

The Christian Education Connection

Purpose: To Encourage, Educate and Excite

from IAYM CE Board March 2016

SEND YOUR COMMENTS TO:

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Christian Education Facebook Page

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/iaymce/>

This is a resource for those passionate about Christian Education in Iowa Yearly Meeting. Our goal is to provide a means for Sunday School teachers, Christian Education committee members and anyone interested in CE to swap ideas, share resources and encourage each other.

Support Your Sunday School Teachers



- Hold a prayer retreat to re-energize leaders
- Set time aside for training, questions, etc.
- Give notes of encouragement
- Provide all supplies/equipment required
- Give the room a fresh coat of paint
- Have substitutes available when needed
- Ask students to speak or write their appreciation



Keep 'em Guessing

Build a surprise into each week's SS lesson to keep kids coming back for more. The surprises don't have to be elaborate, and they should not be tied to performance or attendance. Instead, they should just be fun little perks that show your class how much you care about them.

Consider these ideas: • a simple snack, crackers or fruit; • small trinkets that tie in to the lesson, a tiny cross or stickers; • pictures of the kids taken with an instant camera; • a surprise visitor, the pastor, parents, or elders; • mini field trips, visiting the nursery or holding class in the fellowship hall or kitchen. With imagination, you can build a surprise into each lesson—or at least into every other lesson. Kids will never know what you have in store, and they'll want to come back to find out!

Sunday School Teacher Recruitment and Appreciation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EHT3i63N5co>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=djICGR1vPyk>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CkpM0dDgYQo>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QEIs2A4gAds>



Egg Object Lessons for Easter

by Mimi Bullock



The incredible egg drop. We brought 4 eggs to church. (We only needed two but brought extra in case) I set a clear, glass bowl on the floor to catch the dropped egg but I wanted kids to see the impact. I told a story to give an example of God's protection. We chose the story of the 3 Hebrew boys experiencing God's protection and how prayer helps strengthen that protection. I held up the egg, "This egg is like you and I without God living in our hearts, protecting us from the invisible world." I dropped the egg into the bowl from a height of about 5 feet. Splatter!

"What happens if we live a life of prayer and are covered in His protection?" I added three layers of bubble wrap around the egg. These layers were prayer, worship and faith. We dropped the egg and it didn't break. The kids were amazed! We cut away the bubble wrap ... no cracks.

God colors our lives. I ask parents to send kids to church in play clothes this day or I provide smocks to protect their clothes. Volunteers boiled eggs and prepared bowls of color. Before we have our activity, I hold up a plain, white hardboiled egg. I show how all eggs in the carton look the same. Boring! But God colors our lives. When we live for Him, every life is special and important.

What's inside? I use a hardboiled egg. "Like the apple, the egg has 3 parts: a yolk, a white and a shell. God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit are like this egg. They all work together perfectly." We peel away the outside layer, (the Holy Spirit) to see the egg white (Jesus). We cut through the white to see the yolk at the center, (God.)



Book Reviews

by Denise Nichols

Stick and Stone by Beth Ferry.

When Stick rescues Stone from a prickly situation with a Pinecone, the pair become fast friends. But when Stick gets stuck, can Stone return the favor? The author makes a memorable debut with a warm, rhyming text that includes a subtle anti-bullying message even the youngest reader will understand. This is a funny story about kindness & friendship.

Out of My Mind by Sharon M. Draper. Melody is not like most people. She cannot walk or talk, but she has a photographic memory. She is smarter than most of the adults who try to diagnose her and smarter than her classmates—the very same ones who dismiss her, because she cannot tell them she is smart. But Melody refuses to be defined by cerebral palsy.

Do Hard Things: A Teenage Rebellion Against Low Expectations by Alex Harris & Brett Harris. A generation stands on the brink of a "rebellion." A movement of young people is rebelling against the low expectations of today's culture by choosing to "do hard things" for the glory of God. Combating the idea of adolescence as a vacation from responsibility, the authors weave together biblical insights, history, and modern examples to redefine the teen years as the launching pad of life. They map out 5 ways teens can respond for personal and social change. Written by teens for teens, this is packed with humorous personal anecdotes, practical examples, and stories of real-life rebellionaries in action.

The Light of Asteria by Elizabeth Isaacs. Helping her friends move into the dorm, Nora collides with a mysterious stranger, Gavin Frey. The world seems different—something within her has changed. Her joy is shaken when she discovers that Gavin is not who he appears to be, and she has been thrust in the middle of a war of mythical proportions. Negativity allows all things evil to flourish, the earth is under siege. Will she be strong enough to survive?

The Bait of Satan, 20th Anniversary Edition: Living Free from the Deadly Trap of Offense by John Bevere. Have you lost hope because of what someone did to you? Although you will encounter offense, you can choose how you will react.

God LOVES Small By Jonny Craig



In 2 Samuel 16, we find the story of Samuel being sent by God to find and anoint a new King over Israel. Saul (who happens to be very large) has been rejected by God and a new leader has to be found. Samuel happens upon Jesse and his family and is certain he's found the king in Jesse's oldest son. Why? Because he was big! God even has to tell Samuel to stop looking at "appearance or height" because that's not a good indication of someone's spiritual health. Instead, God ends up choosing David, the youngest and smallest of Jesse's sons.

We all know the rest of the story. This runt ends up killing a giant, ruling Israel, and is a "man after God's own heart." Just one example of many where God chooses to use the small to accomplish the big. It is no different in our churches.

Just as Samuel looked at appearance as an indicator of ability, we sometimes look at bigger ministries and assume they have more of God's blessing. Meanwhile, God is trying to tell us to stop looking at them, and instead see our church how He sees it. God has BIG plans for your small church. That's how He works.

Small churches are used by God to do amazing Kingdom work all over the world. I encourage you to be proud of the ministry God has given you.



Encouragement for Small Church Youth Leaders

by Stephanie Caro

You have a hard calling. Some of you get paid; most don't. Yet all of you put WAY more hours into youth ministry than many realize. You struggle with low numbers, volunteers, few resources, no dedicated youth space...and a small budget. Don't give up. Don't quit. Don't think your ministry is any less valuable because it is not the "big ministry down the road." Don't imagine your impact is any less than a paid youth worker. Don't think you're not as good at ministry as "the pros."

Do you love your kids? Do you give them the best of what you have to give? Are you making ministry happen with a "2 fish/5 loaves" kinda budget? Do you have students that are growing, serving, loving? Are you having fun along the way? Enjoy the fact that you get to spend REALLY quality time with each student. Isn't that great? Keep it up. Don't quit.

What is Christian Education?

Christian Education means EDUCATING CHRISTIANS! Sadly, many Christians have placed education in a box with the word "children" written on the outside. However, there is no evidence in the Bible that Christians are only to be educated as children.

Peter tells us to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," (2 Peter 3:18).



That was written for adults! Paul supports this perspective in Ephesians 4:15 when he tells people, "speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ Jesus."

He didn't say, "Kids, grow in grace and knowledge" or "Adults, grow if you feel like it." He commanded ALL to grow! Paul says we will become the "mature body...of Christ Jesus" as we speak the truth in love. Yes, sermons from the pulpit are one powerful place to hear this truth. But if this one-and-done education is the only "spiritual food" adults receive for an entire week, this "diet" makes for one sickly Christian! Christian education classes and Bible study groups provide additional "nutrients," to strengthen the believer and the Body of Christ.

From the CE committee of Lynnville Friends

Devotions for Adults & Teens

Devotions help us focus on Christ; who He is and what He did for us. Learn about Jesus by leaning on Him, growing in Him and serving Him! All of the below devotionals could be used as discussion starters for a Sunday School class or Bible Study. Just ask everyone to read the devotion before class or print it and read it out loud. Many of them include questions to consider or suggested activities. Some are specifically for men or women. Others are topical, such as Easter or Devotions for Dieters. There are several in Spanish.

<http://www.digdeeperdevotions.com/default.aspx>

<http://www.biblestudytools.com/devotionals/>

<http://www.christianity.com/devotionals/>

(Teen) <http://tddm.org/>

(Parent or youth leader & Teen)

<http://www.lifeway.com/Article/heart-connex-family-devotions>

Quaker Kid University



QKU will be held during Iowa Yearly Meeting July 27–30. Children age 4 through those in 6th grade may join us at College Avenue Friends Church in Oskaloosa.

Bible lessons based on Philippians 4:8-9, crafts, music, games, snacks and a water game day will keep us busy. (Bring Bibles & sunscreen) \$30 per child or \$60 for family. Includes snack & lunch on Thurs., Fri., & Sat. One day fees are available. Register with the IAYM Office.

A director (or 2) is still needed. If you are available to help, please contact us.



Rotation Sunday School

When using the rotation model you teach the same Bible story for several weeks in a row using a variety of teaching approaches. Example: arts & crafts, music, drama, games, computer, science experiments, video, cooking, etc.

Groups rotate into a new workshop each week. All the stations teach the same Bible story or verse for a 4-6 week rotation. The story gets explored and learned in-depth through a variety of creative mediums. The kids look forward to the different experiences and they learn more deeply when their learning styles are used.

Bangor Liberty has been using the rotation method since December. We divide children age 4 – 4th grade into two mixed age groups so activities are only repeated twice. You can keep grades together if that works for you. Currently we are telling the Easter story with video, skit, crafts, cooking, science and games for a 6 week period. We've learned it is best to start each new theme with a video and skit that lay a good foundation of the story before using the other approaches that are more of a review of the story.

Lessons can be found by signing up on Rotation.org. But you can also google the Bible story or verse or go to Pinterest and get many ideas as well. Once you begin this your creative juices will flow and ideas will come. Teachers enjoy it as they can fill in where they are gifted and most comfortable. More people are willing to be involved because of the short commitment.

Interview with Melissa Doll **CE Chair, Lynnville Friends Church**

What Christian Education programs do you offer? Sunday School for all ages, Children's Church, Wednesday Night activities, VBS. Each year we pray about a guiding Scripture and choose a coordinating theme. Our 2015-2016 Scripture is "Let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity," Hebrews 6:1a.

Which program impacts/benefits you the most? All have educational value for different groups of people in our church.

What is your biggest challenge? Changing the "culture" to reflect a more intentional, vibrant view of Christian Education and seeing that all are accountable to our pastors and elders.

Where do you see God moving or opening doors in your church? In the area of adult Christian Education as they grow in the Lord

How can Iowa Yearly Meeting pray for you? Pray that as new leadership begins they may have a mindset to continue the good work God has done/is doing in LFC Christian Education. That they may "press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called us heavenward in Christ Jesus," Philippians 3:14.

The IAYM Board on Christian Education will be contacting other CE committees in the coming months and asking them these same 5 questions. We hope this will be helpful to your own committee as you think about how you should answer the questions but also a help to other churches. Future replies will be posted on the IAYM CE Facebook page.



Five Things About Me For Teens and/or Adults

Have everyone briefly write down their name and 5 unique things about themselves on a slip of paper. Fold the paper and put them into the container and mix them up. The leader picks out 4 slips of paper and calls out the names of the people, who then come up to the front. The leader reads the lists and the group tries to figure out which list belongs to which individual. Play continues until everyone has gone up.

Children's Ministry Matters To God

Maybe you are a SS teacher who is feeling burnt out. Maybe you serve in the church nursery or preschool ministry and constantly miss the sermon. Maybe you are discouraged because kids are not interested in your stories or activities. Maybe you teach children's church and wonder if your lessons make a difference.

The most strategic way to influence God's kingdom is to shape its future leaders. Don't be discouraged if your church is small and there are not many kids. Consider every child as a sacred trust and do your best with what God has given you. When resources get stretched take comfort in knowing you are giving 100%. **Ministry is not a game or a job, it's a calling.**



Reasons To Still Do **Vacation Bible School**

by Wayne Stocks

There are many people who think that VBS is an outdated program whose time has come and gone. Here is my list of reasons to still do VBS at your church:

Kids love it! If you're doing it right, VBS is just plain fun. When kids are having fun, they are more apt to be paying attention and learning, and they are more likely to invite their friends.

It's an outreach event & opportunity to share the gospel of Christ. I talked to a little boy who comes to VBS every year. It is his only exposure to church.

It gives the kids in your church a chance to spend some time together. Building healthy relationships is important.

Parents get a chance to hear the gospel. If you plan your VBS so that at least one night involves parents, you have an opportunity to share the gospel with them.

You get to build relationships w/kids. When else during the year do you get to spend every night of the week with the same kids? That kind of proximity and consistency is hard to come by, and isn't something you should give up.

You get to build relationships with adults. You get to serve with other people from your church that you might not have a chance to meet otherwise.

It's just plain fun for kids and adults. There is no other week during the year that I find so exhausting and so fun all at the same time, and I wouldn't skip it for the world. ☺