

the Parent LINK



November 2011



LAKES AREA VINEYARD CHURCH

Be Grateful for God-Given Gifts

Watching my kids, I'm reminded how God has made each of us unique. Even now, I see the ways each of them is different from their siblings. God has blessed each of us with traits, talents, and spiritual gifts that make us special. Just as we thank God for our material and physical blessings, we should also offer gratitude for our unique gifts and abilities.

As Thanksgiving approaches, take time to consider which spiritual gifts God has given each of your family members. Observe them as they interact with others and perform tasks. What excites and satisfies your kids? What challenges them or makes them proud? Offer choices and don't compare children's strengths or interests to other people's.

Finally, provide opportunities for kids to use their gifts and to grow passionate about serving. Have them serve at church in one of the various ministry areas. Do an outreach together as a family. Give them opportunities to practice hospitality by having people over to your home. Evaluate what they like best about each experience and why. Talk to them about which gifts they have—or would like to develop.



POWERSOURCE

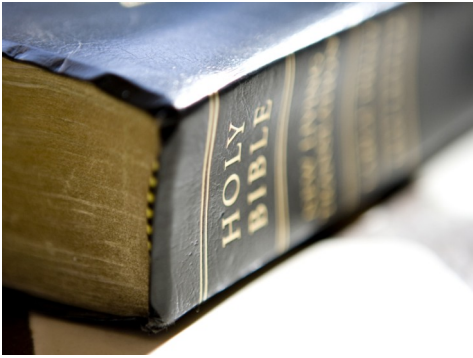
ASK GOD:

1. To help you recognize and nurture your children's talents and gifts.
2. To assure each of your children that God has made them special.
3. To show all family members how they can best use their gifts to glorify God.
4. That Lakes Area Vineyard is a place where people are able to use their gifts.

INSIGHTS

- 68% of Christians say they've heard of spiritual gifts.
- The most commonly claimed spiritual gifts are teaching (9%), service (8%), and faith (7%). The least commonly claimed spiritual gifts are leadership (2%) and evangelism (1%).
- Gifts people claim that aren't listed in Bible passages about spiritual gifts include singing, patience, happiness, creativity, and health.

(Barna Research Group)



“God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another. ... Then everything you do will bring glory to God through Jesus Christ.” (1 Peter 4:10-11)

Instead of burying our talents (see Matthew 25:14-30), we should be grateful for them and use them to serve God and other people.

TEACHABLE MOMENTS

1. Variety Is the Spice of Life

During family outings at places to eat, museums, concerts, and sporting events, discuss the wide range of talents that people have. Emphasize that all gifts are special—and that the world would be boring if everyone excelled in the same areas.

2. Use 'Em or Lose 'Em

After you help children identify their talents and spiritual gifts, help them put them into practice. As a family, think of one way to use your gifts this month. Talk about how it feels to put them into action.

3. Thank the Giver

During prayer times, encourage children to thank God not only for their physical blessings but also for their spiritual gifts. Ask God for wisdom to use the gifts in ways that honor him.



Start a conversation about gifts and gratitude by asking these questions:

1. What special talents and abilities do you think God has given you? How do you thank God for those gifts?
2. What are some ways you can praise God by using your talents?
3. How can you express gratitude for other people's talents—and encourage them to use their gifts to honor God?

FAMILY EXPERIENCE

Try these fun activities to express gratitude for the gifts God has given each of your family members.

Grateful Game

Play a game of Hot Potato with a twist. Sit in a circle, play music, and pass around a gourd or other Thanksgiving decoration. Pause the music at varying intervals. When the music stops, the person with the object must say one thing he or she is thankful for. Play until everyone has several chances to thank God, the giver of all good things.

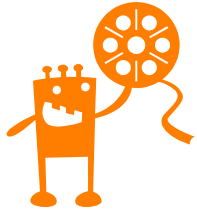
To add more challenge, throw the object across the circle instead of passing it. This adds an element of surprise because people won't know if they'll have the object when the music stops. For even more excitement, use three or four objects rotating in assigned directions. Players will have to stay sharp, and think of even more gifts for which to be grateful.

Amazing Bodies

Have each family member draw a gingerbread-cookie-type person and draw arrows from different parts of the body to the outer rim of the paper. Say: “From the head, write words or draw pictures that describe what you like to learn about. From the hands, things you like to do. From the feet, places you like to go. From the stomach, things you like to eat, and so on.” Read aloud Psalm 139:14.



Form a circle and link arms. Have family members say in unison, "I am fearfully and wonderfully made!" Then close in a prayer of thanks for the wonderful bodies God has given us.



MEDIA MADNESS



MOVIES

Movie: *The Muppets*

Genre: Family comedy

Rating: PG (for some mild rude humor)

Cast: Jason Segel, Amy Adams, Kermit the Frog, Miss Piggy

Synopsis: The beloved Muppets reunite—and recruit some fans—to save their old theater from oil tycoon Tex Richman.

Our Take: Parents who grew up with the Muppets will enjoy introducing their children to these colorful characters. Some humor will likely be over young viewers' heads; for example, Animal is now at an anger-management rehab center for celebrities.



MUSIC

Artist: Jamie Grace

Album: *One Song at a Time*



Artist Info: This 19-year-old singer and songwriter from Atlanta is the newest addition to Toby Mac's Christian music label. She's a featured artist and speaker on Women of Faith's Revolve Tour. Grace also is studying children's ministry. She was diagnosed with Tourette syndrome at age 11.

Summary: Grace's sound is a combination of pop, folk, and hip-hop. In her first single, "Hold Me," Grace sings about loving God "more than the words in my brain can express."

Our Take: Preteens (and their parents) will enjoy Grace's refreshing sound and heartfelt lyrics about relating to God.



CULTURE & TRENDS

- Competitive carpooling is a hot topic in some neighborhoods. Status-conscious parents are racing to fill their minivans and SUVs with kids they want their children to be seen with. (*USA Today*)
- Professor Sheri L. Parks says the hit TV show *Modern Family*, which satirizes family dynamics and relationships, "sets the expectation that nothing is sacred or even sincere" about families. (*washingtonpost.com*)

QUICK STATS

• 85% of American parents feel it's important to tell their kids they're smart (*parenting.com*)



• 69% of families have moved to a new home at least once in their children's lifetime. When choosing a new home, 61% of parents say a safe neighborhood is most important. One-third of children want their own bedrooms, 27% wish for a neighborhood with kids their age, and 25% want a big backyard. (*Denver Post*)

GAMES, SITES & APPS

Title	Content	Rating & Platform
<i>Tetris Axis</i>	This new release of the classic shape-stacking game contains more than 20 game modes, including marathon, fever, and tower climber.	E; Nintendo 3DS
<i>Kirby's Return to Dreamland</i>	The popular character returns with some new abilities. Players help Kirby rebuild an alien spaceship so the aliens can return to their home planet.	E10+; Wii
<i>BAM! Body and Mind</i> www.bam.gov	At this free site, kids learn about eating well, exercising, handling stress, and more. Content includes games, virtual tours, and a fitness calendar.	Geared toward kids ages 9-13

This page is designed to help educate parents and isn't meant to endorse any movie, music, or product. Our prayer is that you'll make informed decisions about what your children watch, listen to, and wear.



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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2 LA Moms @ 9	3	4	5
Serving Together. The story was about the Feeding of the 5,000 from John 6:5-13. When the boy gave his food and the disciples distributed it, they were working together to serve the people. The verse was Galatians 6:2.						
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Worshipping Together. The story was about Jesus Healing the Blind Man from Luke 18:35-43. After the man was healed, he went away praising God and all that Jesus had done. His worship was contagious to the crowd around him, our worship should be "contagious" too. The verse was Leviticus 23:3a.						
13 Pancake Feed & Worship	14	15	16 LA Moms @ 9	17	18 Encounter Night @ 7	19
Worship with your family. This will be a worship, party centered service, where we celebrate what God has done through the "40 Days of Community."						
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
Celebrating Together. The story is the Prodigal Son from Luke 15:11-24. When the son came home, the father threw a party to celebrate his return. God celebrates over us too when we live a life that follows His plans for us. The verse was Philippians 4:4.						
27	28	29	30		Next week December 4 - Christmas Festival!	
Party Day. Pack boxes for soldiers. Sign up for Mexico Colonia Kids. Movies and Games. Our time to celebrate what God has done in the "40 Days Campaign."						

News of the month...

- This month, we are starting a sponsorship program for a church in Mexico.**
We have been asked by Fred Collum the director of Vineyard Mexico to help feed children living in the Colonias where there are Vineyard churches. We will be "adopting" two of these sites. The kids will partner in their small groups to sponsor a child. For \$1.00 a week, the Vineyard in Mexico can provide a child with weekly food and a lesson about Jesus. We do not want this to be about you as parents paying though, it is a way to teach our kids compassion. Think about what your child can do to earn an extra Quarter or two, this will be combined with their group to cover the child's costs. Maybe your child wants to sponsor a student on their own or as a family with their sibling. This will be a one year commitment.
- We also will be collecting materials to send to our troops overseas.**
During the month of November, we will be collecting things to send to members of the military who are currently serving our country. Please send things like Energy Bars, Sunflower seeds, Hard Candies, Gum, small candies to hand out to local children, AA batteries, Personal Hygiene Gear, Zip-Lock style Plastic Storage Bags, Pre-paid Phone Cards, decks of cards or small games, crossword puzzle books, etc. The kids will be packing the boxes along with notes on the 27th of November.
- We ask all parents whose children are regularly attending Children's Ministry to serve.**
If you are not currently scheduled, please talk to Jen Barberg, to find a place on the schedule to serve. We need everything from teachers, to rockers, to closet organizers.
- Please help your child with our memory verse program...**
If they memorize their verse and can share it with one of their teachers, they will get a punch on a card. After five punches, the kids will have the opportunity to visit a prize box with candy and small toys. After 30 punches, the child and an adult of their choosing will be treated to lunch with Jen.

Parent Link is a monthly publication. We hope it will be a tool for your family. If you have any funny stories or comments your kids have made, poems they've written, pictures they've drawn, etc. Please email them to Jen for future editions of Parent Link. Feel free to contact me with any questions, concerns, or comments about Lakes Area Vineyard's Children's Ministry.

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