

PARENTlink

December 2018

WHAT WE'RE TEACHING

For the month of December, we are working our way through a series called "**This Christmas.**" As wonderful as the Christmas season is, the meaning can sadly be easily lost in the busy schedule we create for ourselves. So this year, we want to ask ourselves, how can we make This Christmas different? How can we make **This Christmas** better? We will look at different ways we can make changes in our own lives to see changes in the season around us.

December 2 - To start off, we will challenge our culture's value on getting gifts, and learn to live generously. And when we focus on giving, we will begin to value whats on the inside, not on the outside.

December 9 - Sometimes the time spent with families during the holidays can bring extra stress, and re-open past wounds and hurts. Family is not perfect, and can often be challenging. But what if instead of wishing that other family members would change, instead of blaming others for conflict, we sought to change our own actions, attitudes and behaviors? This week will look at the value of living out our faith in the context of our family.

December 16 - This final lesson will really narrow our focus to the true meaning of Christmas, Jesus. And not just the story of a baby being born in a stable, but a baby who was born to change everything. The true gift of Christmas was the change that Jesus brought, the ability to take what was, and make it something new.

WHAT WE NEED

We are very grateful for all the generous donations we have received in response to our request for help with snacks for our teens. Every week we provide snacks for over 75 hungry teenagers. Thanks to the help of so many, we have been more than adequately supplied to meet that need each week.

However, while we have plenty of snacks, we are running out of drinks. Canned drinks are much easier to take to the schools, to our after-school clubs at Milford Junior High and Milford High School. In a typical week, we will have between 25-30 students at these clubs, so we go through cases of drinks fairly quickly! If you are willing to help out, please pick up a case of drinks on your next shopping trip, and drop them off in the collection center off of the sanctuary lobby. Our students like Mountain Dew, Coke, Sprite, Dr. Pepper and Lemonade.

Thanks so much!

WHAT WE'RE DOING



High School Winter Retreat

February 1 - February 3

LOCATION: Butler Springs Christian Camp

It is time for our annual High School Winter Retreat. We will be returning to Butler Springs Camp February 1-3, 2019 for an incredible weekend students won't want to miss.

We live in a world that is filled with distractions, things and ideas that are constantly shouting for our attention. The noise is so loud, it is often difficult to focus on what is truly important. We are going to spend this weekend trying to quiet these distractions. We will leave our normal schedules, our normal day-to-day activities, leave our phones(!) behind, and get away from the noise. During our weekend, we will spend our time learning and experiencing what is truly important: an ever-deepening relationship with our Creator.

We will worship together, study God's Word both together and individually, play games together, and enjoy the opportunity God has given us to get away. More details and registration information can be found at

<https://www.faithchurch.net/events/high-school-winter-retreat/>

WHAT OTHERS ARE SAYING

Backtalking to Mom Should Be Rewarded

Jonathan McKee -TheSource4Parents.com

"I thought I told you to clean your room."

"You did tell me that, and here's why I didn't..."

How many of you are already taking off your belt to teach this kid a thing or two? At first glance, this kind of talk from your kids might seem disrespectful, or as some of us call it, "backtalk." But what if I told you, allowing this kind of talk can not only open doors for healthy conversations, but it can help your kids learn to say 'no' to drugs or alcohol.

Don't worry, I'm not advocating letting our kids disrespect their parents. I'm advocating allowing our kids to respectfully speak their minds. Kids who can calm and confidently disagree with their parents are actually 40 percent more likely to say 'no' to drugs or alcohol than kids who didn't argue.

Sound crazy? The study was done by the University of Virginia and they published their findings in the journal, Child Development. Dr. Joseph P. Allen studied 157 13-year-olds, opening conversations about conflict in the home and noting which parents actually wanted to talk with their kids about disagreements. The parents who allowed their kids to dialogue with them gave their kids practice handling disagreements.

When Allen interviewed the teens again at ages 15 and 16, he found "The teens who learned to be calm and confident and persuasive with their parents acted the same way when they were with their peers." In fact, they were 40 percent more likely to say 'no' when offered alcohol or drugs than kids who didn't argue with their parents.

One of the biggest complaints I hear from teenagers is that their parents don't listen.

"I thought I told you to clean your room."

"You did tell me that, and here's why I didn't do it yet. You also told me to feed the dog and finish studying for my SAT test. Molly looked hungry, so I fed her first. Then I went straight to studying because I figured that was the most important. When I finish studying in about 15 minutes, I'll get straight to cleaning my room. Is that okay?"

Let's be realistic. This probably doesn't happen too often. Usually our kids come up with a lame excuse that has something to do with their

phone and the need to talk with a friend. The temptation to overreact is strong here, and sometimes we probably convince ourselves that yelling just works better, but wouldn't it be better to keep the channels of communication open? Besides, when we give our kids the gift of letting them be heard, we can do one better than just getting them to clean their room... we can teach them to articulate themselves and stand up for what they believe.

Who would have guessed that effective arguing with mom and dad provided kids with the experience needed to resist negative peer pressure. That probably makes a lot of us think twice about simply responding, "Just shut up and clean your room!"
