

God's Glory Garden

'Lil Sprouts

Faith Church Nursery News

January 2011
Parent Edition

January Birthday
Blessings

to

Kelly Geers

January 12

Bethany Adams

&

Grant Bauman

January 14

New Year's Resolution: Pray with Your Child

I stood over the tiny bundle lying in the bassinet and decided she was starting to look less like a prune. But she was still so helpless and I felt so inadequate. So I did the only thing I thought might help. I prayed. "Lord, you know I've never been a father before. I'm scared. I really need your help."

That was the first of many similarly inelegant prayers I whispered late at night, standing beside my sleeping baby's crib. I knew she could neither hear nor understand me. But I began to feel these moments of prayer were bonding me to her in a very special way.

Gradually, a brief prayer became part of our bedtime ritual, mixed in with the chin tickling and cheek kissing that helped Kari relax and go to sleep. Through this process, I stumbled onto a key that continued to make our prayer time meaningful, even as Kari entered adolescence.

I found myself talking to God about the experiences Kari and I had shared each evening. As Kari grew and began to contribute her own prayers, she followed the same pattern of thanking God for herself and me and for the good times we shared, and of asking God's forgiveness for failures. Over the years our father-daughter prayer times have been among the strongest experiences in building our relationship.

I have often wondered if the pattern would have been so consistent and meaningful if I had not begun practicing in those nights beside her crib. If I had waited until she could have understood what I was saying, would I have persevered through my awkwardness or simply given it up as inappropriate for a young child? —Wes Haystead, Parent and Author

Getting to Know...Glory Gardener

Becky Fair

Few of us have as much exposure to the message of salvation as does a "PK." Daughter of a Baptist preacher, Becky Fair heard the gospel "early and often!" She shared with me that she accepted the Lord at the tender age of five after attending a Youth for Christ rally. "Five!?" I asked. Becky said "yes" and that even at that tender age she could recall her father's sermon after each Sunday service. Laughing softly, Becky stated that she had to go to



church anyway, so she thought she might as well listen! No wonder Becky grew up knowing and loving the Lord! After earning a double degree—English and Bible—from Cedarville College, Becky married college sweetheart, Jim. Their family expanded to include a daughter, Jami, and a son, Jimmy.

Though Becky grew into adulthood knowing and loving the Lord, it was in parenthood that she discovered the depth of her bond with Christ. She and Jim faced the accidental death of their college-age daughter, Jami. "When our precious daughter had her tragic accident and passed away, it was a very difficult time for me with a lot of 'why questions' and personal struggles. I finally realized the reality of God's love by meditating on His sac-

rifice at the cross. I have no doubt of His love because He proved it at Calvary."

Becky said the happiest time of her life was when her children were babies, but those times were also some of the stressful when there was little relief from child care. "Christian friends are also such a blessing. I would recommend that young Moms and Dads cultivate friendships with others in the church to help each other in the daunting task of raising children." Supporting young moms by giving them an hour of relief to attend worship was Becky's chief aim when she began volunteering in the nursery. Becky said that it is such a pleasure to rock each baby; her "reasons" now include hundreds of our youngest attenders. Thank you, Becky! You are a blessing!



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Roaming the classrooms looking for candid shots to put in Christmas ornaments, I asked Nathaniel and Nathan if they could "smile big for me." The result? Both boys checked each other out before they smiled. "I can smile bigger than you can! Oh, yea?" (Picture printed with parental permission.)

A message from the nursery coordinator:

What a wonderful holiday season it was! I never come away from church Sunday afternoons without feeling that I am the one who has received "child care"! Not only was I able to chat with volunteers and realize that they are all very loving and capable, but I also had lots of time to enjoy our newest walkers and talkers: to stop and listen in on classes, to give and receive high fives, to learn about new clothes, coats, and shoes, to share hugs, and to reaffirm that your babies are precious gifts from the Lord. This new year I urge you to continue to spiritually nurture your children at home. This newsletter can give you some insight. And, if you desire further direction, Sandy, Kari, and I would be happy to point you toward other resources. Take some time to check out all the children's ministry newsletters on the church website. Simply log on to faithchurch.net; then click "ministries," then "children," and finally, "parent resources." These newsletters are full of inspiring stories, Bible lessons, and family activities. Many blessings are ahead for us in this new year; the parenting road won't be without its pot holes and detours, but God will be with those who follow Him. Happy 2011 !

Connie

In the nursery classrooms this month....

One-Year Olds: God Helps Me to Grow "God made us." (See Malachi 2:10.) We will sing, talk, and play about how God helps us grow. We want the children to associate their growth with God's loving plan and care.

Sing It!

I Am Growing

(Tune: "Are You Sleeping?")

I am growing.

I am growing.

Yes, I am.

Yes, I am.

One time I was smaller.

Now I am much taller.

Watch me grow.

Watch me grow.

Sing this song to your child as you play with him or her. Show your child a picture of him- or herself when younger and smaller. Talk about how much bigger he or she has grown. Lindsay, you're growing! You've learned to sit up, and now you're learning to crawl. God made you,

and He helps you grow.

Two-Year Olds: Jesus Grows Up

Scripture doesn't elaborate on the childhood and youth of Jesus. We know very little about the young man; but we will take a month to examine what we do know about Him and what each of those events conveys to our little ones as they also experience the challenges of "growing up." You might take some time to meditate on the Lord's knowledge of and love of the Father, His obedience to His earthly parents, and the response of others to His development. Chapter 2 in Luke's gospel focuses on all we know about the Child Jesus, but it is worth reviewing and

"You can talk to God about your children. You can tell Him everything, ask Him anything. You can even laugh with Him about the funnier things. I believe He understands laughter, for He is the One who made your child so funny in the first place."
 — Ethel Barrett