

Announcements

Upcoming Events:

Prayer Meeting – Every Wednesday, beginning at noon, we will continue having an [ERC prayer meeting via Zoom](#).

In this issue:

- [Elder Entryway](#)
- [Family Foyer](#)
- [Prayer Parlor](#)
- [Lyric Living Room](#)
- [Liturgical Library](#)
- [Doctor's Den](#)
- [Bible Reading Room](#)
- [Contact Cupboard](#)

Elder Entryway - Luke Friemark

Worshiping with Kids

Things my kids are interested in: Puppies, trains, PJ Masks, Doritos, jumping off things, swinging, Mom's phone, rocks.

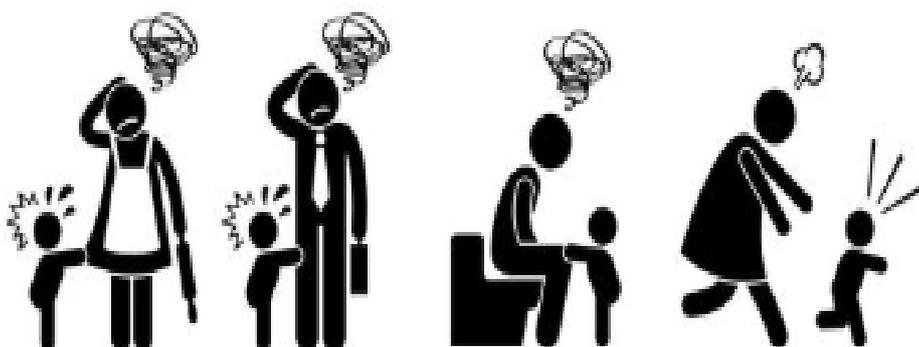
Things my kids are not interested in: Hygiene, personal space, not slamming doors, picking up toys, sleeping through the night, sharing, saying please and thank you, and unfortunately, sermons.

I don't think my kids have ever heard more than a sentence of Dan's or David's sermons before tuning out. It's frustrating to love and value the message of the gospel so dearly, only to have your child be more interested in their belly button than the transformative gift of salvation being preached from the pulpit.

I'm writing to remind you (and myself) to not be discouraged. Even if your kid isn't paying attention to the sermon, simply exposing them to the preaching of the word is valuable. After all, "Faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ." (Rom 10:17) Even if it doesn't seem like your kid is hearing the word, God promises in Isaiah 55:11 that his word will not return empty, and it will accomplish His purpose. God's word is powerful; even powerful enough to overcome the attention span of a toddler.

It doesn't end on Sunday mornings, though. Our pastors are great, but God put YOU in your child's life to be their most influential spiritual teacher. Our kids learn who God is by watching us sing on Sundays, praying with us before bedtime, and hearing how we speak (or don't speak) about Him. Parents, whether you're aware of it or not, you've been teaching your child about God their whole life.

So don't be discouraged if your kids are begging you for snacks on Sunday morning during 10,000 Reasons. Even if they're missing the message on the screen, they're still learning a message from your lifted voice.



Family Foyer - Danielle Elmhurst

Spring

*“For, lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone;
The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come,
And the voice of the turtle is heard in our land;
The fig tree putteth forth her green figs,
And the vines with the tender grape give a good smell.
Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away.”
Song of Solomon 2:11-13*

Spring has finally sprung upon us, which means new life! During this uncertain time, we can reflect on the Lord and on how much His work in our lives resembles spring.



Spring, as a season, is a fantastic way to teach your kids about new life; just as winter resembles death, spring, through the growth and regrowth of trees, flowers, and grass gives us a beautiful picture of new life. Just as the earth can't hold back new life from growing in the spring, so too, death could not hold back Christ from rising again; in Christ we have been raised to new life. While you are outside with your kids, point out all of the plants that are starting to blossom and grow, even the ones that had seemed dead a few weeks ago; this is a great analogy for what Christ has done and is doing in our lives: he takes someone who was dead in their sins and gives them new life through Him.

As God provides for the animals and plants and gives them what they need, He will also take care of His children as well; we don't need to worry about food, clothing, or what will come next in life, because God will provide that to us just as he provides the birds food.

So get outside and enjoy all the new growth and beauty that God has provided to us!

Prayer Parlor - From Anonymous

Here we remain
Captive to something that we cannot see;
Uncertain of what is unfolding;
Cautious about reuniting with those we have missed.

O God, Holy One, High and lifted up,
We've changed-not always for the good,
But we now have something in the back of our minds
That wasn't there a few months ago.

You are unchanged.
Help us, in Your Holiness to sort it out.
Help us to unravel our thoughts,
Help us figure out exactly what we're afraid of,
And help us put to words what is heavy upon us.

We want to live...fully, joyfully, eagerly
In Your Presence, but we need help,
Even with that desire... Even with what we long for.
Holy Spirit, enlighten us to our sin,
Inflame us with Hope,
Strengthen us with Wisdom,
And help us to Trust, Trust, and Trust some more.

This is Your day, Creator Sustainer,
Help us to be joyful in it
And to watch expectantly for Your Glorious Presence
Even in what we don't understand.

For the Glory of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit

Lyric Living Room - Benjamin Novak

First, some songs.

"[Only You](#)" by Young Oceans. A meditative art rock group, Young Oceans manages to create an atmospheric contemplation on the authority and supremacy of God and His rule in our world. The lyrics of the chorus seem to harken back to Job 38 where God recounts all of the mighty things He has done when creating our universe.

"[Only a Holy God](#)" by CityAlight. This modern hymn conveys the holiness of our God by walking through different aspects of God's character, all of which point back to His holiness. Each verse asks a series of questions which can all be answered with the statement "Only a holy God", and the chorus gives us the chance to express praise to our holy God.

"[O Praise the Name \(Anastasis\)](#)" by Shane and Shane. A very fitting song for Easter-tide, "O Praise the Name" takes us back to our Savior's death, burial, and resurrection, walking us through each part, until the chorus invites us to praise the name of the risen Christ.

For Parents: [Rain For Roots](#) is a collective group of musicians and songwriters who write singable scripture songs for kids (and grownups). They have albums that cover topics like Advent, the Kingdom of Heaven, Psalms, and creation.

Liturgical Library - Benjamin Novak

The last liturgy in our newsletter was for the preparation of a meal, and the implied use was for a family or group of individuals preparing said meal together as a way of service, selflessness, and personal renewal. This week's liturgy is for a different type of meal: that eaten alone. Just as there are many at this time who are seeing and interacting with their family and household members more often than usual, so there are many who live alone or are separated from family and loved ones. Even for those who are physically with their family, they may feel more alone than normal, especially if their family is unloving, estranged, or difficult to be with for long periods of time. If you find yourself eating alone, may this liturgy remind you of the ever-constant presence of Christ and redirect your grief and loneliness towards Him; may you also find encouragement and eager anticipation as, with society beginning to reopen, the day is quickly approaching where you no longer have to eat alone!

A Liturgy Before a Meal Eaten Alone

by Douglas McKelvey from "Every Moment Holy"

You created us for companionship,
O God, for the sharing of burdens,
for the joining of celebrations,
for the breaking of bread in fellowship,
and so it is not unnatural
that we should taste a particular sorrow
when eating a meal alone.
Sit with me and linger
at this solitary table, O Lord.
Sit with me as my Father.
Sit with me as my Brother.
Sit with me as my Shepherd.
Sit with me as my Friend.
In the absence of human companions,
may I know more fully Your presence.
In this silence where there is no conversation,
may I more clearly hear Your voice.

Use my own momentary loneliness
to work in me a more effectual sympathy
for others who are often alone,
and who long for the companionship
of their God and of His people.

Let me afterward be more intentional
in the practice of hospitality.
Let me sometimes be the reason
the loneliness of another is relieved.
Meet me now in my own loneliness, O Lord.
Meet me in this meal, I receive it as Your
provision for my life in this hour.

Amen.

Doctor's Den - Dr. Martha Grace Courtright

Let's talk about contact tracing.

Contact tracing in a nutshell is a process by which people who have come into contact with an infected person are identified. After this identification that person is monitored and likely tested for the disease. If that person is found to be positive, then *their* contacts are identified—and so on and so forth. How this is done varies widely. It can range from simply gathering a list of names to digital and video tracking.

[Here](#) is a well-done video that talks about how South Korea approached contact tracing and the results they saw. As I see it there are two major key benefits to thorough contact tracing. First, it can help identify people who have had an exposure so they can isolate when they might be asymptomatic. One of the most frustrating things about COVID we are finding is that it appears to be the most infectious prior to the patient being symptomatic. If a person is able to be alerted that they have had an exposure it gives them the ability to isolate during those potential pre-symptomatic periods, so they don't inadvertently spread the virus. Second, it could potentially reduce the necessity for further lockdowns. The point of the lockdowns was that without good testing we don't know who is infected (especially if they are pre-symptomatic). Therefore, if we can identify those infected through contact tracing, we can reduce the need for widespread quarantines.

The key for this to work effectively is good testing (easy access and high accuracy) and timely identification of contacts so as to prevent further spread. Unfortunately, we are only just starting to get really good testing capabilities and we do not yet have the infrastructure to conduct highly efficient contact tracing. However, those gaps are rapidly closing. In conclusion, for those interested in further reading, [here](#) is the CDC guidance for community contact tracing.

(Bible) Reading Room

Emmaus Road Bible Reading Plan

Saturday, May 23: Psalm 126; 1 Corinthians 16
Sunday, May 24: Psalm 113; Mark 10
Monday, May 25: Psalm 114; Mark 11
Tuesday, May 26: Psalm 130; Mark 12
Wednesday, May 27: Psalm 138; Mark 13
Thursday, May 28: Psalm 1; Mark 14
Friday, May 29: Psalm 7; Mark 15
Saturday, May 30: Psalm 11; John 16

Contact Cupboard

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