



January | 2011

FINDING WAYS TO CONNECT PARENTS AND KIDS
TOGETHER | LOOKING AT YOUTH CULTURE TODAY

focus

Youth Prayer Focus: PRAY21

Will you help our youth start the New Year off with prayer support?

For the next 3 weeks (21 days), pray the following for the youth in our church each day:

That they would...

- * believe in who they are in Jesus Christ
- * belong and find their place in the church
- * become and discover God's call on their life

Your prayers can help change the lives of our youth for Christ!

New Year's Resolutions?

Did you resolve to read the Bible more in 2011? Or to do daily family devotions?

Find an online Bible reading guide here to read through the Bible in a year:

www.oneyearbibleonline.com

Find family devotions here:
www.biblestudyplanet.com

Youth Group News

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity. 1 Tim. 4:12

Happy New Year! I hope you enjoyed spending New Year's Eve together - ringing in the New Year with my church family is such a great way to kick off 2011!

As the year begins, so does our preparation for Sports for Christ Retreat. The youth will be going through the book of Luke on Wednesday nights to get us ready for Bible quiz! Be thinking about friends or youth you may know that you can invite to participate in Sports for Christ Retreat. We need youth for our teams (basketball, volleyball, soccer, Wii bowling, Bible quiz), so get your game on! This is an amazing opportunity to share Christ with the youth in our community. I'd love to have all the youth in our church participate!

Thanks to everyone who participated in or helped out with our Nativity play. The children and youth were all amazing, and it

was wonderful watching our older youth assist the younger children. I was truly blessed to be a part of this production, and hope you were blessed by it as well.

In the first few weeks of this year, the Youth & Family Support Committee will be working to find ways to better incorporate children and families into the worship life of our church. Helping our children to discover their spiritual gifts and begin lives of service to God will have lasting impact on the church as they grow into the future adult leaders of Hamilton Street or wherever God may lead. We will be using the information from the family ministry survey conducted this fall as we make plans for the children and youth in the coming year. Children have already begun passing out children's worship bulletins, and there is more to come!

May God bless your New Year!



Parents Corner

God in the New Year

Many of us have probably made New Year's resolutions recently, hoping to get 2011 off to a fresh and motivated start. Do your resolutions seem to revolve around things like weight loss, time management, or breaking bad habits? Most New Year's resolutions don't last very long, and then we re-

visit them with each passing year, frustrated that we've made no progress. Instead, what about approaching this year with God at the center of your goals, and keeping your family in mind, not just your bad habits?

Here are some suggestions that can help your family keep Christ at the center as you begin the New Year.

- Sit down with your children and come up with a family theme and Bible verse for the year. Instead of focusing on negatives, this gives your family a positive, Christ-focused emphasis. Once you have your theme picked out, brainstorm a list of things your family can do that complement the theme. For example, if your theme is "simplicity", you might list things such as giving away extra clothes and toys to families that would be blessed by them, eliminating extra activities from your schedule that aren't fulfilling and don't help your family stay focused on God, and planning a "stay-cation" where you have fun at home together as a family.
- Adopt a child from through an organization like Compassion International or World Vision. Each week or month, take time as a family to write letters and draw pictures to send to your child. Pray for your child each day. Your family will be blessed by this experience, and you will be sharing Christ and giving hope to a child who might otherwise never hear about Jesus!
- Did you do the daily Advent devotions with your family before Christmas? Don't break this good habit! Continue doing daily or weekly devotions with your children as you begin the New Year. You are not only daily transforming your life by spending time in prayer and God's Word, but you are creating a lifetime practice of committing time to God! What better gift or resolution can you offer yourself and your children as you begin the year?
- Read through the Bible together—if your children are young, you may only want to read a few verses a day with them, but teens can read through the Old and New Testaments right along with you!
- Find a way to serve together with your family at church! Whether it's serving a meal, setting up for or cleaning up after an event, working in the nursery, or helping lead activities, there are plenty of ways families can be involved TOGETHER at church. Serve God as a family!
- Invite a friend to church! This is an easy idea, but if your goal was just to invite one person to church each week for a year...that is 52 people who might have heard the gospel before!

As you are looking ahead to the New Year, don't just make any old resolution. Look at the life of your family and the direction God is leading you. Spend time in prayer and conversation together to see what God might have in store for you this year! When you seek after God through prayer, He will answer—and when God is behind our goals and resolutions, it's a lot easier to keep them! Keep Christ at the center, not just at the start of the year, but always. You and your family will be blessed as you keep your focus on Him.

YOUTH & FAMILY MINISTRY CALENDAR

January 16-19: January Bible Study - for all ages! Kids, bring your parents! Parents, bring your kids!



