

# Parents & Crosslink

## One Thing in Common

Linda Buxa

Angelina Jolie and Brad Pitt are making interracial adoption cool. Every day some form of media showcases this family that is not defined by skin color. How much more then, shouldn't the body of Christ, where every member is adopted by God, celebrate interracial families?

Sadly, that's not always the case, as Dean and Kim Zemple know firsthand.

"We had five boys," says Dean. "My wife always wanted a daughter and thought maybe through adoption we could have one." A social worker told Kim about a three-year-old girl and her one-year-old brother. In April 2000, Keyshonna and Keyvontae—whose names were changed to Katie and Casey—became the Zemples' foster children. Then in May 2001, they were officially adopted.

Not only are they a different race, but Katie and Casey also had special needs because their mother used cocaine during both pregnancies. When she remained on drugs, a family member intervened, and the children were rescued from their birth home.

That's why the Zemples and their boys, who ranged in age from 9 to 18, took classes with social services. "We knew there would be adjustments because we were bringing children who had 'baggage' into our home," says Dean.

### Adjusting at church

But the Zemples didn't expect to face challenges at church as well. "There was nothing overt," says Dean. "It was subtle, but we would sense things. We were expected to be a normal family,

but with the challenges we faced with Katie and Casey, at times we were anything but normal."

Still, it wasn't only race or Katie's and Casey's emotional behavior. "People looked at the financial struggles. Others wondered why, when we already had five children, we would want any more," says Dean. "We were being judged because our plate was already full."

### Adjusting at home

In the beginning at home, race wasn't the issue; it was the children's emotional needs. They had never bonded with other people before, so Katie and Casey demanded all of Dean and Kim's attention. "We always had to sit with them. But in some respects we felt more like their parents because they were so proud of having parents. They told everyone,

'That's my father. That's my mother,' I don't remember my biological children doing that," he laughs.

At age 5, Katie innocently noticed the difference in skin tone and declared, "Little people are black; big people are white." Now that Katie is 11 and Casey is 9, they see the differences more clearly. "They are more aware that they are in a white culture and that they don't have any African-American role models," says Dean.

That's when the Zemples remind their children they have one thing in common, "We're all adopted—by God," he says. "I tell them, 'You're as much my child as the other children.'"

### Relying on faith

So how do you parent when you struggle with emotional outbursts at

(Continued on page 2.)

**"There was nothing overt; it was subtle. But we would sense things."**

Dear Mother,

Your heart is gold, your love never-ending, and your touch sweet and gentle. Every time I see your face, I feel safe. Do you know I love you? I just wanted to be sure, because the love you give me is always so pure.

I'm hoping to be with you until the end of time. I'll take care of you when you're old and always be by your side. I can always count on you. I want you to know something special, it's that I'll never stop loving you, just like you'll never stop loving me. I'm glad you saved me from my foster home.

You saved me that day; you are the best mom in the world! No other mom is like you, I'm glad God chose you to be my mom. I'm the luckiest girl on earth.

I still remember when you took me from that horrible place, you might not have known this but I was thinking in my mind: "Mommy's taking me home." I was happy then and happy now because I have you and no one else. You're the best mom.

Your loving daughter,  
Katie Renee Zemple



love

(One Thing in Common . . . cont.)

home and face questions people raise about your parenting? At times the Zemples go to therapy. Plus, says Dean, "You have to lean on the Lord 100 percent and be ready for bumps in the road."

The past eight years have brought perspective. "Looking back, when we brought them in, there were very good people who were encouraging." As for those who weren't, Dean is gracious because "we are all sinful; we have our own prejudices. I pray for them that their hearts would change." He says, "We like to think we can overcome it, because we're all saved by grace."

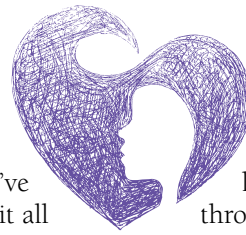
Despite the challenges they've faced, the Zemples would do it all over again. "I've seen God's hand from the beginning. When we felt weak, he gave us strength. We were in a dark tunnel, and now we see the light. He worked things out physically, materially, and spiritually."

The Zemples see the eternal benefit of bringing children into a Christian home. "Katie will come home and sing a Christian song that she's learned," he says. That's when they get a glimpse of eternity, where there will be "a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and

language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb" (Revelation 7:9).

We're all going to be part of an interracial family in heaven. The Zemples just got a head start.

*Linda Buxa lives with her husband, Greg, and their three children in Sacramento, California, the most racially diverse city in the United States.*



To add thoughts and continue the discussions about these questions and answers, go to

[www.parentscrosslink.net](http://www.parentscrosslink.net).

**I've read that today's kids do not do well with deferring gratification. When my child wants something, he throws a tantrum. Is that his problem? If so, how can I deal with it?**

It depends largely on your child's age. Children throw tantrums as a way of expressing anger and frustration. Tantrums in two- and three-year-olds are common because they are becoming independent, developing their own wants, needs, and ideas. However, most of them are not yet able to express their wants and feelings with words. Hence, many parents are faced with the child having a floor-thumping tantrum.

Tantrums are best handled when your child's behavior does not cause you to lose control. Resist overreacting to tantrums; remain calm and ride out the storm.

The good news is that tantrums seem to peak at about age 3 and generally disappear in the preschool years. If your child is age 4 or older,

you may be dealing with a deferred gratification problem. Deferred gratification is the ability to be patient while waiting to obtain something that one wants. At this age your child does have the vocabulary to talk about his feelings and express his thoughts. Teach him to replace tantrums with behavior that's appropriate. Give him the words to use the next time he feels angry.

Also, be proactive. Anticipate when your child will be disappointed and have a discussion about how he will handle the situation when it arises.

Finally, praise your child when he shows self-control and expresses feelings with words.

**Sarcasm and sharp comebacks are almost the only mode of meaningful communication in our house. Is this a normal and healthy way for us to talk to one another?**

Properly defined, sarcasm states the opposite of an intended meaning to intentionally mock another person's words or actions. As such, sarcasm definitely has its limitations.

As with almost everything in life, sarcasm should be used in moderation. When it is used to belittle or to tear someone down, it can be very destructive and hurtful even when it was meant to sound humorous. Before saying things in a sarcastic way, consider the person's feelings and evaluate the goal of your communication. In the end, the

things we say should be things we wouldn't be ashamed to say to God's face as well. "May the words of my mouth . . . be pleasing in your sight, O LORD" (Psalm 19:14).

**I have three normal boys who have developed the habit of blaming one another and finding ways to excuse themselves whenever I have to discipline them. Any suggestions?**

We want our children to recognize that blaming others is a sin and that it is important for them to take responsibility for their own words and actions. The older boys may even be able to understand what the apostle John was driving at when he wrote, "If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:8,9).

Try this consequence: Tell the boys there will be 24 hours of no playing together. They will realize the blessings they have in one another. Ask them, *What's the opposite of blaming?* Help them conclude that it is admitting our own mistakes. Commend them when they are forthcoming with their mistakes, and reassure them that they are forgiven for Jesus' sake.



# "I'm Coming In!"



Emily Kratz

While on a field trip, I waited in line in a bathroom full of kindergartners and chaperones. A loudly jiggling door handle clued us in to the fact that a little girl was having problems with the lock on a stall. As we looked at one another, trying to figure out whose group she belonged to, another little girl called out, "I'm coming in!" In a flash she scooted under the door. The two of them never did get the lock open, but they both crawled out from under the stall smiling.

Children often receive help from others. They know that the need for help is not to be ignored.

When my daughter Hannah began her second grade year in school, she usually came home excited to tell me about her day. I asked questions about things that were unfamiliar. One day she told me about a teacher's aide who was assigned to help a particular student in her classroom. When I asked her why the student needed a teacher's aide, she gave me a blank look. Thinking she didn't understand, I tactlessly inquired if the student had some sort of problem. Hannah's brow furrowed as she looked at me and stated, "There's nothing wrong with him. He just needs help sometimes!" To Hannah he was just a kid who needed some help.

I wish I could say this was the only time my children have shown a level of sensitivity greater than my own. The truth is that children are often more sympathetic to the needs of others, especially to those with physical or mental disabilities.

Sometimes adults are uncomfortable with a disabled person. Their best effort at an appropriate response is to simply

try to ignore the disability. But too often that turns into ignoring the disabled person as well. We are so afraid of saying or doing something that might be offensive that we say or do nothing.

The apostle John encouraged us to actively love others. "This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity

## Helping others isn't just an option; it's our responsibility.

on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue *but with actions* and in truth" (1 John 3:16-18, emphasis mine).

The story of one of Jesus' miracles provides a fine example of how to show love actively to people with disabilities. While Jesus was teaching a large crowd of people, four friends brought a paralyzed man. They wanted Jesus to heal their friend. But the crowd was packed so tightly into the tiny room that the friends could not get their friend close to Jesus. So they used an innovative approach, lowering him down in front of the Lord through a hole in the roof.

Jesus said to the crippled man, "Son, your sins are forgiven." And then later, "Get up, take your mat and go home" (Mark 2:5,11).

What an example! I'm not talking about the example of Jesus miraculously

healing someone. You and I won't ever be able to do that. I'm not even talking about the statement of forgiveness, though that's something everyone needs to hear. I'm talking about the four friends—men who could have said, "We'll leave our paralyzed friend at home to avoid any embarrassment for him," or "Why make others feel uncomfortable by exposing them to someone who can't walk." Instead, they lovingly carried their friend to the Savior's side. Did it take extra time and effort? Yes. Were they putting their love for God into action? Absolutely.

Helping others isn't just an option; it's our responsibility. Paul wrote, "Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2). It doesn't matter if their needs are physical or emotional or personal, helping others is the best way to show our love for Christ.

God saw our distress and came to earth to help us with the worst problem of all—sin. His help motivates us to follow the children's example of helping others. The next time I see someone who needs help, I'll be ready to say, "I'm coming in!"

Emily Kratz lives near Birmingham, Alabama, with her husband, Benjamin, and their four children: Hannah, Lydia, Norah, and Thaddeus.

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The NPH Bible study entitled "Burden Bearing," by David D. Sellnow, offers support for those dealing with burdens and encouragement for those who want to help.

**Here are six Bible texts to help your children understand how to put love into action: Matthew 9:1-8; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 10:25-37; John 13:1-17; 1 Corinthians 13:1-7; James 2:14-17.**



# Pass the Brain Food, Please

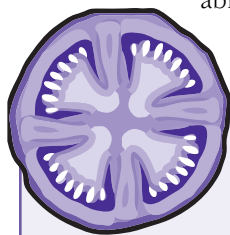
Karla Aden

**W**ith the advent of the dollar menu and the modern family's crunch for time, eating *out* or *fast* (sometimes both) is the norm. And our eating habits are causing us to lose more than just the togetherness of the family mealtime.

Obesity has become an epidemic in our country. The age groups hit the hardest are children and adolescents. Currently, one in three young people between the ages of 6 and 19 are obese. Less than 1 percent of school children are meeting the recommended daily allowances of vitamins and minerals. As a nation, we are filling ourselves up, but not with the things we need.

The results appear to be more than just physical. One in three children in school has trouble staying on task and paying attention. The causes are varied and many, but research has shown a link between nutrition and the brain's ability to perform. It

turns out some of the things parents and



## SLICED TOMATOES

A tomato slice reminds us of a heart. It is red and has four distinct chambers, like a heart. Research shows that tomatoes are especially good for the heart and blood.

pediatricians have been saying all along have been right on target. Today's research tells us that, as a country, we are failing our children, at least in a nutritional sense. To turn these trends around, we will need to start with the things we know.

## Breakfast is still important

A strong body of research dating back to the 1970s shows that eating breakfast improves memory, concentration, and learning. The greatest hurdle to providing a healthy breakfast may be as simple (or complex) as overcoming the packaging. A cereal box label can boast of fiber, grains, vitamins, or minerals even if the cereal in the box only contains a minimal amount of the daily requirements. The high sugar content of many cereals often sabotages the few good things they contain, robbing the body of vitamins, minerals, and enzymes, and increasing hyperactivity by preventing blood sugar levels from remaining stable. We must become label readers to find cereals that truly give our children what they need.

Breakfasts rich in whole grains provide your children with the protein and fiber to keep them satisfied until lunchtime. The body's favorite fuel, grain, gives kids

the energy to play and pay attention. Whole wheat toast and an egg provide an appropriate amount of fiber and protein for school-aged children. And oatmeal really is a wonder food.

## Throughout the day

Fruits and vegetables provide many of the vitamins and minerals, as well as dietary fiber, to aid digestion. The dairy group provides vitamins A and D, which improve nerve function and therefore brain function. Replacing an afternoon snack of chips or cookies with fruits or vegetables and some string cheese will not only keep the stomach satisfied until suppertime, it will provide the proper fuel to help through homework time. Meat, fish, beans, and nuts give us the protein and vitamin B complex we need to repair body tissues and build muscles.



## ONIONS

Research demonstrates that onions cleanse waste materials from all of the body's cells, including the epithelial layers of the eyes when tears are shed. And onions have the same shape and look as many of the body's cells.

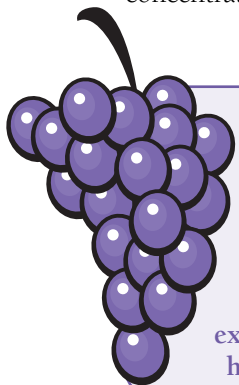
**As we make dietary choices, we must ro**



### WALNUTS

The nut at the center of a cracked walnut looks like a little brain. It even has a right and left hemisphere. And the wrinkles or folds of a walnut remind us of the neocortex of the brain. We've learned that walnuts help develop neuron-transmitters for brain function.

Studies have shown that children need iron for mental motor development and healthy brain tissue development in very young children. Yet iron deficiency is one of the most prevalent nutritional problems of children in the United States. Because nerve impulses move more slowly when children are iron deficient, iron deficiency and anemia lead to shortened attention span, irritability, fatigue, and difficulty with concentration.



### GRAPES

Each individual grape in a cluster of grapes reminds us of single blood cells. Research tells us that grapes are excellent for vitalizing our heart and blood cells.

### On the horizon

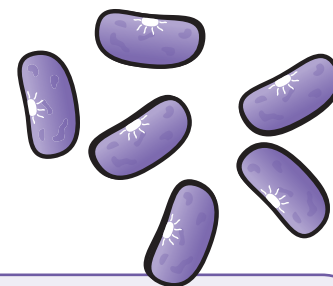
Much has been written recently about the effects of omega-3 and omega-6 fatty acids. There is some promising research that suggests these fatty acids help brain cells receive the messages

sent between synapses. Some research has even shown a link between children struggling with ADHD and a deficiency in these fatty acids. Good foods that contain such fatty acids are fish, flax seeds, and nuts. Could these be the brain's wonder foods? The research is not definitive, and it is new. However, these same foods are an excellent source of protein, and they are a low-calorie solution to the fats and oils your body needs to keep firing correctly.

Not only do our bodies not run well when we do not give them the proper fuel, the fact is we are wrecking them. Consider the following quote from an article that appeared in the *Washington Post*: "Being overweight at a young age appears to be far more destructive to well-being than adding excess pounds later in life. Virtually every major organ is at risk. The greater damage is probably irreversible.

"Doctors are seeing confirmation of this daily: boys and girls in elementary school suffering from high blood pressure, high cholesterol and painful joint conditions; a soaring incidence of type 2 diabetes, . . . even a spike in childhood gallstones." \*

As we make choices about what to eat or what not to eat, we must remember that our bodies are not our own. We were bought at a high price and



### KIDNEY BEANS

Kidney beans look just like the human kidney. And, believe it or not, they actually help us maintain healthy kidneys.

belong to God. Consider the words of 1 Corinthians 6:19,20: "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body." Doing something we know is harmful to our bodies is more than a poor choice. It is morally wrong.

Looking around the table and seeing the little "temples" that God has placed in our care should be motivation enough to make wise food choices for ourselves and our children.

*Karla Aden lives in Greenville, Wisconsin, with her husband, Darin. They have been blessed with four children: Lydia, Maya, Joshua, and Annie.*

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### SWEET POTATOES

They look like the pancreas, which controls insulin production, and they actually help it balance the body's glycemic index (blood sugar level), which can help avoid the development of diabetes.

### SOURCES

- American Academy of Pediatrics Health.msn.com (Omega 3 and Omega 6, Jean Weiss)
- Makewayforbaby.com
- Shereen Jegtvig's Web page at nutrition.about.com
- Conversations with pediatricians, Drs. John and Jill Edwards

# REMEMBER THAT OUR BODIES ARE NOT OUR OWN.

\*Susan Levine and Rob Stein, "Young Lives at Risk: Obesity Threatens a Generation," Washington Post (May 17, 2008).

# Viewpoint

## A Yellow Light for the Green Movement

Kurt Rosenbaum

**We all know the rule: yellow light means slow down; exercise caution. Calendars tell us that this year April 22 will once again be celebrated as Earth Day. So what should be a Christian's response to this annual celebration and the green movement of which it is a part? Should we exercise caution or run full-steam ahead?**

Earth Day itself, in most people's minds, is a day to focus on maintaining a clean and flourishing earth for the next generation. That certainly is a noble goal. We do well to keep our environment clean for ourselves and to work to avoid irreparable harm to the earth we will pass on to our children.

God placed us as stewards over the earth he created. He has called on us to exercise wise management of its resources (Genesis 1:26-28). Like the earth, we too are God's creation, nothing more. And this is where official Earth Day celebrations more than likely cross the line of propriety for a Christian. Earth Day's founder, Gaylord Nelson, said, "The fate of the living planet is the most important issue facing mankind." As Christians, we would dispute this statement. We know that we have more important aims in life that look forward to the life to come.

In fact, Ken Ham of the creationist group Answers in Genesis points out that Earth Day activities have a hidden agenda. They sometimes include the use of New Age crystals, a message based in the teachings of evolution, and the worship of Mother Earth. Christians, on the other hand, recognize that we are to worship the Creator, not the creation. We are wise to avoid the exercise of paganism.

The ideas of global warming and especially its causes could be approached with equal caution. While few would disagree that there has been a slight increase in the world's average temperature over the past decades, there is wide diversity when it comes to the reasons why. To get a balanced representation of the various explanations, one must be ready to do some thorough research and avoid getting caught up in an emotional discussion.

In a wider context, the whole green movement should be handled cautiously. It is wisest to approach any environmental topic with the Creator in mind. It is also prudent to remember our main purpose here on earth, which is to glorify our Savior and share him with others. Then we will be truly prepared for the dissolution of the environment as we know it.

As parents, these are the steps that should be taken with our children: Reflect on what

God's Word says regarding the environment and our role, especially in the opening chapters of Genesis. Pray for his guidance. Proceed with caution.

Indeed, "the earth is the LORD's" (Psalm 24:1), and it is his to control and oversee. Would it be presumptuous of us to think that we could have any determination of its ultimate outcome? For Christians, obeying the rule of the yellow light of caution is the best course to take when it comes to deciding our roles in the green movement and participation in Earth Day celebrations.

*Kurt Rosenbaum is teacher and principal at Ascension Lutheran School in Sarasota, Florida. He and his wife have two children, one in college and one in elementary school.*

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**How should a Christian respond to the annual Earth Day celebration and the green movement of which it is a part?**

## OUR family MATTERS

### Mud-luscious and Puddle Wonderful

Jeffrey Bonack

There's a creek that runs through our backyard. It has provided countless hours of scientific discovery for my children. However, their curiosity often gets the best of them. And despite repeated warnings not to do so, a child will invariably fall in—shoes, clothes, and all.

We have eight children. Imagine how that increases the odds!

So, what do I do with this sopping-mud-algae-covered putrid-smelling, I-can't-even-quite-tell-which-child-it-is standing there at the back door?

The temptation is to lose my cool. I've done it. God knows I don't have the time or the patience to deal with this.

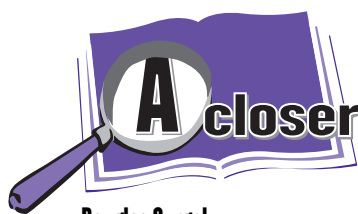
So, I clean him up—only with more than obvious rage. And before long he'll be as good as new on the outside. But if I've only expressed disappointment and anger, . . . if I've merely lambasted him for his foolishness, . . . if all I'm concerned about is how his careless actions have inconvenienced me, what's happening to my child on the inside?

When, as a parent, I slip into my own spiritual mud-messes, how grateful I am that my heavenly Father goes about the task of cleaning me up in a very different way.

**Heavenly Father, give me the patience to see under all the muck, a little child washed clean in the blood of Jesus Christ, and help me use every opportunity to witness your patient, forgiving love. Amen.**

*Jeffrey Bonack is a pastor at St. Paul Lutheran Church in Muskego, Wisconsin. He and his wife, Laura, have been richly blessed with eight children and a very patient cat named Fluffy.*





Douglas Gurgel

# SAMUEL'S GODLY ATTITUDE

In the days of the judges in Israel, God's chosen people often opted for the lifestyles of the unbelieving nations around them. By God's grace, however, Elkanah and his family were different. Year after year, according to God's command, they trekked the 20 miles from Ramah to the tabernacle in Shiloh to offer sacrifices to the Lord.

But sin still twisted its way into Elkanah's family. Elkanah had two wives, and Peninnah, the wife who had children, ridiculed Hannah, who had none. So Hannah was distraught. She shed many tears and lost her appetite.

Hannah, however, did not forget those sacrificial object lessons, the signs of the coming Savior and tokens of God's people's commitment and thanks. She stood praying silently and tearfully within the tabernacle courts, trusting that the Lord heard her petitions. In her prayers she promised that if God would give her a son, the child's life would be devoted to the Lord's work. Then Hannah stopped her crying, ate, and confidently returned to their hometown of Ramah.

Soon after, God did provide Hannah and Elkanah with a son, whom they named Samuel. (The name appropriately means "Asked of God.")

Several years later, Hannah returned to Shiloh to fulfill her vow to the Lord. She related the story of God's grace to the old high priest named Eli, and before leaving Samuel with Eli, she worshiped there with her son. This time Hannah's prayer flowed out of her heart so all could hear. She praised the Holy One who exalts the humble and who would one day send his Anointed One.

Life in Shiloh, unfortunately, often mirrored the life of unfaithful Israel. Instead of giving their attention to the Word of the Lord, Eli's sons, Hophni and Phinehas, stopped their ears to the Lord's commands. They defiled God's sacrifices and sanctuary and offended the people they served.

When Eli heard of his sons' unfaithfulness, he rebuked them. Yet they rejected

their father's warnings. And Eli did not follow through with consequences, parental or professional. Finally, a prophet came to warn Eli that he was guilty of honoring his sons more than he honored the Lord.

Despite the godless environment, God blessed Samuel with a true faith and called him to serve Eli and Israel. One night Samuel heard a voice calling his name. Thinking it was Eli, he ran to the elderly high priest's bedside. Eli instructed him to return to bed because he had not called. Twice more, without com-

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plaint, Samuel hastened to his master's side when he heard his name called. After a third time, Eli realized that the Lord was calling Samuel. He instructed young Samuel to answer, "Speak, LORD, for your servant is listening."

Samuel was ready when the Lord came calling again. The Lord's message to the young Samuel, however, was a spine-chilling pronouncement of imminent doom for Israel and Eli's family. Speaking this message of God to grandfatherly, old Eli would not be easy. However, at Eli's own encouragement, Samuel delivered God's message. And, chastened, Eli accepted the Lord's judgment.

In a sad series of events, Israel's army was defeated, Hophni and Phinehas were killed, the ark of the covenant

was captured, and Eli's own life came to an end. Yet the Lord continued to speak to Samuel, who faithfully carried God's message of repentance to the nation of Israel.

Our lives as Christian parents begin at the feet of Jesus. Like Hannah, we too may have friction in our relationships, whether with spouse, colleague, friend, or even our own child. The temptation to follow the sinful world, not to mention our own sinful nature, is no less enticing today than in Old Testament times. God made Hannah faithful. As she listened to his promises and saw them reenacted each year in festival sacrifices, she found comfort in the coming Messiah and hope for each day.

Seeing our Savior through family devotions, Bible study, and regular weekly worship keeps us centered on what Christ has done for us and what he promises for our daily walk with him. Forgiven in Christ, we are free to serve as his representatives—to model him in our lives so that our children will see Jesus living in us. We may not have sacrificial object lessons like those of the Old Testament temple, but we can demonstrate our sorrow for mistakes. We may not stand praying in a tabernacle courtyard, but we can kneel at our child's bedside with prayers that flow from our hearts' troubles and joys. We may not be blessed with a vision of the Lord Almighty, but we can hear the voice of God in family Bible readings, during our worship in church, and while attending Bible studies.

"Speak, for your servant is listening." As Christian parents, we humbly listen so that our actions and words point to our loving master.

*Douglas Gurgel cherishes time spent with his wife, Ruth, and daughter, Mira. He serves as principal and teacher at Saint John Lutheran School in Jefferson, Wisconsin.*



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# Recipes for Hope-Filled Living

Pam Holz

Foam and plastic, candy and hard-boiled, egg hunts, egg trees, egg baskets, plus all the special Easter recipes that contain eggs—Easter eggs are everywhere this time of year. For Christians, the egg is a symbol of new life in Christ. A chick's breaking forth from an egg is a good visual for Christ's breaking out of the tomb. Yet we don't want to put that idea away with the Easter decorations. Follow these "recipes" to help you and your children think about and discuss ways to keep the Easter message fresh all year long.

- 1 Eggs are an essential ingredient in many recipes. Remind family members that Christ's resurrection is the essential ingredient of our faith. Because Jesus died on a cross and rose on Easter, we know that we have heaven!
- 2 Have a glass of milk and a cookie with your child. Cookies need eggs to bind them together. Talk about how Jesus binds his believers together as the holy Christian church. It is an invisible church, not the building we go to on Sunday mornings.
- 3 Bread made with eggs is richer. Jesus is the Bread of our faith lives. We are fed by his Word. How can we live our lives to show that we are richer because of this spiritual food?
- 4 When making waffles, eggs are separated. The yolks are added to the main batter, but the whites are whipped up glossy and shiny, full of air. They are then folded into the batter. God has blessed each of us with different talents. Discuss how siblings and parents can all have different gifts. How can Christians use their unique talents to serve their Savior?
- 5 Did you know that mayonnaise is made with eggs? The eggs add a rich flavor to this ingredient used in many recipes. Sometimes we can't see how God is working in our lives. We may wonder where God is in our lives. Jesus promises us, "I am with you always" (Matthew 28:20). We trust that even though we can't see him, he is with us, blessing us as he knows best.



Cartoon: Ed Koehler

"Psst . . . care to boost your antioxidants?"

## Parents & Crosslink

DEAR READER,

Today's parents learn from each other, sharing ideas and encouraging one another to meet the daily challenges of living in an increasingly godless society. In the context of the gospel, this is a very powerful dynamic. *Parents Crosslink* (PCL) is a response to the demand for an interactive approach to assisting parents with a biblical view of family. Please join our ongoing conversation about Christian parenting at the PCL Web site located at [www.parentscrosslink.net](http://www.parentscrosslink.net).

Kenneth Kremer, PCL Editor

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