



# Family Wellness News

## This month's Four Keys focus...rituals and traditions

As we enter into spring we begin the celebration of many rituals and traditions. Springtime is when we celebrate graduations from pre-school, middle school, junior high, senior high and college. Many couples choose this time of the year to get married. Families celebrate confirmation rites. And the we have the secular holidays of Mother's Day and Father's Day.

It is true that our culture is filled with rituals and traditions. Think about the rituals and traditions that your family has. Do you visit the same campground every summer? Do you celebrate family birthdays in a special way? Do you have an annual family picnic? Do you participate in an annual family service project? Do you plan an family ski trip?

These rituals and traditions are important part of our daily lives. Rituals can be simple tasks that are shared together. Make a list of things your family does together that are traditions. Keep these traditions alive. Add new traditions as your family changes. It is the rituals and traditions you celebrate that will make lasting memories for your family.

## Most U.S. teens serious about religion

The majority of American teens believe in God and worship in congregations, but their religious knowledge is remarkably shallow, and they have a tough time expressing the difference that faith makes in their lives. This conclusion was formed from the National Study of Youth and Religion done by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

The project involved a telephone survey of

3,370 randomly selected youth ages 13-17, followed by personal interviews with 267 of the respondents.

The study revealed that teens follow their parent's faith traditions. 82 percent of the teens interviewed were affiliated with a local congregation. 65 percent stated that they prayed alone a few times a week. 61 percent believe in miracles from God.

Sociologist Christian Smith, who led the study, stated that he material collected is not just about teenagers. It speaks more broadly about the direction of American religion.

The full results of the study is being published by Smith in a book "*Soul Searching: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers*". The book will be available in April.

### Inside this issue:

Welcome School	2
Book of the Month	2
Sharing your Faith	3
FaithLife Exercise	3
Coming Events	3
Family page	4

### Four Keys to Nurturing Faith

- *Caring conversations*
- *Family devotions*
- *Family service projects*
- *Building and celebrating family traditions and rituals*

## Welcome School...our FaithLife Milestone for April

This month's FaithLife Milestone is the celebration of Welcome School. Welcome School is a child's introduction into Sunday school. This will happen on two consecutive weekends: Sunday, April 17 and Sunday, April 24 at 9:30 a.m. Invitations are sent to parents whom have children that will be three (3) years old between September 1, 2004 and August 31, 2005.

Children and their parents are invited to attend this two day event. Not only does the child become acquainted with Sunday school it also gives parents an opportunity to spend time together with their child learning about God and sharing in the child's faith development.

Sunday school is a place where children learn basic Bible stories, songs and simple prayers. It provides a pattern for faith talk in the home. Sunday school provides an

opportunity for the faith community to fulfill the promises it made at the child's baptism to receive and welcome the child.

### *Taking it home...*

After your child has attended Sunday school take time to ask them about what they learned. Have them tell you the Bible story and fill in pieces that they may have missed. Talk about the characters in the story and how they might have felt.

Make prayer and Bible story time an integral part of family time. Read the story from a children's Bible or listen to it on an audio tape. Listening to the story on tape can be a new and enjoyable worship experience for your child.

Have your child draw or paint a picture to describe the story and have him/her send the picture to a grandparent, godparent, aunt, uncle or special friend.

Remember to pray with your child and to mark them every night with the sign of the cross.

*After participating in Welcome School the child will be enrolled in Sunday school for the next fall.*



***We are apt to forget that children watch examples better than they listen to preaching.***

***Roy L. Smith***

## Book of the Month

**Can I Have the Keys to the Car? How Teens and Parents Can Talk about Things That Really Matter**

By Terry & Sean Paulson

Father and son team offers a practical book that helps teens and parents talk about safe

driving, alcohol, drugs, sex, study habits, grades, honesty, schedules, curfews, family chores, self discipline, and more tougher issues.

This book is available through the Atonement BookNook.



## Sharing your faith...ages 15-18

---

These are years when youth give serious attention to issues affecting their future: education, job, friendships, dating, marriage, and family life, as well as political and ecological concerns. Awareness of their new physical, mental, and relational powers lead to experimentation and idealism that is fraught with spiritual and moral significance.

Choices are made and attitudes are formed that are constantly challenged and reviewed both internally and externally. Church as a social institution may diminish in importance, but religious and spiritual issues remain important to their developing identity and future relationships.

Idealism is still present as people enter their twenties and have a greater commitment to determine their own future and establish their own patterns and home life. New relationships with parents and other family members develop. New cognitive, moral, and social challenges lead them to reevaluate basic meanings and religious convictions that were largely assumed in earlier years.

### *Things to do*

- Recall, maintain, and create family and seasonal rituals and worship that keep meaning and

celebration alive in your relationship.

- Affirm youth's independence, skills, and capability.
- Let them know that they can come home again.
- Stay connected to their friends, know them by name, invite them into your family, and include them in your prayers and concerns.
- Include ethical, political, and environmental topics in your intergenerational conversations. Wonder together how God's love and presence shapes those concerns.

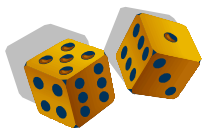
**MISSION UPDATE: Our youth raised \$1,500 for World Vision's 30 Hour Famine with matching funds from Thrivent.**

---

## FaithLife Exercise: Dice Prayer

---

No, this isn't prayer *a la* Vegas! This really is a great tool for learning the various elements of prayer. Create a die using a wooden block. Draw or paste pictures of various symbols on each side. Each person takes a turn rolling the die, then says a prayer that fits the symbol rolled. Make several different dice.



Some examples to get you rolling:

- Gingerbread person - gifts you're glad God has given you
- Compass - direction and guidance
- Sad face - forgiveness
- Broken heart - prayers for someone who is hurting
- Globe - world concerns and leaders

- Cross - praise and honor recognizing God
- Footprints - people and place God put in your path today



*"Your faith has made you well."*

*Luke 17:19*

---

## Coming Events...

---

**April 4-17 - Church of the Week Service Opportunity**

**Sundays, April 17 & 24 - Welcome School**

**April 24 - Spring Fling - Celebrating Earth Day**

**Saturday, May 7 - Mother/Daughter Luncheon**

**Sunday, May 8 - Mother's Day Brunch**

**Sunday, May 15 - Senior Sending**

**Sunday, June 5 - SrHi Car Wash**

---