

The Christian Education Connection

Purpose: To Encourage, Educate and Excite

from IAYM CE Board January 2017

SEND YOUR COMMENTS TO:

goodhome@heartofiowa.net or 641-939-7795

Christian Education Facebook Page

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

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

Building a Snowman For Jesus

The following website is perfect to use during winter as it compares snow with Jesus. The snow is so pure and clean. Likewise, Jesus' life was pure and clean. Snow falls freely covering the earth. When Jesus offers us forgiveness and life in heaven with Him, it is also given free.

It goes on to talk about the uniqueness of each snowflake and how snow changes into water. This article even includes activities. Be sure to check it out to use this winter.

http://www.sundayschoolnetwork.com/lesson_snowmen.html

CE Workshop

A Christian Education worship will be held at Salem Friends Church on Saturday, February 18. Fellowship begins at 10:30 and the first session will be at 11:00. After a light lunch (free-will offering) a second session will be presented around 1:00. If you are in the area and wish to attend please RSVP to Rita Davis.

The sessions will include creative ideas for teaching the 'old, old story' with information of how to best present lessons to various age groups. We hope this day will be encouraging and a reminder that our goal is not to just inform but to transform lives.



Live Love Ideas

For Valentine's Day or any day of the year.

Cards of Thanks: Write a letter to the people who have made a difference in your life. Tell them about how they helped you get where you are, and why you are thankful for their support.



Valentines: You know those funny cards you sent to everyone in your class back when you were in school? Bring cheer to someone's day by mailing or secretly handing them out, but keep it to yourself whom it's from. ☺

Valentine Meal for Widows and Widowers:

There's nothing that says Valentine's Day has to be limited only to couples. It is a hard holiday for many. Plan a meal at your church inviting those in your community who are without a 'valentine'. Have the kids or youth decorate and provide the music & games. Or prepare the meal; deliver it to your friend's home and stay to eat and visit with them.

Create a Kindness Blog or Facebook Page:

Church members and friends could post the random acts of kindness they do and those they experience to encourage your congregation to continue to 'live love' together in Christian fellowship.

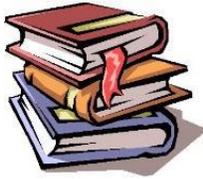
Love is a language that the deaf can hear and the blind can see.

When it's Spring Cleaning Time

If you have Sunday School or VBS curriculum or other Christian materials you are not using and would like to pass it along, bring them to the annual Ministry Conference July 26-29 at William Penn University in Oskaloosa. We will have a table available for materials to be displayed & shared at no cost. Be sure to check it out!

A child's prayer: "Dear God, please take care of my daddy and mommy, my sister and my brother and my dog and my cat and me. Oh, please take care of yourself, God. If anything happens to you, we're gonna be in a big mess."





Book Reviews

by
Denise Nichols

Salt to the Sea by Ruta Sepetys

World War II is drawing to a close in East Prussia and thousands of refugees are on a desperate trek toward freedom, many with something to hide. Among them are Joana, Emilia and Florian, whose paths converge on a ship that promises salvation. Forced to unite, the three find their strength, courage, and trust in each other tested with each step closer to safety. (Young adult/teen)

If You Plant a Seed by Kadir Nelson

A gently humorous story about the power of even the smallest acts and the rewards of compassion and generosity. The sparse text and breathtaking oil paintings demonstrate not only the process of planting and growing for young children but also how a seed of kindness can bear sweet fruit. (preschool)

The Hope Quotient: Measure It. Raise It. You'll Never Be the Same by Ray Johnston

The Hope Quotient is a revolutionary new method for measuring—and dramatically increasing—your level of hope. Hope is more than a feeling; it's the by-product of seven key factors. When these are present in your life, they cause hope to thrive. (adult/teen)

Adult Sunday School

What are we trying to accomplish with adult Sunday School? Bible study is and should be the major component of Sunday School, but it is still a means to accomplish a goal. The goal is discipling adults. Sunday School is a way to foster spiritual growth through participation in Bible study, ministry, building relationships, missions and prayer.

All of the things that an adult Sunday School class should be doing have the intent of helping to grow each one in their relationship with Christ. The disciples of Jesus did not sit around and study the Scriptures all day. They were busy walking with and doing the Master's work under His direction. We should be doing the same. For our adult SS to be effective, it needs to be serving, ministering, praying, going, telling, comforting, encouraging and loving.



Positives in Small Church Ministry

by Ron Johnston

Small churches thrive on relationships. Large churches

take attendance by counting heads. Small churches take attendance by looking to see who is missing. When I wrote my thesis a few years ago, I interviewed six who had come to faith in Jesus Christ in a small-church setting. Each of these attributed their conversion to people reaching out to them and showing them they cared. I am not saying that people in large churches don't show love but it seems to happen more naturally in a small-church setting.

Small churches are naturally inter-generational.

In a small church with only a few teenagers, a couple realized that they could not run a conventional youth group. So they invited those young people to supper once a week and then talked for several hours about how the Bible related to their lives.

Small churches produce leaders. It's a natural happening. Small churches are tough. While some may argue this should not be at the top of the list, one of the most distinctive characteristics of the small church is that it is a hardy institution that usually can survive a succession of disasters.

Small churches are and always have been the norm. The normal size for a Protestant congregation in the North American is forty people at worship on a Sunday morning. If you read through the Book of Acts you will see small churches. Paul planted churches in the cities of the Greek part of the Roman Empire and then moved on leaving a handful of believers as the church in that city. Those churches met in homes ... probably very small homes.

"The world needs kind people who make life less difficult. People to encourage, comfort, overlook, appreciate and give small acts of kindness. Children thrive on kindness. The heartbroken, the destitute, the lonely, the wounded all need kindness." ~Dr. Val Farmer

What can you do today to share God's love and kindness with someone in need?

Fun with Kids

by
Marvis Smith



There are numerous object lessons you can find on the internet or in books from the Christian book store. They will keep the kids quiet and curious about what is going to happen. One of the best ones I have used is the straw through the potato.

Bring an ordinary potato from home and let them see that it is solid, or better yet bring the whole bag of potatoes and let them pick one out for you to use. Bring a box of drinking straws with you and have them pick out one for you to use so they can see it is no trick. The straw cannot be one that flexes or bends but one solid straw.

Put your thumb over the one end of the straw and pierce the potato. The straw will go in one side and come out the other. You have to use force and believe you can do it. It works. (You may want to practice at home first.) Surprising isn't it? Have the Pastor try it or someone else the kids look up to.

This could be used with the story of David and the lion or Philippians 4:13 or Luke 1:37 or Matthew 19:26. Or think of your own Bible connections. It will certainly create a memory for the kids to attach to whatever verse or story you use.

Another fun project uses molds found in the candle or candy section at Hobby Lobby, and Plaster of Paris. It is reasonably priced for all you get out of the jar or box. You can find Plaster of Paris at a hardware store, Hobby Lobby or WalMart. Practice before hand if you have never used Plaster of Paris so you get the right consistency. It is like making gravy. I use clean cottage cheese or oleo containers and a plastic spoon to mix Plaster of Paris. When you have poured the Plaster of Paris into the mold it will set up in about 20 minutes. Kids have fun feeling the heat as the mold sets. Just make sure they don't press too hard on the mold. Be sure you pour the Plaster of Paris so it is level and full and that there are no bubbles.

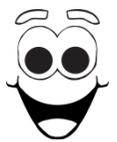
For hanging, put a bent wire or whatever you use to hang it, in the mold while you pour so it will be embedded. You don't want it to show on the front of your project. A heart mold for Valentine's Day is good to give to mothers. There are numerous molds available. My kids ask to do this project again and again. They

love painting or using markers to decorate them. Use plain or glitter paint, which costs 50 cents a bottle most places. Use a Styrofoam plate for the dab of paint you use for painting. You will be surprised how little it takes and can always add more if they need it. This also protects the bottle of paint from getting a different color from the brush mixed in the bottle. It is fun, easy to clean up and a lesson on patience, love for others and creativity.

Cleaning Tip: A good source of cleaning color marks from a table, wall or clothes is a wet wipe. You would be amazed how fast it works. It also cleans paint off objects.



Add Games to Your Sunday School



These games are not only fun for all ages, but inspirational. They help forge strong bonds between the group members and provide lifetime memories.

Bible Pictionary: List several Bible scenes onto pieces of paper and place in a bowl. Divide the group into two teams. Have one member from each pick a piece of paper and draw the scene on a dry-erase board. The other members of the team will try to guess what is being drawn.

True or False: Have each person tell two stories about themselves, one that is true, and one that is false. The group has to guess which of the stories is false.

Who Am I? You will need an index card for each person. Write the name of a popular Bible character on each card. Pin the back of the card onto the back of each person. Members ask each other questions to figure out whose name is pinned to their back.

Name That Hymn: A piano is needed as well as someone who can play hymns. Divide the group up into teams. The pianist will play the song without singing the words. The first group to guess the most number of hymns correctly will win the game. To make this game more challenging, try starting the song in the middle of a verse.

Net Support



The Skit Guys Easter videos, fun & meaningful
<https://skitguys.com/videos/theme/easter>

Preschool SS lessons <http://www.sunday-school-center.com/preschool-bible-lessons.html>

Object lessons for kids of all ages
<http://www.sermons4kids.com/ot.htm>

How to Create a Scope & Sequence, 5 yr. plan
<http://www.rotation.org/topic/how-to-create-a-scope-and-sequence-by-neil-macqueen>



Why We Need Sunday School Ministry

by Mimi Bullock, Ministry to Children

There has been a lot of discussion in my circle about the necessity of Sunday School. I know the arguments, "We need to cut costs," and "We don't have enough volunteers," but these seem small compared to the growing need for spiritual guidance. Is the answer to remove Sunday School?

More than ever before, people need a counterweight to the massive cultural shifts that modern societies are now experiencing. Sunday School helps children respect, appreciate and utilize the Bible. Reverence for God's written word doesn't come naturally. A healthy SS classroom, centered around the Bible, will elevate its importance.

Sunday School teaches us how to navigate the Bible. Teachers don't just teach Bible stories, they give a basic understanding of the Bible's books and overall format. We get a chance to ask questions and learn from each other.

Sunday School develops a community of believers. A community learning the Bible and discovering God together creates a bond that single study can't accomplish. Sunday Schools are the Petri dishes for the future church.

Sunday School plants spiritual seeds. Some of my greatest revelations concerning God's love and plan for me I received quietly in Sunday School. They are like plant nurseries, they may look unimpressive at first, but under the soil, miracles are happening. We need Sunday Schools!

Ways to strengthen Christian Education in your local church

by Calvin R. Malcor



Form a Christian Education board or committee.

Even if your church is small, someone needs to be planning for the future. The small church can achieve progress in surveying needs, approving curriculum, selecting personnel, overseeing facilities and equipment, and making the congregation more aware of Christian education.

Enlarge your vision. Don't limit CE to Sunday School. Consider implementing a week day club, Bible study, training class, etc.

Emphasize your positives. If your church is small, build upon the ability to know everyone by name, your strong family units, the crossing of age lines, your sense of purpose, and your creativity in the use of the facilities and resources that God has given to you.

Work closely with the home. Church & family must work together to achieve the purpose of preparing individuals to be disciples of Christ. CE teachers must communicate with parents in the home to make sure that what is taught at church is being lived at home.

Take advantage of all available resources. Be alert to materials, conferences, books, and seminars that can enrich your program. You should not respond with "That will never work in our situation." Instead, ask, "How can we adapt this in our church?"

Cooperate with other churches. They may be looking to you for assistance, too. Perhaps you can work out solutions to problems that you have in common.

We all face difficulties, and yet, significant results continue to be accomplished. Because we don't do the educating – God does! This should encourage us in our task of Christian education. Christ said, "I am with you always, to the very end of the age." He who has mandated the task will see to it that it is fulfilled.