

Fan the Flames of Kids' Faith This Summer

2008

July

Issue 10



What is on your teenagers' to-do list during these "lazy" days of summer? Chances are it includes catching up on much-needed rest, hanging out with friends, and some type of work, lessons, or camp. But does faith development make the cut?

Summer can lend itself not only to physical getaways but to spiritual getaways as well. When sunshine beckons, it seems tougher to attend church and spend time with God.

Your teenager might be going on a mission trip or other youth group outing, which can change lives and build faith. But summer also is a great time for your family to talk about God and deepen your relationship with him.

Use travel time to spark in-depth conversations about kids' beliefs. Pray together while exploring God's creation, sing together at Christian concerts, and worship together at outdoor services. You might even visit different churches to spark teenagers' thoughts about what they believe and why. Summer offers plenty of volunteer opportunities, too. As a family, help with your church's vacation Bible school, assist with a local service project, or let kids pick a new charity you can support together.

Use the ideas and insights from this newsletter to give kids a summer to remember—and a faith that lasts.

In *Group Magazine*, longtime youth minister Steve Case writes about six spiritual disciplines that help kids—and adults—connect with God:

- 1. Solitude**—On long drives, have some iPod-free times for reflection and prayer. Also set up a quiet place at home for Bible study.
- 2. Simplicity**—Pare down your schedules and your "stuff." Keeping things simple leads to generosity, self-discovery, and purpose.
- 3. Abandon**—Be willing to live without the approval of the rest of the world. Serve without expecting acknowledgment.
- 4. Submission**—Trust God as almighty and good. Treat people as God's treasures.
- 5. Worship**—Honor God through conversation, not recitation. Expand your worship to everyday experiences.
- 6. Fellowship**—Establish faith traditions, pick a favorite song and Bible verse, and keep Jesus at the center of your family.

Pulse

Even spiritually active teenagers are at risk for disengaging from Christianity when they become young adults. Consider these findings—and take steps now to prevent the same thing from happening to your kids:

- 81% of teenagers say they've attended church for a period of at least two months.
- 61% of young adults had attended church during adolescence but are now "spiritually disengaged" (not actively attending church, reading the Bible, or praying).
- Only 20% of young adults have maintained a level of spiritual activity consistent with their high school experiences.



(The Barna Group)

Great Questions to Ask Your Kids

What's the state of your teenagers' faith? Is it growing, stagnant, or somewhere in between? Use these questions to find out if your kids are standing firm or faltering:

1. How strong would you rank your faith right now, with "10" being strong and "1" being weak?
2. What's the best part of your relationship with God? What needs work, and why?
3. What questions do you have about God and faith?
4. What are some ways you live out your faith? How easy or tough is it to put your faith into action?
5. What would it look like to have an "extreme" faith?



Focus on Prayer

PRAY THAT:

1. Your teenagers will use their summer wisely and grow spiritually.
2. God will be real to your kids and will speak to them through worship, prayer, and Bible study.
3. God will nurture your teenagers' faith and keep it strong as they enter young adulthood.
4. Your teenagers will live out their beliefs and be comfortable expressing their Christian faith to others.

Verse of the month

"If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is by believing in your heart that you are made right with God, and it is by confessing with your mouth that you are saved." (Romans 10:9-10)

The most-important thing your teenagers can ever have is faith in Jesus as their Savior. It leads to the "end goal" of heaven, where we'll spend eternity in God's presence. Faith is the only route there. By believing in Jesus, who died and rose for us, we're assured of salvation, the greatest gift possible. Make sure your kids receive this priceless treasure!

What's Up With Kids

The new *Live Bible* (NLT) from Group Publishing not only builds teenagers' faith but encourages them to express themselves. It's filled with writings and artwork by kids throughout America. Sidebars challenge young people to write, draw, or try activities as they respond to God's Word. Here's an activity you can use this summer:

Read Mark 2:1-12. The scene is crazy. Jesus is rock-star popular, and everyone in town is coming to see and hear him. The house he's speaking at is jam packed, and people are lining up just to get a glimpse of him. That's when a group of friends do something crazy. They tear open a roof just so their paralyzed friend can get an audience with Jesus. And when their friend does, he is healed!

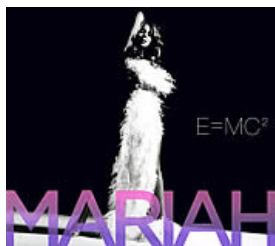
Find a mat, rug, or small piece of carpet (even a towel will do) and sit on it. In the space provided, list some of your friends who need Jesus. Next, list some of the creative ways you could get them to meet with Jesus. You could write a song or poem about what Jesus means to you and give it to them. You could draw a cartoon about your faith and see what they think. You could invite them to read through this Gospel—Mark—with you. Anything—just think outside the box! Then drop in at www.Group.com/RoughEdit and tell us what happens when your friends encounter Jesus.

(Parents: Your kids can share their original artwork, photography, and drawings on Rough Edit, where creativity and Christ collide.)



Seeking Answers — ©2008 Michelle Joswiak, 18

MUSICSPOTLIGHT



Mariah Carey E=MC2

Pro-social Content

A woman is determined to see love last ("Love Story"). Written for Carey's deceased dad, "Bye Bye" mourns him and notes that he's in a better place. It also puts an arm around fans coping with similar pain ("This is for my people who just lost somebody"). "I Wish You Well," a boldly biblical attempt to exercise forgiveness, shares a handful of relevant verses. A woman jettisons a reportedly abusive husband on "Side Effects," but ...

Objectionable Content

With conditions of the divorce unclear, it's hard to know if her departure was entirely justified. Love songs such as "I'll Be Lovin' U Long Time" and "O.O.C." treat love as an addiction requiring a physical fix. After some superficial self-promotion on "I'm That Chick," a woman offers herself to a man for a night of passion. The hit "Touch My Body" is an even more explicit proposition ("Let me wrap my thighs all around your waist") that includes Carey warning her lover not to make a YouTube video of their romp. She also can't resist a guy she knows has fathered children with six women ("Cruise Control"). A night of clubbing finds a couple sipping tequila and pinot grigio as they "Migrate" from one hot spot to the next (a crass term for breasts is muted, but fairly obvious). A CD poster reveals side nudity of the artist wearing only a feather boa.

Summary Advisory

Naming this disc after Einstein's Theory of Relativity is apropos, since moral relativity is the known quantity of E=MC², especially in the sexual arena.
<http://www.pluggedinonline.com/music/music/a0004069.cfm>



Natalie Grant RELENTLESS

Sounds like ... Kelly Clarkson, Celine Dion, Nichole Nordeman, and BarlowGirl through an eclectic array of adult contemporary, pop, rock, and R&B.

At a glance ... picking up right where Awaken left off, Relentless finds Natalie Grant pushing herself musically and thematically to offer more than the usual Christian pop.

Two time female vocalist of the year Natalie Grant says of her new album, Relentless, "God is relentless because his love for us is limitless, unconditional and undying. And as God has always relentlessly pursued me, I will be relentless in my pursuit of Him. I pray this album will awaken the relentless spirit within others, knowing that as you draw near to God, He will draw near to you."
<http://www.christianitytoday.com/music/reviews/2008/relentless.html>
<http://www.musicchristian.com/sys/product.php?PRODUCT=544132>



tenth avenue north Over and Underneath

Sounds like ... an unlikely AC-friendly pop/rock hybrid of MercyMe, Jars of Clay, and Switchfoot, with some additional similarities to Rush of Fools, Snow Patrol, and Paul Colman.

At a glance ... though there's nothing particularly new or innovative about their sound or songwriting, Tenth Avenue North does enough on their debut to keep the music and lyrics thoughtful and engaging.

<http://www.christianitytoday.com/music/reviews/2008/overandunderneath.html>

FILMWATCH

Movie: Hancock (releases July 2)





Genre: Action, Comedy, Drama

Rating: PG-13 (for some intense sequences of sci-fi action and violence, plus language)

Synopsis: Hancock (Will Smith) is an edgy, unconventional superhero who's been irresponsible with his power. Although his heroics save lives, his careless attitude and actions cause incredible damage. The public is just about ready to get rid of Hancock, when he saves a PR executive (Jason Bateman) and discovers his vulnerable side.



July 2008

		1	2	3	4	5
						
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Middle School Summer Church Camp July 6-11						(n)Fusion
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
					(n)Fusion	
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
					(n)Fusion	
27	28	29	30	31		
					(n)Fusion	

(n)Fusion- Friday Nights 7-11pm

Small Group Bible Studies:

Sunday Nights (HS & College) 6-8pm- Apologetics class

Wednesday nights (Middle School) 7-8pm

July

4- Friday, No (n)Fusion Friday Night (holiday)

5-11- Middle School Church Camp (Fisher Camp- Weston, WV)

10-12- Kings Fest @ Kings Dominion (not a youth group sponsored event)

13- Hard Core Music Night – 4-10pm (at New Hope Gym) *Music with an EDGE!*

Mark your Calendar! AUGUST 8 – Cool Beans Coffee House

September

13- Awakening Fest (music festival) **\$16 ticket-** *sign up today at the youth bulletin board to get this group rate.*

24- See You At The Pole **Wednesday, September 24, at 7 a.m., Students GATHER** at their school flagpole. **PRAY** for their school, friends, families, and world. **CONNECT.** Listen as He speaks to them.

For more information check out our website:

www.nfusionyouth.com

Contact Info

New Hope Bible Church
80 North Lake Ave.
Front Royal, VA 22630
540-636-8838

Lee Montgomery
Pastor of Student Ministries
Email: newhopeyp@gmail.com
http://faithfreaks.com/Pastor Lee
http://www.myspace.com/northstaryl

Copies of this newsletter are available at the information desk located at the rear of the Fellowship Hall.