Advent Gathering 12:00pm-1:30pm

November 23: Thanksgiving Worship at 7:00pm

November 27: Thanksgiving Weekend, No Sunday School Classes

December 2nd: Lutherhaven at Zion 4:00pm

December 17: Lucia Bride, Mother (Aunt, etc) & Daughter, Breakfast 9:00am

December 18: Christmas Program- "Away in a Manger" 11:00am Worship