

## Northeast Indiana Family Life Ministry Council



### Featured Events

**Robert Rogers -  
Living a Life of No  
Regrets**

St. Peter's

Fort Wayne

October 16, 2013

7:00 pm

FREE

[Click here for more info](#)

### Children in Worship

Children are a blessing and a challenge especially when you take them to worship! You are encouraged to bring them to church, but how do you get them to sit, to be quiet, to not kick the pew in front of them, to stop stroking the lady's fur jacket, to not poke their siblings, to not crawl under the pews... The list could go on and on. Everyone knows this scene, but how do some people manage to have quiet, well-behaved children *in* worship? Can you use all those words in *one* sentence and be taken seriously?

Many parents end a worship service feeling frazzled and exhausted. Others give up entirely, stating they will wait until their children are older to attend worship. As ministry leaders, we can help. This newsletter contains several suggestions area Lutheran Churches use to help families find meaning and peace as they worship with their children. Try one (or two), and feel free to make it work for you. If you have further suggestions or modify one of ours, please send your story to the FLMC Website (through the "Contact Us" page) so others can benefit as well. Thank you.

[Click here to visit the FLMC website.](#)

### Worship Bags

These handy bags are meant to engage the young child in worship rather than relegate them to observer. It is easy, and it works! During each worship service, the greeters and ushers are at a door ready to meet the families. If a small child is with the parents for worship, they offer a Worship Bag and a Children's Bulletin to go into the pew with them. These bags hold a number of objects designed to involve the child in worship, including stuffed characters representing those who contribute to the worship service. Parents remove the soft figures and help their child (children) identify some of the participating individuals for that day: pastor, acolyte, choir director, choir member, etc. Your bag could even include a Bible, a hymnal or even a parament covering a lectern. [Read more...](#)

### Parent Resources - Making Worship Meaningful for All

#### During Worship

Children in worship pew and/or bulletin inserts can help parents explain

and discuss the worship service and environment. This can create a setting where children are actively participating in worship, not simply enduring it.

The Family Ministry Council website has several samples for you of Children in Worship materials being used by local churches. [Click here to see the samples.](#)

## After Worship

*Taking Faith Home* bulletin inserts from Vibrant Faith Ministries are an effective resource for helping members apply and live God's Word all week long. Here is an inexpensive way to help families and individuals continue in the Word that was shared at Sunday's Service and put it into action using the Four Keys for nurturing faith in the Christian home: Devotions, Caring Conversations, Rituals and Traditions, and Service. Sunday's message is further expanded through suggested daily Bible readings, daily prayers, and blessings. Each week's *Taking Faith Home* insert is packed with ideas that will nurture Christian faith at home as family members talk, pray, and work together. They are also appropriate for private devotions, neighborhood gatherings and congregational meetings. They are available in downloadable or CD format for a price of \$19.95 for the entire year. To order, or for more information, go to [www.vibrantfaithathome.org](http://www.vibrantfaithathome.org).

## Parenting in the Pew

*Parenting in the Pew* by Robbie Castleman is a fantastic resource for ministry leaders and parents. Robbie helps parents understand that they have a greater responsibility in the church pew each week other than keeping their children quiet. She offers practical advice for making worship a meaningful experience for children of all ages.

Description as seen on Amazon:

"Daddy, I'd like you to meet my children." That's Robbie Castleman's attitude about taking her children to church. She believes that Sunday morning isn't a success if she has only managed to keep the kids quiet. And she knows there's more to church for kids than trying out their new coloring books. Children are at church for the same reason as their parents: for the privilege of worshiping God. Worship, Castleman writes, is "the most important thing you can ever train your child to do." So with infectious passion, nitty-gritty advice and a touch of humor, she shows you how to help your children (from toddlers to teenagers) enter into worship. In this significantly revised and updated edition Castleman includes a new preface and two new appendices that provide new perspectives on children's sermon and intergenerational community. She also provides a study guide for personal reflection or group discussion. More than ever, *Parenting in the Pew* is essential reading for parents and worship leaders who want to help children make joyful noises unto the Lord.

## Involving Children and Youth in Ministry

Studies are showing that youth are more likely to remain in the church if

they are actively involved in the ministry of the parish beyond the youth group. Consider helping your youth make that connection by participating in weekly worship. Children and youth could...

- Operate AV or soundboard equipment
- Make sure microphones are turned off after services
- Usher
- Acolyte
- Greet
- Sing in a family choir or just a solo
- Be a bell ringer
- Read lessons or prayers
- Conduct a noisy bucket collection
- Complete family service projects involving worship - sharpening pencils, straightening pews, cleaning
- Participate in milestone blessings
- Play special music
- Conduct a youth led worship service (Some churches do this on any fifth Sunday of the month.)
- Make banners to hang in church throughout the year

## Trunk or Treat

Emmanuel's annual Trunk and Treat is held on Halloween evening, October 31, from 5-7 pm. The purpose of this event is to create an environment in which the members of Emmanuel and citizens of the West Central community can interact. Up to twenty congregation members provide their vehicles as places where treats are shared. Volunteer vehicles are decorated and owners who pass out the candy are costumed. Also included in the event are free food, caramel corn, and games for children. Trunk and treat is designed to be a "pass through" activity and not a destination. Volunteers can assist with the event by providing and manning a "trunk," donating candy to be passed out, and helping with food, drink, and caramel corn.

## VBS

### Not Just a Summer Thing

As most churches who hold a Vacation Bible School during the summer can tell you, one of the most difficult things to do is just to get your system in place. Each year will be different in many ways, but the bones of the schedule, the general roles of the volunteers, and the set-up are pretty much the same. Once you have it down, planning isn't so tough. (Getting enough volunteers, etc. may be another story!)

Many years ago our church took those bones of that VBS schedule, roles, and set-up, and applied them to a one-day "Christmas VBS." This ministry has been relatively easy to plan and execute and has been well-received.

[Read more...](#)

## We Want to Hear from YOU!

We would love to hear anything you might share with us for the good of Northeast Indiana family ministry efforts! Do you have a program or ministry idea you would like to share? Do you have a particular topic you would like us to cover? Feel free to **contact us** at any time.

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Northeast Indiana Family Life Ministry Council | 405 W. Wayne St. | Fort Wayne | IN | 46802