

CONNECTIONPOINT

connect | ignite | inspire | transform |

DECEMBER 2011



HE WANTS US TO KNOW HIM!
advocate . bringht and morning star . deliverer . counsellor . emmanuel . faithful and true . good shepherd . i am shepherd . healer . lamb . lion . prince of peace . righteous judge . cornerstone . truth . faithful one . word of life son of god . son of man . resurrection and life . teacher . light of the world . first and last . sent from heaven . amen

oswald chambers . my utmost for his highest

'Behold, the virgin shall be with child, and bear a Son, and they shall call His name Immanuel,' which is translated, 'God with us' —Matthew 1:23

His Birth in History. "... that Holy One who is to be born will be called the Son of God (Luke 1:35). Jesus Christ was born into this world, not from it. He did not emerge out of history; He came into history from the outside. Jesus Christ is not the best human being the human race can boast of— He is a Being for whom the human race can take no credit at all. He is not man becoming God, but God Incarnate— God coming into human flesh from outside it. His life is the highest and the holiest entering through the most humble of doors. Our Lord's birth was an advent— the appearance of God in human form.

His Birth in Me. "My little children, for whom I labor in

birth again until Christ is formed in you . . ." (Galatians 4:19). Just as our Lord came into human history from outside it, He must also come into me from outside. Have I allowed my personal human life to become a "Bethlehem" for the Son of God? I cannot enter the realm of the kingdom of God unless I am born again from above by a birth totally unlike physical birth. "You must be born again" (John 3:7). This is not a command, but a fact based on the authority of God. The evidence of the new birth is that I yield myself so completely to God that "Christ is formed" in me. And once "Christ is formed" in me, His nature immediately begins to work through me.

God Evident in the Flesh. This is what is made so profoundly possible for you and for me through the redemption of man by Jesus Christ.

cover: Pieter Aertsen
The Adoration of the Magi
c. 1560 Oil on panel. Rijks museum, Amsterdam



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To access a soft copy of this issue go to www.gracepoint.ca/who we are/connection-point

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point people . our leadership team

COME AS YOU ARE

BE MOVED BY GRACE

There was much consternation and constipation back in October when two former US Presidents visited Surrey to speak at our city's Regional Economic Summit. Bush and Clinton received most of the attention, of course, but there was another speech that caught my attention. Craig and Marc Kielburger of *Free the Children* told a story of when the building of an African school looked in jeopardy because of forecasted bad weather. One of the local women said that she would call for a minga, a "Coming together of the community for the benefit of all." The next day the whole community showed up and worked on the project. The Kielburgers were amazed, but when the woman asked what their word for minga is, the two brothers were dumbfounded...they couldn't think of one.

I can think of one. There is a word for minga in our tongue: church. I believe we have been learning what this word means in new and biblical ways at Gracepoint. We are working together as a people for the benefit of all: recommitting, restoring, rebuilding, revisioning and refocusing. Our work together is for the good our city, each other, and ultimately for the glory of God.



Interim Lead Pastor
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From the bottom of my heart I am saying thank you. Thanks to you who have persevered through a season of transition and have grown to love the church more and more. Thanks to you who are new to the Gracepoint family. We are thrilled

IN FACT, I believe we will become a shining city on a hill, bringing God's love to more than we ever dreamed possible and experiencing God's blessing beyond measure.

you are here. Please engage your gifts and energies in growing as disciples with us on mission with Jesus. Thanks to our elders who have modeled humility and transparency. And, thanks to our pastoral and support staff who have gone above and beyond the call of duty. God has blessed us with an incredible community, a minga, that he is shaping for his purposes. Thank you, Lord, for being faithful to your word, your people, and your promises.

As we head into the home stretch of 2011 allow me to address some logistics and big-picture thinking.

FIRST, SOME YEAR-END LOGISTICS:

- **O**ur family Christmas services will be on December 18. Our children will sing, the joy of the birth of Christ will be in the air, and we will take time to be together as a people in an inter-generational way. Invite a friend or neighbour into one of our campus parties!
- **T**here will be two Christmas Eve services, one hosted by our Campus that meets at the Bell Center for the Performing Arts (4pm), and one hosted by our Surrey South Campus (7pm). Who might you invite to join you for Christmas Eve this year?
- **B**ecause Gracepoint's big Christmas celebrations will happen Christmas Eve, and because we desire to allow our families to engage with family and enjoy Christmas Day together, **there will be no services on Sunday, December 25.** Take the time to rest and enjoy some company. We will still host our Gracepoint Community Dinner, however, so perhaps you could volunteer to help, or just come and be part of that wonderful community expression of God's love.

- **J**anuary 1 will be a very special **GracepointTOGETHER Sunday.** We will gather both campuses for one service at our Surrey South location. Both campuses will tell stories, we will worship together, hear some vision casting, and of course eat as one people who normally don't get the chance to hang out together. Let's jam the room at Surrey South! We know you'll all be tired from ringing in the New Year, so we'll use that more sleeper-friendly Bell Campus meeting time of 10:30am!

NOW, FOR SOME BIG-PICTURE STUFF:

- **O**ur staff has been working hard to clarify our vision as we look ahead to 2012. We've met with focus groups within the congregation to test what we've been praying through and discerning and look forward to articulating what we sense the Holy Spirit stirring among us as a people. Please ask God to prepare us for more than we can ask or imagine!
- **I** believe God has used the journey of the past year to test, sift, and reposition us for his purposes. This has not been an easy journey, but I am excited about what God has been doing. With that in mind, given our year of change and consolidation and our responsibility to steward the resources God has given us, **we will need to reposition and refocus our staff to effectively equip the saints for ministry within the church and for the city.** We're diligently working at discerning the best way for us as your pastoral staff to most effectively lead and serve so that you can grow as a follower of Jesus and engage your world with the Good News. Please pray for this process which I believe God will clarify over the next number of weeks.
- **I** am thankful for some willing and very able Gracepointers who are lending their gifts these days. The steering team that is focused on calling out new elders is diligently at work, a search team is vetting candidates for a lead student pastor, and still others are join-

ing Randy Plett on a team to review our budget and plan our stewardship for 2012. Can you hold these teams in prayer?

- **I** am keenly aware that these are challenging spiritual times and, therefore, I am also aware that these are challenging economic times. Our world is in flux and simply living is a taxing experience. That simply ratchets up the need for God's people to actively and generously share his love. It costs to do well for the sake of the world and some of you are active partners already as you share the first 10% of what God has blessed you with. Still, **can I challenge us with something I believe is more than attainable?** Our average Sunday morning adult attendance is approximately 500. Here's the simple math: If...
 50 of us commit to at least \$10 per week...
 100 of us commit to at least \$25 per week...
 250 of us commit to at least \$50 per week...
 75 of us commit to at least \$100 per week...
 25 of us commit to at least \$200 per week...
 ...if we shared the load in this way...if each of us did what God has made possible for us to do... we would easily meet what we project to be our 2012 budget. In fact, **I believe we will become a shining city on a hill, bringing God's love to more than we ever dreamed possible and experiencing God's blessing beyond measure.** I know we all get plenty of requests for money each year, but if Gracepoint is your church family would you consider this invitation?

You can see, can't you, that Gracepoint is a minga! **The Lord is doing a new thing; it is springing forth now, do you not perceive it (Isaiah 43:19)?** You are part of this new thing! However, this new thing isn't just for us. It's meant to make us a people who declare God's praise with the whole of life and work together for the benefit of all! Are you ready? The minga has been called!

Love in Christ,

focal point . worship arts

focal point . worship arts

Create(d) to bring Him Glory

Gracepoint Worship Arts (GpWA) exists for one reason only: to bring glory to God and enjoy Him forever through myriad forms of artistic expression. In order to answer this high and holy calling, we need people with artistic gifts. We always have room for painters, set decorators, musicians, vocalists, worship leaders, actors, writers and poets, directors, videographers, editors, photographers, graphic designers, audio technicians, and much, much more. If you are interested in joining our artistic community, check us out on Facebook or, better yet, let's have coffee sometime ...

Over the past year and a half, I have enjoyed the extraordinary privilege of serving as Creative Programming Director and Music Pastor (Bell Campus) at Gracepoint and I have been blessed throughout all four seasons by people who want to use the gifts that God has bestowed on them to tell God's story and lift up the name of Jesus at Gracepoint and beyond.

Now, in a church of some 600+ children of God, I have to believe that there are more of you out there who may be hiding your creative light under a bowl. Perhaps you used to enjoy school plays or drama class; maybe you have great vocal talent that you only secretly reveal in your shower or on the drive to work; perhaps you are an artist, avid photographer, videographer, writer, blogger, but you spend all your creative energies at home or online; however for some reason or other, it has never occurred to you to explore sharing your gifts, hobbies, and passions at Gracepoint. I have good news for you! There is plenty of opportunity for creative expression of all sorts at Gracepoint, and Jesus says to you:

"You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven. Matthew@5:14-16 (NIV).

If any of these ramblings sound interesting to you, or you are feeling that Holy Spirit conviction through the Word, please connect with any of us at GpWA. We'd love to hear your story.

Blessings,
Gregg Baker (Creative Programming Director/Music Pastor)
gregg@gracepoint.ca



'Nativity' Unknown Austrian (Master of Salzburg) 1400



In January 2012, GpWA is holding a retreat at Stillwood Camp and Conference Centre, from the 19th to the 21st. (re)Generation 2012 is about gathering together as the artistic community of Gracepoint. We are intentionally coming together in the middle of Winter—a season that is often portrayed in the Arts as representative of death and the end of all things new—because we know that it is in winter that God is preparing the seeds of new life that will burst forth in Spring. So, we want to gather as a community in a creative space that promotes listening. We want to listen to God and to each other, to find out what new dreams and visions God has for us.

If you have been involved in GpWA in any capacity over the past months and years, we want you to come (and if you have a spouse, we want them to come too).

If you are at all interested in the Arts and you call Gracepoint your home church, then we want you to come. There is only one set limitation : : this is an adult-oriented spiritual retreat and there is no programming for children. We strongly recommend a weekend break for you (and for the sake of your kids ;).

If you are interested in joining us, email danica@gracepoint.ca



No Sunday Jam in December First Jam Session - Jan 15, 2012



We think student ministry should be fun, engaging, encouraging and uplifting. But more than that, we believe when teens get to hang out with leaders who take time to listen and build solid friendship around the truth of Jesus, they gain purpose, hope and begin to thrive in life. At Gracepoint you get the best of both worlds – fun, engaging programs and staff and volunteer leaders who are committed to encouraging students to pursue a personal, passionate and real relationship with Jesus Christ.

For more information contact Julia at julia@gracepoint.ca or Jon at jon-michaelpue@gmail.com or phone 604-538-1825 Ex. 211.



Identity and Grace

Last night (Tuesday, Nov 15, 2011) we started the evening off with a game of doctor-dodgeball - a game most of us probably haven't played in years. Doctor dodgeball is a lot like dodgeball, but if you get hit you have to sit down and wait for a designated "doctor" on your team to come tag you and drag you to the back wall. As soon as the doctor gets hit though, the only hope the team has is to hit the other team's doctor as well so that no one can be saved. Very fun game.

After ending in a free for all, we headed downstairs for some worship. It was a great reminder that worship isn't about hitting the right keys or playing the right chords all the time but it's about well... praising God! However, we did have Caleb come in and save the day with his awesome vocals!

We had a speaker come in from Canadian Mennonite University and discuss some options we can have after graduating highschool. There's lots of fun ways that you can get an education and have a ton of fun at the same time! If you were interested in the talk then we have brochures for you to have to check it out. The grade 11's and 12's continued their talk on identity by going through the book of Romans and figuring out who we are in Christ while the 9 and 10's finished the talk by Louie Giglio and his story of Ashley and the power of grace - looking a bit deeper into what exactly grace is.

EDITOR'S NOTES: THIS ARTICLE IS FROM THE GP YOUTH BLOG AND SOME DETAILS MAY BE IN REFERENCE TO THINGS IN THE PAST

- Also, there will still be Avail (Student Leadership Team) and all are welcome. Here's the structure of Avail if you're wondering what it's all about
- 1) Open up with prayer by a volunteer and we will draw out who will be sharing their testimony the following week. Avail is a totally safe place to be open with each other and we encourage you to step out of your comfort zone. This week it will be Rebecca!
 - 2) 2 minutes - we go around sharing what God has been doing/teaching us this past week
 - 3) Testimony - we've put our names in a hat and we will draw out who will be sharing their testimony the following week. Avail is a totally safe place to be open with each other and we encourage you to step out of your comfort zone. This week it will be Rebecca!
 - 4) Planning/Discussion - this is where we plan events or discuss decisions made for youth. Avail is the voice of the youth so we wouldn't want to make any drastic changes without them! We've also already started planning the Christmas Banquet - Each week we'll go through a devotional that will train you on what it means to be a student leader and encourage you along the way
 - 5) Devo and Activity - Each week we'll go through a devotional that will train you on what it means to be a student leader and encourage you along the way
 - 6) Challenge - each week there will also be a challenge for you that will help you grow with your walk with Jesus and grow with your leadership skills
 - 7) Prayer - a volunteer closes in prayer

Christmas Youth Banquet Dec 16 that's a Friday



"The Nativity" Elena Beniceru Reverse glass painting

Christmas Community Dinner

- this year for community dinner we're going to help out our church in making care bags for those who attend. The items in these bags include:

- Mouthwash
- Toothbrush
- Toothpaste
- Sani-wipes
- Kleenex
- Comb
- Chapstick
- Floss
- Shaving Blades and Shaver
- Gum
- Hair gel
- Tim Hortons
- Starbucks gift card

You can start to bring these items to youth and church

JR HIGH

QUESTIONS THEY ASKED PASTOR PHIL THURS NOV 17

JUNIOR HIGH TOOK THEIR TURN TONIGHT ASKING ANONYMOUS QUESTIONS TO PASTOR PHIL ABOUT GOD, JESUS, THE BIBLE AND WELL, LIFE IN GENERAL. PHIL TACKLED THEM AGAIN AND DID A GREAT JOB ANSWERING EACH ONE IN GREAT DETAIL. BUT! OF COURSE WE COULDN'T GET TO THE TALK WITHOUT PLAYING A FUN GAME OF "LINE TAG" AND SINGING WORSHIP LEAD BY SARA, JOSH, LEVI AND KYLE. WE REALLY DID "SING SING SING!" ;)

HERE IS A LIST OF QUESTIONS THAT WERE ASKED: - WHERE IS HEAVEN? - WHY DOES GOD LIKE ALL OF US? - WHAT HAPPENS TO THOSE WHO DIE THAT NEVER GOT A CHANCE TO HEAR ABOUT GOD (JESUS)? - WHAT HAPPENS IF YOU PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS BUT DON'T CHANGE WHAT I DO? - WHO WROTE THE BIBLE? - HOW DO WE KNOW THESE EVENTS IN THE BIBLE ACTUALLY HAPPENED? - WHERE DID GOD COME FROM? - WAS MARY STILL A VIRGIN AFTER MAKING JESUS? - WHO DID HIS FOLLOWER (JUDAS) BETRAY HIM? - WHAT IS A GOOD QUESTION TO ASK? ANSWERED: WHAT IS THE MEANING OF LIFE? - WHY DID GOD CREATE DISEASES? - IS GOD JESUS' FATHER OR IS JOSEPH HIS FATHER? - WHAT DOES GOD LOOK LIKE?

ENDING THE EVENING OFF WITH... - WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST THOUGHT WHEN YOU LOOKED IN THE MIRROR FOR THE FIRST TIME? OH, WE ARE FANTASTIC I MUST SAY!

STUDENT MINISTRIES INTERN
JULIA MCDUGALL

FOCUS meets at both campuses every Sunday except the First Sunday of the month
BELL CAMPUS: room 204
SSO CAMPUS: youth room



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY at Gracepoint

For children from birth to Grade 5



Your kids mean the world to you. We get that—and that's why we provide a safe, fun atmosphere where kids can discover God's truth, where the Bible is relevant, applicable and taught creatively by leaders who care deeply about your kids' spiritual growth. We believe there's no limit to what God can do when kids get involved in a Jesus-centred children's program like Kids Unlimited

MIDWEEK PROGRAMS

GIRLS CLUB (Gr. 1-5)

Mondays @ 6:00-8:30pm, Surrey South Campus

The purpose of GEMS *Girls Everywhere Meeting the Saviour* Club is to bring girls into a living, dynamic relationship with Jesus Christ.

The GEMS Christmas Banquet and Fall Badge Award Ceremony is on Mon, Dec. 12. GEMS will then break for Christmas holidays and reconvene on Jan. 9-12.

To register &/or for more info, contact Janet Loewen: 604-536-7668
jamesandjanet@telus.net

KU COMPASSION PROJECTS: OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD 2011

Thank you for your enthusiastic support and sharing the belief that God can use a simple gift to make an eternal difference in children's lives around the globe. Please pray for the child that will receive your gift of hope – that they will be truly blessed to know that God loves them. A SPECIAL "SHOUT-OUT" to those who volunteered their time to transport the gift boxes to the OCC collection centre.

GRACEPOINT CHILDREN'S CHOIR

(K-Gr.5)

Practice Schedule: Thursdays @ 6:30pm-7:30pm, Surrey South Campus

Performance Dates & Times: Sun, Dec. 18 at the Family Christmas Services
For more info, please contact the church office @ 604.538.1825

This will be a performance you won't want to miss! Invite your friends and neighbours to share in the celebration at the Family Christmas Services on Dec. 18

KU CALENDAR

- Sun, Dec. 4:** 2nd Sunday of Advent
- Mon, Dec. 5:** GEMS
- Thurs, Dec. 8:** Gracepoint Children's Choir practice
- Sun, Dec. 11:** 3rd Sunday of Advent
- Mon, Dec. 12:** Last GEMS before Christmas Break
- Thurs, Dec. 15:** Last GCC practice
- Sun, Dec. 18:** 4th Sunday of Advent—Family Christmas Services/Nursery available (No KU)
- Sat, Dec. 24:** Christmas Eve Services
4pm @ Bell Campus
7pm @ Surrey South Campus
- Sun, Dec. 25:** Christmas Day—no services
- Sun, Jan. 1, 2012:** New Years Day—Gracepoint Together at Surrey South Campus 10:30am

SUNDAY PROGRAM (0-Gr.5):

Celebrating the Season of Advent

To make the weeks leading up to Christmas full of anticipation and preparation, we will be observing Advent in KU on Sundays. To help your family mark the four weeks of Advent and prepare your hearts to celebrate the gifts of Christmas (Hope, Peace, Joy, Love and Light), we encourage you to use an advent wreath at home. According to tradition, each candle in the Advent wreath has special meaning to remind us of the approaching birthday of Jesus.

Week 1: The Gift of Hope

The first candle (gold) symbolizes the hope that Jesus gives us. Read aloud Prophet Isaiah's words about the coming Messiah in Isaiah 42:1-4. People in the Old Testament knew that God had promised to send a Saviour. We're filled with hope because we know that Jesus came to Earth on the first Christmas so he could tell people about God and die for our sins. Light the first candle on your Advent wreath and then share some ways that you're filled with hope because you know Jesus.

Week 2: The Gift of Peace

The second candle on an Advent wreath (blue) represents peace. Reflect on the words of peace spoken by Jesus in John 14:27. Light the first two candles on your Advent wreath and pray that you will experience peace amidst the hustle and bustle of the season in preparation for the arrival of the Prince of Peace.

PARTNERING WITH PARENTS Resources

Recommended resources to inspire & equip families
The Parent Link: Children's Ministry Edition
Practical ideas for nurturing children's faith on the following pages
December issue: Boost Faith While Celebrating Christmas
This month's topic is new Christmas faith-boosters families can use. Advent, the four weeks before Christmas, allows people to prepare for Jesus' birth and to share the good news of his arrival with others. This issue is filled with creative ideas to reinforce the true meaning of Christmas and to spread the joy Jesus brings into our lives.
Highlights of this new issue include:

Week 3: The Gift of Joy

The third candle on an Advent wreath (green) symbolizes the joy that Jesus brings to us. Read aloud Luke 2:9-11. The angels made a big announcement on the first Christmas, calling Jesus' birth 'good news' that would bring 'great joy.' Everything we do to get ready for Christmas can fill us with joy about Jesus. When we're joyful, we, like the angels, can help spread that good news.

Week 4: The Gift of Love

The fourth candle on an Advent wreath (red) reminds us of God's love for us. Christmas happened because of God's great love for all people. Read aloud John 3:16. At Christmas, God gave us the best gift ever. He sent his Son, Jesus, to live, die, and rise again so we could live with him forever in heaven. Although this gift required great sacrifice, God knew we needed Jesus. Light all four candles on your Advent wreath.

Christmas Eve: The Gift of Light

The fifth candle (white), usually called the Christ candle, is placed at the centre of the Advent wreath. Open your Bibles and read John 8:12. Light all 5 candles and close in prayer, thanking our loving God for sending Jesus, Light of the World, as our best Christmas gift.

- Prayer starters to keep parents focused on Jesus during the busy holiday season.
 - Teachable Moments that include fun, easy reinforcements of the Christmas message
 - Two fun family activities for adding meaning and learning to holiday celebrations,
 - Information and insights about the new movie The Adventures of Tintin and the new album from Christian singer, Aaron Shust.
- Thanks for sharing Jesus' love with children and families!

Stephanie Martin
Editor, The ParentLink



December 2011



Try New Christmas Faith-Boosters

The most wonderful time of the year is a wonderful time to share Jesus—and why he came to earth—with your children. Instead of getting caught up in the holiday rush, focus on what Christmas truly means. Use the Advent season (the weeks of preparation before Christmas) to engage in old and new traditions, make simple crafts, have discussions, and worship Jesus, our newborn King.

Faith-boosters needn't be elaborate or time-consuming. Instead, use materials you already have to reinforce the good news that the angels shared on the first Christmas Eve: Jesus, our Savior, is born!

After you've shared this message with your children, look for simple ways to spread Christmas joy as a family. From caroling and delivering cookies to sending cards and inviting neighbors to programs or concerts, the possibilities are endless for letting your light shine as you celebrate Jesus, the Light of the world.

INSIGHTS

- In a poll conducted in the U.K., 24% of children ages 7 to 11 said Christmas was about giving, rather than receiving, presents. *(Daily Mail)*
- When asked about the true meaning of Christmas, 70% of children said it's about celebrating the birth of Christ, 39% said it's about being thankful, 37% said it's about spending time with family, and 13% said it's about receiving gifts. *(KidzEyes.com)*

POWERSOURCE

ASK GOD:

1. To bless your Christmas preparations and to ready your hearts for his arrival.
2. To help your family stay focused on Jesus during the holidays.
3. To replace stress and busyness with calm and peace, so you can treasure family time.



TEACHABLE MOMENTS

1. Wrap Race—You'll need some empty boxes and gift-wrapping supplies. Form teams and have them race to wrap an imaginary gift for the whole world (such as peace) in the shortest time possible. Afterward, discuss what gifts you'd like to give and why.

2. Chapter Chain—Encourage family members to spend more time exploring God's word. From Thanksgiving until Christmas, give out a red or green construction paper link for every chapter of the Bible someone reads (or listens to). On Christmas Eve, hang the chain as a special birthday gift to Jesus.



3. O Christmas Tree—Tie a red ribbon around the head of a concrete nail, and tie the ends of the ribbon into a knot to form a loop. Hang the ornament on your Christmas tree. Talk about how baby Jesus wasn't only born for us but was born to die for us—on a tree.

So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son. (John 1:14)

At Christmas, we celebrate the good news that God became flesh, in the form of Jesus, to die for our sins.

While engaging in Christmas festivities, start a conversation by asking these questions:

1. What are your favorite Christmas traditions, and why? How do our traditions help us remember the real meaning of Christmas?
2. What are some ways we can add service and outreach to our Christmas celebrations?
3. How would you explain Christmas to someone who didn't know anything about Jesus?

FAMILY EXPERIENCE

Add a meaningful new twist to your Christmas celebrations by trying these ideas:

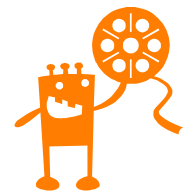
- **Unwrap the Story**—Start a new tradition as you unpack your family's crèche, or nativity scene. Let each person pull out one or two wrapped figures without peeking to see what's inside. Take turns unwrapping figures. When someone adds a figure to the scene, have him or her say a prayer of thanks for the role that figure played in Jesus' birth. For example, the person holding the stable might say, "Thank you that there was at least a stable nearby where Jesus could be born." The person with a shepherd might say, "Thank you that the shepherds went and told lots of people about Jesus' birth."



After the scene is complete, discuss the role we all can play in preparing for Jesus' birth and in telling people why Jesus came to earth.

- **Parable Ornaments**—Make a different ornament each week that reflects a parable from the Bible. For week one, pour salt into clear ball ornaments (Matthew 5:13). For week two, pour mustard seeds into clear ball ornaments (Matthew 17:20). For week three, tie Goldfish crackers in netting (Matthew 13:47). For week four, pour sunflower seeds into clear ball ornaments (Matthew 13:37). Print the verses and tie them to the ornaments. Then hang the ornaments on a small Christmas tree as a powerful reminder of Jesus' life and teachings.

the Parent LINK



MEDIA MADNESS



MOVIES

Movie: *The Adventures of Tintin*

Genre: Animated adventure

Rating: PG (for adventure-action violence, some drunkenness and brief smoking)

Cast: Jamie Bell, Daniel Craig

Synopsis: In this motion-capture film based on comic books, a boy and a captain go on a treasure hunt to find a sunken ship.

Our Take: With Steven Spielberg and Peter Jackson at the helm, *Tintin* is being hailed as a "must-see" family movie this Christmas.



MUSIC

Artist: Aaron Shust

Album: *This Is What We Believe*

Artist Info: Shust, a church worship leader, won several Dove Awards for his 2005 folk-driven album *Anything Worth Saying*.

Summary: The singer-songwriter's fourth album contains several heartfelt worship anthems, including "My Hope Is in You." The moving video is available on YouTube.

Our Take: Shust's powerful tunes and lyrics will help listeners of all ages celebrate God's power and love.



CULTURE & TRENDS

• Last year, 36% of kids ages 10 or 11 owned a cell phone. That number has more than doubled since 2005. Boys are more likely than girls to perform "data-intensive" activities with their phones, such as browsing the Web and downloading games. (*Mediamark, NY Times*)

• Before heading to the ER with their sick children, more parents are now logging in. One in eight parents now checks the Internet for medical information before plunking down an emergency-room copay. (*Reuters*)

QUICK STATS

• Only 4% of adults ages 25 to 34 in the U.K. believe that the most important part of Christmas is the religious meaning. (*Church of England Newspaper*)

• According to a new study, pre-schoolers who have trouble resisting temptation and delaying gratification are more likely than their more-patient peers to become adults who lack self-control. (*HealthDay*)



GAMES

Title	Content	Rating & Platform
<i>Skylander: Spyro's Adventure</i>	This action-adventure game is pricey because it comes with collectible action figures and a sock puppet. Contains cartoon violence.	E10+; Xbox 360, Playstation 3, Nintendo 3DS, Wii,
<i>Centipede Infestation</i>	In this reboot of the classic arcade game, players must kill as many creepy, crawly critters as they can in numerous rounds of play.	E10+; Nintendo 3DS, Wii
<i>FactMonster.com</i>	This free website from Information Please provides a wide range of resources for students, including a "Homework Center" reference desk.	Geared toward elementary and middle-school students

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.



THE PARENT LINK

December 2011

FOR PARENTS OF TEENS

CELEBRATE THE SEASON BY ENCOURAGING SERVANTHOOD

Community service is now a graduation requirement at many U.S. high schools. That may be one reason volunteerism is on the rise among young people today. But another is that teenagers are recognizing the value and joy of helping to meet other people's needs.

Youth ministry researcher Laura Widstrom summarizes the power of service:

- Service offers kids many opportunities for taking on significant responsibilities.
- It leverages deep and meaningful relationships.
- Service is a powerful catalyst for community.
- Service-related struggles expand teenagers' capacity for overcoming hardship.
- Service offers kids a context and process for "owning" their faith.
- Service-learning makes a profound connection between our hearts and minds.

This Christmas, as you celebrate the birth of our Servant-Savior, help your kids follow Jesus' example by looking beyond themselves to serve other people in his name.

THE VIEW

Group Magazine surveyed more than 23,000 Christian kids who attended a summer workcamp. Here's how they completed the line: "Service to others has..."

- Made me feel closer to God. (82%)
- Made me feel better about who I am. (80%)
- Created new and valuable friendships in my life. (74%)
- Increased my compassion for people in need. (70%)
- Made me more likely to serve others in everyday life. (69%)

TIPS >>>

At SimplyYouthMinistry.com, youth leader Tim Kurth offers even more benefits when kids step up to the plate and serve:

- **Service encourages young people to be salt and light.** Kids share their Christian faith with people by demonstrating God's love in practical, tangible ways.
- **Service takes kids out of their comfort zones.** This forces teenagers to rely more directly on God—and helps them grow closer to him in the process.
- **Service makes people in need become real and human.** Teenagers gain a greater sense of value for every life, as well as sensitivity to how God can use them to touch others with his love.
- **Service becomes a habit.** When teenagers help others, they establish a lifestyle of service that often carries over into adulthood.
- **Service makes kids appreciate how fortunate they are.** Helping others in need puts life into perspective and makes kids count their many blessings.
- **Service builds a wide range of life skills.** Teenagers learn tolerance, accountability, good citizenship, compassion, friendliness, acceptance, self-control, determination, endurance, and dependability.
- **Service creates a hunger for God.** Kids who serve realize they're also serving God in the process and often desire to get to know him better.

PONDER THIS

- What are your views about serving others and volunteering?
- What joys or benefits do you gain from helping other people?
- How might your family work together on a service project in your church or community?





GOING DEEPER

Expert Insights for Parents of Teenagers

By Doug Frank

Doug Franklin, president and founder of LeaderTreks, shares how to unlock young people's hearts for service. His comments from LeaderTreks.com are reprinted with permission at SimplyYouthMinistry.com:

The best way to connect kids to a life of service for God is to show them how they are uniquely made for an important role in God's kingdom. First, we need to challenge their world view and expose them to realities that less-fortunate people face. Once kids ask, "What role do I play?" we have an open door to teach them about how God has made them for a unique mission.

Second, we must help young peo-

ple understand that God's plan for them can be known. I use this formula to explain how to discover your mission:

Burden + Passion + Vision = Mission

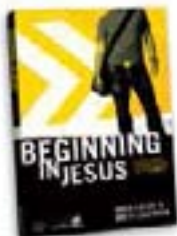
When kids discover these three things, they'll have a road map to the mission God has for them.

Burden is what breaks your heart, **Passion** is what you love to do, and **Vision** is God's calling for your life. God will give you a vision when you get your eyes off yourself and on him. Vision comes only through prayer. When young people put burden, passion, and vision together, they'll not only discover their mission but also joy.

Consider Nehemiah, whose heart broke for the people left in Jerusalem. Because Nehemiah had a passion for administration, the King of Persia had put him in charge of his household and made him cup bearer. God gave him the vision to return to Jerusalem to rebuild the city's walls. Nehemiah's love for his people brought him home. His skill as an organizer allowed them to finish the wall in 52 days, and his willingness to follow God brought God glory.

God has given your kids everything they need to accomplish the task. Let's help them understand and prepare for the mission. After all, that's our mission.

RESOURCE



In *Beginning in Jesus*, the first book in the small-group curriculum series "Experiencing Christ Together" (Simply Youth Ministry), Doug Fields explores Jesus' character qualities. One session explores why servanthood is so important to Jesus.

BIBLE FOCUS

"Since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you."

John 13:14-15

MEDIA SPOTLIGHT

MAINSTREAM MUSIC



TOBY KEITH

Background: This country singer and actor has had several multi-platinum albums, and 19 of his songs have gone to #1 on the Billboard charts. He supports both conservative and liberal political candidates while maintaining patriotic views. Keith sings about alcohol a lot. He also supports Ally's House, an Oklahoma charity that helps kids with cancer.

Albums: *Clancy's Tavern* (2011), *Big Dog Daddy* (2007), *Honkytonk University* (2005)

What Keith Says: After winning a military award, Keith says, "Spending time with our soldiers around the world is something I've always regarded as a privilege and honor. I'm certainly happy to accept this award, but I won't forget for a second who's really doing the heavy lifting to keep this country safe."

Explore: You can check out some songs on Keith's Myspace page at www.myspace.com/tobykeith. Or stream his new album on Spotify.

CHRISTIAN MUSIC



EVANESCENCE

Background: This "gothic" metal band sold 17 million copies of its debut album and has won two Grammy Awards. Members created controversy by asking to be distanced from the "Christian band" label. Some people saw this as turning their back on faith to sell records, while others thought the band wanted to expand their influence. Some band members say they're Christians, while the language of others would indicate they aren't. Listen and decide for yourself.

Albums: *Evanescence* (2011), *The Open Door* (2006), *Fallen* (2003)

What Evanescence Says: Singer Amy Lee says, "I am a Christian, and I'm proud of being a Christian, but this has never been a 'Christian band.'"

Explore: Watch the band perform here: www.metacafe.com/watch/hl-40051057/jim-my_kimmel_live_evanescence_w_hat_you_want_season_9/. Or listen to the new album on Spotify.

MOVIE

Movie: *Mission: Impossible: Ghost Protocol*

Genre: Action, Adventure, Thriller

Rating: PG-13

Synopsis: When the director of the covert IMF division is killed, agents have to go deep, deep undercover to clear their names.

Our Take: Director Brad Bird was behind the amazing movies *The Iron Giant* and *The Incredibles*. This gives us great hope for a good thriller—maybe with some unexpected heart.

Movie: *Sherlock Holmes: A Game of Shadows*

Genre: Comedy, Family

Rating: PG-13

Synopsis: The brilliant detective meets his intellectual match in the equally brilliant—and completely nihilistic—Professor Moriarty.

Our Take: Although the first movie was beautifully shot and directed, the story was seriously lacking. Robert Downey Jr. still has the charisma to draw in viewers, though, so expect this film to be another hit.

For more media discussions and ideas, go to www.MinistryandMedia.com.

VIDEO GAMES



The Legend of Zelda: Skyward Sword—Despite financial troubles, Nintendo still has some franchises that are guaranteed to be big hits. "Zelda" is one of them. This family-friendly adventure is enormous, with an art style that manages to look great despite the Wii's limited power. Adventure fans should check out this game.

Assassins Creed: Revelations—The "Assassin's Creed" series keeps cranking out sequels. In addition to the blood and gore, this game takes some cheap shots against Christianity and has weird Templar stuff. It's the same sort of "da Vinci Code" nonsense you don't want floating around as fact for impressionable young minds.

Garry & Kristen Corrigan
The Canadian Conference
of MB Churches
Quebec
<http://www.mbconf.ca>

John & Ev Wiens
MBMS International
Zaporozhve, Ukraine
www.mbmsi.org

Cecil Rast
Area: Surrey Director
Youth for Christ
Surrey
www.gvyfc.org

Rob & Judy Griffioen
MBMS International
PHUKET Southern
Thailand
www.mbmsi.org

Brian Brown
Module Coordinator
Sam Rowland
Christian Commu-
nicator
Youth for Christ
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Cynthia Friesen
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Austin & Emily Malnis
TREK, MBMS Interna-
tional
Chachoengsao, Thailand
<http://trekae.tumblr.com/>

Tim Ibbotson
Young Life
Regional Director
Lower Mainland
www.younglife.ca

Julia Poole
- short term
ERRC - Educational Resources and Refer-
rals - China
<http://errchina.com/>

Carolyn Thiessen
Child Evangelism
Fellowship
Greater Vancouver
www.cefcanada.org



tim ibbotson . young life

TIM IBBOTSON
Tim his wife Ali and their three children Lauren, Macy, and Kaiyen call Gracepoint Bell Centre Campus their church home.

Tim is currently the Regional Director of Young Life in the BC Fraser Valley, has recently completed his MA in Whole Systems Design, which he tells people means he sees circles instead of lines. His passions include hockey, systems theory, theology, philosophy, storytelling, and poker. He has an obvious passion to see teenagers be loved for the reason of love itself.

Things to Pray for

1. Prayer for new Club starting in Fleetwood is desperate for a basement in a home in the area to host weekly gatherings of teens.
2. Pray for our new Club start in Delta, and praise that we have great team of leaders and student leaders at Seaquim.
3. Praise for a new White Rock intern, Jonathan Dueck has now joined our staff, pray for him as he begins raising financial support, and for him and his wife as

they are expecting there first child in January. **4.** Dec 29 - Jan 2 is our New Year's Camp at RockRidge Canyon, where over 300 teens from BC will hear the message of Christ.



cynthia friesen . mbmsi . thailand

CYNTHIA FRIESEN
Dear Gracepoint family, Thailand has been going through a few months of major flooding and now food shortages and the start and spread of disease. It's a very devastating time for this nation. Please pray with us for the country leaders to turn to God and seek His wisdom and guidance for their people. Please pray for the local churches that they would see this time as an open door to reach out to the neighbors and share the good news and hope they have. Phuket is not affected by the floods except for some food shortages and food price inflation.

We are a week away from receiving an MB mission's Trek team of 4. We have finished some

renovations in our centre to be able to house them all. Pray for us as we orient them to life and ministry in Phuket.

Pray also for me as I will be leading them in some ministries at our local University with hopes of building friendships with students, and Lord willing I would be able to disciple in the future. We have had many connections with students but have yet to see them really open their eyes and hearts to the truth we have shared. Please pray that this time there will be significant relationships that will lead to the salvation of many and see our little church grow with youth and students. Our church is now officially called The Fellowship Church (that's the English translation) and we recently wrote our name on the front door of our Phuket Life Centre. Right now we are gearing up to do some christmas outreaches next month. We have already been invited into one of the local schools to do a Christmas program for the students.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support. I truly see the power of your prayers and am so encouraged to know we are working together to see God's Kingdom come around the world.

UP-TO-DATE
Don't forget to check out missionary blogs like Austin and Emily's TREK Extravaganza! on line www.trekae.tumblr.com/

the finer points

look out point

Recipes from Marie

CRANBERRY BUTTER TART SQUARES

BASE:

- 1 1/2 cup flour
- 1/3 cup white sugar
- 3/4 cup cold butter or margarine

TOPPING:

- 2 large eggs
- 1 1/4 cup brown sugar
- 1 T. golden corn syrup
- 2 T. melted butter
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 tsp white vinegar
- 1/2 tsp baking powder
- 1/4 cup quick oats (ground in the blender)
- 3/4 cup dried cranberry
- 1/2 cup walnuts

BASE:

Combine flour and sugar and rub in cold butter to form crumbs. Press into the bottom and up side of a 9 inch pan. Bake 350 oven for 25 minutes or until golden brown. Cover with foil if browning to quickly. Cool 5 minutes.

TOPPING:

Whisk together the eggs, sugar and corn syrup, whisk in the butter, salt, vinegar and vanilla, add baking powder. Stir in oats, cranberries and walnuts. Pour over warm base and return to oven for 22 minutes.

Makes 16 squares

Next club meeting
Tuesday Dec 13 @ 7pm
BOOK to discuss
A REDBIRD CHRISTMAS
by Fanny Flagg

Bring a Christmassy snack to share if you like
Judy Marshall's place
13112 - 66B Ave. Surrey
T : 604.572.7676

Schedule

<p>Dec 04 Fred & Pat Wiens</p> <p>Dec 11 John & Dorothy Howat</p> <p>Dec 18 Helen Jackson</p> <p>Dec 25 Dorothea Bergen</p>	<p>Jan 01 Marie Isaac</p> <p>Jan 08 Outreach Opportunity</p> <p>Jan 15 Adrienne Alkema</p> <p>Jan 22 Brigette Bourassa</p> <p>Jan 29 Joe Milankovics</p>
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walk thru the Bible with us

When: Saturday Jan 21, 2012
9am - 2pm

Where: Gracepoint Surrey South Campus
3487 King George Blvd.

Register with Danica by calling the office or by emailing her danica@gracepoint.ca

EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION GOOD TIL
January 3, 2012
\$30 per person
\$100 max per family

AFTER JANUARY 3RD
\$40 per person
\$125 max per family

CONFESSION OF FAITH

We believe in God as eternal Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God created and sustains the universe. The eternal purpose of God the Father is to create a people who will bring glory to God forever. God alone is worthy of worship.

We believe that God became human in Jesus Christ. Jesus came to restore the world because humans have rejected God in disobedience. Jesus taught and modeled the way of God's kingdom. He died on the cross, making it possible for us to accept a renewed relationship with God. He rose from the dead, broke the power of sin and death, and frees us to live in obedience to God's will.

We believe that God the Holy Spirit invites all people to be reconciled with God and to join the global family of faith. Believers confess their faith, are baptized, and join in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. Through the power of the Holy Spirit and guided by the Bible, members of the church seek to live as followers of Christ and invite others to experience this new life.



ONE service
ONE location
ONE great big CELEBRATION!

New Years Day, Sunday
LOCATION: Surrey South Campus
3487 King George Blvd
TIME: 10:30am only
(no 9am service)

service times & locations

SURREY SOUTH CAMPUS
3487 King George Blvd.
Sunday Service Time:
9am

BELL CENTRE CAMPUS
6250 144th St. Surrey
Sunday Service Time:
10:30am

office information

3487 King George Blvd.
Surrey, BC V4P 1B7
T. 604.538.1825
F. 604.538.6139

Office hours:
M, Tu, Th, Fri 8:30 - 4:30
W. 8:30 - 2:30

www.gracepoint.ca

Gracepoint is an evangelical church affiliated with the Mennonite Brethren Conference of Churches, but people of all backgrounds and denominations - or lack thereof - are welcome here

At Gracepoint you'll hear a lot about:

LifeGroups . That's because no matter how many campuses we have or how many people come to our weekend services, it's important that you always have the opportunity to deepen your relationship with God and make life-long friendships. The list below is a current list of life groups. If you are interested in joining a life group please contact steve@gracepoint.ca or jeff@gracepoint.ca. If you would like your life group to be added to the list please email Danica.danica@gracepoint.ca.



GENERAL MIXED

arnold & sharon machel
meet weekly | thursday

cal & sonja boomer
meet weekly | wednesday
delta

ernie & marie isaac
meet every other week | sunday
fleetwood

john & lois penner
meet every other week | wednesday
cloverdale

phil & jen wagler
meet weekly | saturday
surrey | langley

kevin & theresa wiebe
meet weekly | thursday
panorama ridge

gregg & tracy baker
meet 1st & 3rd wednesdays | each month
north delta

jeremy & cathy wilson
every other friday | each month
north delta

carey & cheryl vanderberg
meet every two weeks | friday
south surrey

YOUNG CHILDREN

steve & kim savage
meet every two weeks | tuesday
panorama ridge

YOUNG CHILDREN - Pre-teens | Teenagers

ryan zindler
meet every two weeks | wednesday
delta

ADULT CHILDREN | EMPTY NESTERS

allan & beverly moffat
meet every two weeks | sunday
south surrey

walt & charlotte epp
meet weekly | wednesday
north delta

david & liz raison
meet weekly | tuesday
north delta

SINGLES

melanie kartye
meet weekly | thursday
newton

WOMEN - ALL AGES

alison boettcher
meet weekly | tuesday
south surrey

WOMEN 'LIFE AFTER DIVORCE'

kathie edwards
meet 3rd friday | each month
various locations

YOUNG MARRIED

nathan & miranda caleb
steven & sarah cook
meet weekly | thursday
various locations

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 CHILDREN'S CHOIR PRACTICE JR HIGH YOUTH	2	3
4 9AM WORSHIP SSO CAMPUS 10:30AM BELL CAMPUS no Sunday Jam FREEDOM SESSIONS	5 GEMS	6 SR HIGH YOUTH	7 ascent - young adults MEN'S FLOOR HOCKEY	8 CHILDREN'S CHOIR PRACTICE JR HIGH YOUTH	9	10
11 9AM WORSHIP SSO CAMPUS 10:30AM BELL CAMPUS FREEDOM SESSIONS	12 GEMS	13 no sr high youth	14 ascent - young adults MEN'S FLOOR HOCKEY	15 LAST CHILDREN'S CHOIR PRACTICE no jr high youth	16 Youth Christmas Banquet	17
18 9AM WORSHIP SSO CAMPUS 10:30AM BELL CAMPUS no Sunday Jam no freedom session	19 no Gems	20 no sr high youth	21 ascent - young adults no hockey	22 no jr high youth	23	24 CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES 4pm at the Bell 7pm at Surrey South
25 CHRISTMAS DAY NO SUNDAY SERVICES COMMUNITY DINNER IS ON	26 no Gems	27 no sr high youth	28 no ascent no hockey no fuel	29 no jr high youth	30	31
JANUARY 1 2012 go together one service one location one celebration 10:30 Surrey South Campus						



'NATIVITY STAR' FLOR LARIOS
MIXED MEDIA

The Birth of Jesus

The birth of Jesus took place like this. His mother, Mary, was engaged to be married to Joseph. Before they came to the marriage bed, Joseph discovered she was pregnant. (It was by the Holy Spirit, but he didn't know that.) Joseph, chagrined but noble, determined to take care of things quietly so Mary would not be disgraced. While he was trying to figure a way out, he had a dream. God's angel spoke in the dream: "Joseph, son of David, don't hesitate to get married. Mary's pregnancy is Spirit-conceived. God's Holy Spirit has made her pregnant. She will bring a son to birth, and when she does, you, Joseph, will name him Jesus—'God saves'—because he will save his people from their sins." This would bring the prophet's embryonic sermon to full term:

Watch for this—a virgin will get pregnant and bear a son;

They will name him Immanuel (Hebrew for "God is with us").
Matthew 1:18-23

The Message