

FAMILY CONNECTION



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25 Days of Compassion

By Karen Wilson | Nov. 25, 2015 | Parent Cue

Christmas is the most wonderful time of year.

What makes it so special? The jingle bells, the wrapped presents, the winter wonderlands, the roasting chestnuts, the squeals of children...?

Or is it that we are celebrating the greatest gift and acts of compassion ever! God sending his son Jesus into this world over two thousand years ago.

It could be that we've kind of lost the joy of Christmas in our efforts to make it special or gotten side tracked with all the stress

we've tacked onto it...and then of course there's the overspending and overeating.

But what if you were deliberate as a family this year to spend time focusing on the reason for the season to celebrate God's ultimate gift of compassion by showing compassion to others?

We've created an advent calendar* that has you covered with 25 days of Compassion. Each day until Christmas, there's a sentence of the Christmas Story to read as a family (seen each day in



bold) and an activity your family can do together to show compassion.

Remember to give yourself compassion too, if you're not able to do every single thing on the calendar.

Feel free to replace some of the ideas with your own!

www.theparentcue.org

*The Advent calendar can be found on page 3.

Message from Pastor Jeanette

Joy and Wonder at Christmas

Children are so honest in the joy they express. We can learn so much from our children when we share in their freedom of joy. As parents we tend to be thinking of what all we have to do to prepare for Christmas and forget to live and enjoy the moments that this time of year brings. Allow your children to lead you into the joy at Christmas. After all,

we are rejoicing in the birth of the coming of the Christ child. We delight in the wondrous hope, love and forgiveness that God through his son Jesus Christ brings to us. Let us rejoice and savor the moments with our children and rediscover again the wonder of Christmas.

Isaiah 11:6 *...and a little child shall lead them.*



Family
Christmas Eve
Service
Dec. 24
4:00 pm

Bring your family to the Foothills' Family Christmas Eve Service at 4 pm for an engaging, interactive experience in the story telling of Jesus' birth. Kids of all ages will enjoy it!

Ways to Connect

Family Faith Experience – Feeling overscheduled but still want to connect with other FUMC families? Give our Family Experience "FX" a try! Held on the first Sunday of the month immediately following the 10:30am worship service in King Hall Connection Center, FX gives families an hour of fun, food, and faith connections! We start with an activity or game that explains the month's KidsConnect theme, followed by a family service project, and we end with a potluck lunch! Sunday's main dish is carne asada with Harun Hutchinson manning the grill! Families can bring a side dish, dessert, or make a donation towards the main dish.

Family Service Project – This month the Foothills' youth and MomsConnect groups are providing cards and gifts to the families of El Nido Transitional Housing program, which helps victims of domestic violence. If your family would like to contribute a card or wrapped gift, please drop it off at the church on or before 12/13.

Spotlight



For the November FX, families gathered to make Christmas doves to decorate the sanctuary. Ken Schiermeyer and Jenny Bramer attended with their two sons, along with Ken's mom.

What's Happening in KidsConnect?



Parent Cue

This month's Parent Cue is about Compassion. Pick up your card at KidsConnect.

The KidsConnect theme for December is **Compassion**. Christmas movies not only have a way of changing how you look at Christmas, but also how you look at life, as we see characters on the screen transform from unbelief to belief, from stingy to generous, or from cold-hearted to compassionate. For the month of December, we're taking a quote from one of those famous movie lines and encouraging kids to show compassion to the people around them.

Compassion is caring enough to do something about someone else's need. If you look at the Christmas story, it's easy to see that one aspect of God's character is compassion. God saw our greatest need, and He met it in the most remarkable way.

Compassion starts with God. Every week this month, we'll be asking kids an important question to help them think more about showing compassion. God loved you first. How will you love others?

Shout Out to...



Anna Achenbach. Anna has faithfully served as a VBS leader and K/1st grade KidsConnect leader for the past two years.

Get Connected!

Here is what is coming up in
Children's, Youth & Family Ministries.

- *Family eXperience*, 12/6 at 11:45am
- *Christmas Concert*, 12/12 at 5:00pm
- *Christmas Caroling*, 12/20 at 4:30pm
- *Family Christmas Eve service*, 12/24 at 4:00pm

Children, Youth & Family Ministries Team

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Pastoral Team

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ADVENT



CALENDAR

Gather around and READ God's story of compassion one day at a time. Then go and DO the suggested activities and write your own story of compassion as a family.

2015

1

A YOUNG COUPLE, MARY AND JOSEPH, GET ENGAGED.

Give up your spot in line. (They'll be so thankful!)

2

ONE DAY, GOD SENDS THE ANGEL GABRIEL TO MARY. HE HAS SOME VERY SPECIAL NEWS!

Donate money to a non-profit.

3

MARY IS GREATLY TROUBLED WHEN SHE HEARS THE ANGEL'S GREETING.

Pay for someone else's coffee. (Christmas caffeine!)

4

GABRIEL RESPONDS TO MARY: "DON'T BE AFRAID; GOD IS VERY HAPPY WITH YOU!"

Send cards to service men and women who are serving overseas. (Long distance Christmas cheer!)

5

GABRIEL TELLS MARY THE SPECIAL NEWS: SHE WILL HAVE A BABY BOY, AND HE WILL BE NAMED JESUS.

Tell a joke to make someone smile. (Or tell several to spread even more joy!)

6

GABRIEL SHARES MORE DETAILS OF GOD'S PLAN WITH MARY: "JESUS WILL BE GREAT AND WILL BE CALLED GOD'S VERY OWN SON!"

Donate scrumptious food to your food bank.

7

MARY DOESN'T UNDERSTAND HOW SHE CAN HAVE A BABY WITHOUT BEING MARRIED, BUT THE ANGEL GABRIEL ASSURES HER OF A GREAT TRUTH: NOTHING IS IMPOSSIBLE WITH GOD.

Donate pet supplies to an animal shelter. (You'll make a puppy's day!)

8

"I SERVE GOD WITH MY LIFE AND WANT ALL THAT YOU HAVE SAID TO HAPPEN," MARY TELLS THE ANGEL, AND HE LEAVES.

Help someone do a chore or other job. (And sing Christmas carols while you work!)

9

MARY VISITS HER COUSIN ELIZABETH AND IS SO OVERWHELMED WITH GOD'S GOODNESS THAT SHE SINGS A SONG OF PRAISE.

Do yard work or shovel snow for a neighbor. (And sing more carols!)

10

CAESAR AUGUSTUS WANTS TO KNOW HOW MANY PEOPLE ARE IN HIS EMPIRE, SO HE TELLS ALL THE PEOPLE TO GO BACK TO THEIR HOMETOWN TO BE REGISTERED AND COUNTED.

Donate books you no longer need. (You'll be giving the stories a second life!)

11

JOSEPH TAKES MARY, WHO IS PREGNANT, TO HIS HOMETOWN OF BETHLEHEM TO BE COUNTED.

Pick up litter. (It'll help the reindeer to have a safer journey!)

12

WHILE JOSEPH AND MARY ARE IN BETHLEHEM, THE TIME COMES FOR THE BABY TO BE BORN.

Offer free babysitting for a family so they can do some Christmas shopping.

13

MARY GIVES BIRTH TO JESUS, WRAPS HIM IN SWADDLING CLOTHS AND LAYS HIM IN A MANGER BECAUSE THERE IS NO ROOM FOR THEM ANYWHERE ELSE.

Leave a popcorn surprise for neighbors to find.

14

AT NIGHT IN A NEARBY FIELD, SHEPHERDS ARE WATCHING THEIR FLOCKS.

Donate fun toys to a children's hospital.

15

THE SKY LIGHTS UP—GOD HAS SENT AN ANGEL TO THE SHEPHERDS TO TELL THEM THE GOOD NEWS.

Donate a pair of new pajamas for foster kids. (Snuggly pajamas are like a warm hug!)

16

WHEN THE SHEPHERDS SEE THE ANGEL, THEY'RE AFRAID!

Put money in the Salvation Army bucket.

17

THE ANGEL TRIES TO CALM THE SHEPHERDS: "DON'T BE AFRAID—I BRING WONDERFUL NEWS THAT WILL BRING JOY TO ALL OF THE WORLD!"

Make get well cards for someone who needs them.

18

"A SAVIOR—THE RESCUER YOU HAVE BEEN WAITING FOR IS BORN TODAY!" THE ANGEL PROCLAIMS TO THE SHEPHERDS.

Bring coffee to your teachers. (More Christmas caffeine!)

19

THE ANGEL EXPLAINS THAT THE SHEPHERDS WILL FIND THE BABY WRAPPED IN SWADDLING CLOTHS AND LYING IN A MANGER.

Make holiday decorations for others. (Spread that Christmas cheer!)

20

MORE ANGELS COME TO CELEBRATE THE GOOD NEWS—THEY ARRIVE AT THE SHEPHERD'S FIELD AND BEGIN PRAISING GOD!

Donate meals to No-Kid Hunger.

21

THE SHEPHERDS LEAVE THEIR FLOCKS AND HURRY TO FIND MARY, JOSEPH AND THE BABY WHO IS LYING IN A MANGER.

Make ornaments for your neighbors. (Help them deck their halls!)

22

AFTER THEY SEE THE BABY, THE SHEPHERDS EXCITEDLY GO AND TELL EVERYONE THEY RUN INTO THE GOOD NEWS!

Donate new, awesome toys to Toys for Tots.

23

THE SHEPHERDS RETURN TO THEIR FLOCKS, PRAISING GOD FOR ALL THEY HAD SEEN AND HEARD.

Feed the birds. (A tweet treat!)

24

MARY NAMES THE BABY JESUS JUST AS THE ANGEL HAD TOLD HER TO DO.

Candy cane bomb the cars in the parking lot.

25

GOD HAS SENT HIS SON TO RESCUE US BECAUSE HE LOVES US!

Go back to Day 1 and read God's story of compassion from beginning to end. Merry Christmas! God loves you!