

A bi-monthly resource to help families raise Christ centered children and grow vibrant homes of faith!

# Family Faith Formation

@MVL and in the home

## FAMILY FAITH FORMATION

POINTS OF INTEREST

In this newsletter you will find tips for:

- **RAISING** your children in a faith forming home
- **EMPOWERING** your marriage
- **DISCIPLINING** your children in a Christ-like way
- **CONNECTING** with other families at MVL

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## Why “Family Faith Formation”?

When I was asked to become the Family and Youth Ministry Assistant at Mountain View Lutheran Church, I humbly accepted the responsibility to help enable and empower the families of our community and congregation grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ and share that with those around them.

As I started this task in November I saw a lot of great things going on at MVL that encourage families in their faith walk. Family fellowship nights, Sunday School, a nursery, kids’ worship bags and caring volunteers all encouraged me as I started in ministry here.

Serving in New Zealand for almost two years, I worked with families of all ages. In my time there one of our Family Ministry’s greatest goals was to better equip families to practice family faith formation on their own and in the home. Part of that was passing on tools and resources that would help the families to do so. The loudest cries of families at

our church was, “I want to do family devotions, I want to form the faith of my household...I just don’t know how to do it!”

Now, you may already have family devotions going on in the home. You may feel pretty confident in your family faith formation skills—and

that’s fantastic! Don’t get me wrong, I’m not here to tell you parents how to raise your children. However, I know that one more resource, from a friendly Christian source, is not something that most parents will shirk away from. By no means! Instead, most families are enthusiastic about getting more ideas, more tips and more support for raising a household of faith.

Hence, this newsletter is meant to do just that. *Family Faith Formation* is a bi-monthly newsletter resource intended to help you, the faithful

leaders of your home, to be spearheading family faith formation every night with your loved ones.



**At MVL we are seeking ways to equip families for faith formation in the home**

So each issue will contain tips, resources and information to help the faith of your family grow. This issue has

some psychology talk, a few helpful ideas for you and your family to try today (or tomorrow) and some information for you and your family to get connected with MVL’s family ministry. I hope it is all helpful. If you ever have any suggestions, questions or ideas please send them to me and I would be more than happy to incorporate them into the next newsletter. Peace in Christ, and blessings on the growing of faith in your home!

**-Ken Chitwood**

## Family Ecosystems

### Family Faith

#### GET TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBORS!

*Do you know your neighbors? Studies show that the vast majority of people in American suburbs don't know their neighbors. Knowing that your family's "habitat" vastly affects your child's development it is important for you to get to know those living around you. Try this idea::*

Think of the eight homes surrounding yours an dill in the names of families that you know. It may be all of them, one or two, or none. Over the next few weeks get to know people from one house/apartment each week. At the very least introduce yourself, say you'd enjoy the neighborhood more if you knew your neighbors. Invite them over for some coffee or chat. Make a connection.

*As you get to know them, see how your families can connect and create a positive habitat for both of your families to develop.*

Lizzy grew up in a part of town and in a family environment that gave shape to the rest of her life. She was raised in a family where dad drank and they lived above the bar that he worked in. The neighborhood was rough and the experiences she had are not what would be called "typical" today. Now, as a mother, Lizzy is trying to provide the best environment for her family to grow in. She lives near a park, knows her neighbors, is part of the church down the road and makes sure there is only one TV in the house. She does all these things because she knows that family habitats are important to form positive family habits.

The ecosystems approach to family

development says that the way a family relates to, changes and is changed by its environment of social relationships and the physical world is very important for family formation.

It takes a look at everything from the family's physical environment to its spiritual context and attempts to help families better understand how to raise their children in a positive way. In this issue, let us take a look at how HABITAT has an impact on family formation.

Family minister and mother, Diana Garland, says that "[t]he physical settings of the dwelling, the neighborhood and the community must support the social settings of the family itself and the family's community if families are to

thrive." (*Family Ministry*, p. 57) She encourages families to take a look at their neighborhoods: do you know everyone around you? How are your relationships with them? Are there parks nearby? Schools? Is it a safe place for the kids to play? To look at the home: does your home's layout encourage family togetherness or individual autonomy? Does each family member have one place that is all their own? To look at your community: are there family friendly places in town? How close are we to them? How can we get there?

Maybe if we take a look at these things a little more often, we might be able to better work together to support positive family faith formation.

## For Grown Ups: Take Note Together!

As children worship within a faith community they experience the presence of God. From these experiences and from your attitude comes a sense of mystery, awe, and wonder of God.

A service of worship encourages wonder and awe by offering a means for the participants to hear God's Word for them and to respond. Worship at its best is experiential—oral, auditory, tactile, and visual. The candles, paraments, music, a smile, a frown, seating proximity, and all other stimuli are absorbed and interpreted by even the youngest worshipper.

You can help your child understand that worship is an act of

joyful response to what God has done for us through Christ, and that it is important to come together as a big family to celebrate and share the wonderful news of salvation through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Children do love and worship God, but they need to be introduced to the meaning and actions of group worship. This awesome responsibility has been given to you. Your conversations and actions convey your attitude towards the importance of the worship experience and, likewise, teach your child whether worship is a joyous opportunity or a somber responsibility.

Knowing that the Holy Spirit

works in and through you, begin your worship journey by inviting the Holy Spirit to touch your lives with the love of Jesus through your time together.

*(Used by permission—Hallelujah! Hurray! © Judith Christian 2000)*

Each week in the children's worship bags there will be an insert for you and your child to grow in the grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ in worship, together! These resources are supplied by *Hallelujah! Hurray!*, and each is a wonderful way to start talking about worship with your child today! Use these sheets to start family devotions or simply as a Sunday de-brief on the drive home! However you do it, the LORD will bless you and your family through it.

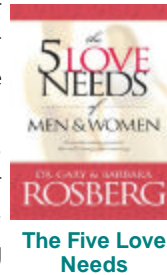
When my wife and I were engaged we signed up for marriage counseling with the pastor who was going to conduct the wedding ceremony. In preparation for the sessions he asked us if there were any books out there that we might be interested in reading. We'd heard about *The Five Love Languages* by Gary Chapman and passed that onto him. We were quite excited to read through this book and grow from it like other couples had.

At our first counseling session he handed us a wrapped present—our book. When we opened the package we were quite surprised to see *The Five Love Needs* where *The Five Love*

*Languages* were supposed to be. We looked up at our pastor who had a smile of smug satisfaction that he found the right book, he could see the “excitement” on our faces. We decided to keep quiet about the mistake and endeavored to read through this book instead.

The surprises did not stop there. *The Five Love Needs* by Dr. Gary and Barbara Rosberg is a fascinating look into the love-needs of men and women in a marriage relationship. Following comprehensive research, and drawing from years in marriage counseling, the Rosbergs put together a masterpiece of marriage counsel in this book. Identifying and understanding one another's love-needs is a

thought provoking and intriguing process that will add heaps of depth and new understanding to a marriage relationship. Although at first we were quite apprehensive to read through the book, the growth we gleaned from its pages still has an impact in our relationship three years later. We never told our pastor the “mistake” he made, and never will; because after reading the book we don't think it was a mistake at all.



## A Quote to Ponder

*“Our children will not learn to honor God with the best of their lives if they don't observe and participate in offering God our very best in worship.”*

*-Marva Dawn*

## DISC Discipline

Every child is different. In my 18 years of childhood (although my mother still tells me I'm her kid) and in my seven years of doing children's/family/youth ministry I know that you cannot treat two different children the same way. And that applies to discipline as much as anything else.

Not only are children different, but they are all uniquely gifted for the purpose of God. They are all particularly shaped and therefore each child possesses their own particular needs. To maximize the upbringing of our children we need to be flexible in our discipline and correct their behavior according to their individual personality. This includes disciplining

according to personality and temperament types, learning modalities, learning styles, preferred environments and multiple intelligences. But before diving into the complex psychology of child discipline let's take a moment to look at their personality types. Many of us have taken personality profiles and maybe you've taken the DISC test before.



**Does your child ever respond to your discipline like a roaring lion? Maybe they are just a dynamic person!**

This test tells you whether you are Dynamic (LION), Influencing (OTTER), Sensing (GOLDEN RETRIEVER) or Calculating (BEAVER). Our children have these same personality traits and how we discipline depends heavily on what their personality is. For example, if your child is a “lion” then it is best to give them something to be in charge of. If you try to control them it can easily turn into a drag out fight. If you have a lion for a child you know what I am talking about.

In future issues we will explore the four main personality types and give you the parent some tips to identify these personalities and discipline accordingly. Happy disciplining!



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**LIFT YOUR EYES UP TO  
THE HILLS....OUR HELP  
COMES FROM THE LORD!**

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ORG

## Family Fellowship Nights are events where:

You can **CONNECT** with other families in your community

You can have some **FAMILY FUN** without all the stress of planning

You can **ENJOY** music, games, food and other activities in a **SAFE** environment.

Mountain View Lutheran has monthly Family Fellowship Nights

### IN JANUARY:

## Family Game Night

*Saturday January 9th @ 6pm*

### IN FEBRUARY

## Spaghetti Dinner and Dance

*Saturday February 14th @ 6pm*

*Look for more information in the bulletin, by e-mail or contact the church office,  
Bonnie Gregow or Ken Chitwood*

## Like to Write? Come and Join Us!

Do you like to write?  
Do you have a passion  
for family ministry?  
Would you like to help  
write an article or  
devotion for the *Family  
Faith Formation*  
bi-monthly newsletter?

hotmail.com) to let him  
know today that you  
would like to write in  
the future.

The *Family Faith  
Formation* newsletter is  
a ministry of  
Mountain View  
Lutheran Church that  
seeks *help families raise  
Christ centered children  
and grow vibrant homes  
of faith!*



Use your writing skills in  
ministry here at MVL!

**COME AND JOIN  
US IN THIS  
MINISTRY TODAY!**

If you answered yes to  
the questions above  
please get in contact  
with Ken Chitwood  
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