

October 2014

parenting CHRISTIAN kids



**St. Michael
Lutheran Church**

hope@stmhc.us



Reap a Harvest of Spiritual Fruit

POWERSOURCE

ASK GOD:

1. To show your family how to live out each fruit of the Spirit.
2. To help you grow more fruit in your life—and to share God’s bounty with others.
3. To bless your family’s efforts to live “fruitful” lives in God’s glory and service.

With fall comes the long-awaited harvest, as farmers across the land see the fruits of their labors. Likewise, when the Holy Spirit is planted in our hearts, we bear fruit, too.

Galatians 5:22 lists the good fruit that God wants God’s followers to bear: love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

These qualities can be tough to live out—especially in families consisting of imperfect people. Thankfully, God’s Holy Spirit helps us be fruitful “in every part of our lives” (verse 5:25). Here are simple ideas for cultivating spiritual fruits among your family members.

Berry Special—While you enjoy a fruit salad, affirm one another. Start with “You are berry special because...” Then list ways you see each person display the fruit of the Spirit.

Go Bananas!—Create fun “candles” by placing half a banana (pointed end up) inside a pineapple ring. Attach a maraschino cherry “flame” atop the banana with a toothpick. Eat the snack and discuss ways that showing the fruit of the Spirit helps us “shine” for God.

Fruit Suit—With paper and markers, design fun “suits” you could wear to show God’s love through the fruit of the Spirit, such as a bunch of grapes to represent how you can help a “bunch of people in need.” Then ask: Why does God’s love grow *inside* us? How can we show God’s love to others without wearing a “fruit suit”?

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TEACHABLE MOMENTS

Growing a Good Crop

With your family, draw a large mural of a tree with roots. Also draw nine pieces of various fruit on the tree, and write a fruit of the Spirit on each piece. Give everyone index cards and something to write or draw with.

Have kids draw pictures of what a few fruits mean to them. Older kids can write what the fruit of the Spirit means to them. Discuss each fruit and attach the cards to the mural.

Read aloud John 15:5. Then ask:

What conditions affect crops? To grow these fruit of the Spirit in our lives, what conditions do we need? What will help us live a fruit-filled life for God?

Close in prayer: **Dear God, please provide good conditions so we can bear good fruit for you by how we live. In Jesus' name, amen.**

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Families Can Bear Fruit

Right before listing the nine fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5, the apostle Paul lists their opposites: the desires that stem from our sinful nature. These include impurity, idolatry, hostility, quarreling, jealousy, angry outbursts, selfish ambition, dissension, division, envy, and more (see verses 19-21). In families, sometimes those things threaten the spiritual fruit that God wants us to live out. With prayer and practice, however, we can resist temptation and sin, growing spiritual fruit even when facing tough challenges. Explore these insights about the role of each fruit in your home.

Love—First Corinthians chapter 13, known as the “love chapter,” is popular at weddings but also contains wisdom for family life. Love is patient and kind (two other spiritual fruits!). It isn’t jealous, boastful, proud, rude, or self-seeking. And love always perseveres and endures, no matter the obstacles your family faces.

Joy—Spiritual joy is gladness that doesn’t depend on your family’s circumstances. Rejoice that Jesus came to die for all of your sins and that the Lord’s joy is your strength (see Nehemiah 8:10).

Peace—True peace trusts that God is in charge and has a plan for your family. Jesus, the Prince of Peace, offers his followers peace that “exceeds anything we can understand” (Philippians 4:7).

Patience—Many parents say this fruit is the toughest to display at home, where tempers often run short. Remembering God’s patience with you—as well as his perfect timing—can reduce your irritation with family members.

Kindness—This fruit flows from your life when you put others’ needs first and follow the Golden

Rule at home: “Do to others as you would like them to do to you” (Luke 6:31).

Goodness—Because only God is perfect, any goodness you show to your family members comes from him. During Jesus’ life on earth, he modeled how to provide and seek good things for other people.

Faithfulness—This fruit involves being “full” of faith, trusting God completely, as well as being trustworthy and reliable to one another. As Jesus says in Luke 16:10, “If you are faithful in little things, you will be faithful in large ones.”

Gentleness—When you treat family members with care and concern, using pleasant words and a quiet tone of voice, your gentleness reaps a noticeable harvest in your home.

Self-Control—Satan uses our sinful human desires to tear families apart, but Scripture says God’s followers “are controlled by the Spirit if you have the Spirit of God living in you” (Romans 8:9).

Blessings as God’s Spirit fills your family with all this fruit!

“Every good tree bears good fruit, but the bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit.”

—Matthew 7:17-18

MEDIA MADNESS



MOVIE

Title: *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*

Genre: Family Comedy

Rating: PG

Cast: Steve Carell, Jennifer Garner, Dick Van Dyke, Megan Mullally

Synopsis: This Disney live-action movie is based on the best-selling 1972 picture book by Judith Viorst. It gets laughs by following the calamities of 11-year-old Alexander and his entire family on a single day.

Our Take: Expect lots of situational humor geared toward preteens. The PG rating is for “rude humor, including some reckless behavior and language.” After watching the movie together, you can discuss what makes a day “good” or “bad”—and how God is with us in all circumstances.



MUSIC

Title: *Anchor*

Author: Colton Dixon

Synopsis: This 23-year-old Christian singer was a contestant on the 11th season of *American Idol*. “Let Them See You” was his first hit on Christian radio. Dixon’s second pop-rock album follows closely on the heels of his debut, *The Messenger*. Amid his rising popularity, Dixon insists that “God’s first, and I’m second.”

Our Take: Underneath Dixon’s punk-rock look is a heart for God. Many of his lyrics speak about glorifying God, not ourselves. On “More of You,” the first single from *Anchor*, Dixon sings of emptying himself and surrendering his life to God. The new album should appeal to a wide range of music fans.



CULTURE & TRENDS

Birthday Treat Makeover—More schools are banning sugary birthday treats such as cupcakes, asking children to distribute alternatives such as pencils and stickers instead. Schools say they’re trying to teach healthy habits, avoid problems with food allergies, and reduce parents’ stress of having to feed entire classrooms.

QUICK STATS

Just Do It!—Active tasks such as singing or doing arts and crafts make children happier, according to Oxford University researchers. Tests show that passive activities such as looking at picture books or watching television don’t contribute to kids’ happiness. (*660news.org*)

Liar, Liar—A new study shows that kids between the ages of 5 and 7 who’d been lied to by an adult researcher were more likely to cheat and then lie about cheating when given the opportunity. But being lied to didn’t seem to make any difference for kids ages 3 to 4; they cheated and lied at the same rates regardless of whether the adult had been truthful with them. (*medicalxpress.com*)

Games, Sites & Apps

The Last Tinker: City of Colors

This charming platform game is filled with unique puzzles and artwork. Because it isn’t difficult or aggressive, it’s been compared to family games such as the “Lego” series.

Available for nearly all platforms, including PC, PlayStation, and Xbox.

Youngzine.com

At this site, older children can learn about current events in an interactive manner. Plus, they can contribute information and views to a community of other kids, parents, and teachers.

Duolingo

With this free app (iPhone and Android), learning a second—or third—language becomes a game. Short daily lessons allow kids to unlock more challenges as they master Spanish, French, Italian, German, or Portuguese.

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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, read, listen to, and play.



October

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2	3	4
5 World Teacher's Day	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14 National Dessert Day	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31 Halloween	

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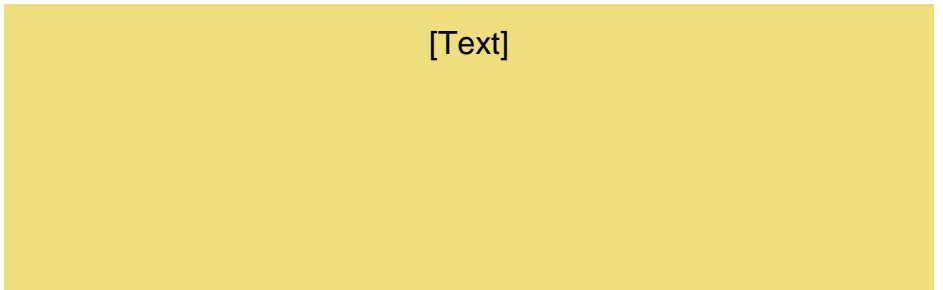
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