



Family Matters

Thoughts from Durham

By Colleen Grogan

Well, hopefully by now you can begin to see your sidewalks and driveways again. Y'all have been hit really hard this year by snow. If it's any consolation, we too have had our share, more than the usual from what I've been told. And a half inch of snow here really shuts things down! But, as I write this, schools are closed there (even UCI!) and we are enjoying a sunny 45 degree day here, so I won't complain.....

Since the last issue of this newsletter, I have been thinking a lot about the whole idea of becoming a more welcoming congregation. Part of this stems from a discussion we had at the last staff meeting about how to build community at ECC. As I have thought about this, and "talked" (ok, emailed) with some of you, I have become convinced that building community is not something we as a staff can do alone. And, I also believe it is an area where we in Children's Ministry can take the lead!

If I haven't scared you off yet, here's what I have in mind. The best way for all of us to really get to know one another is by spending time

in one another's homes, seeing each other in our own settings, with our children not on their "Sunday best" behavior. (I hear you laughing!) A number of you have been very active in inviting other families over to your homes for meals or other activities. But it seems to me that we need to really branch out here. We need to look beyond our comfort zone to those people who are not in the same stage of life as we are. There are some amazing people at ECC who have had lives full of joys, sorrows, struggles and victories. There are singles, couples with no children, couples with grown children, widows and widowers—you name it, I think we've got it! I would like to challenge you (and me too!) to consider a family ministry of hospitality. This doesn't mean a fancy-schmancy meal. It doesn't even necessarily mean you have to do the cooking! Pizza is a great alternative, or subs, or whatever you want to order in! Plan to have a family you already know along with some



people you don't know so well—this might help you over that awkward what-if-we-don't-have-anything-to-talk-about period. But, don't allow having a friend there to distract you from the real purpose of the gathering—to really get to know someone you don't already know. Check out the books I review on the inside of the newsletter. They are really encouraging and have some great ideas. I'll be bringing these to the Parent Resource Table in March when we are back there (the 13th-19th), but feel free to get them yourselves from your favorite online bookseller.

We can set an example for the rest of the congregation that I hope will be picked up by all—to move outside of our comforts zones to make friends with the brothers and sisters we worship with.

Save the Dates!

Joyful Noise

Thursdays 4:30-5:30

March 4, 11, 18, 25

April 1, 8, 15, 22

Concert: April 25

Thursday Morning Moms

Thursdays 9:15-11:00

March 11, 25

April 8, 22

Easter Egg Hunt

March 27 (rain date April 3)

Easter! April 4

Special prayer request:

- As of the writing of this newsletter, the Grogans' van is still missing after being stolen from in front of our apartment building during the night of Feb 14. Please pray for a smooth resolution to this situation, whatever that might be! Thanks.



Prayer for Missions

There are two families supported by ECC who are working on getting to the mission field. You can help by praying for both families. Here's how!

Neither the Kinneys nor Monte and Jen can go on assignment until they've raised sufficient support, so they covet your prayers!

Jack and Alysia Kinney were planning on moving to Ghana with their 7 children to work with HCJB (radio), but their newborn has Down's Syndrome and accompanying medical problems. They are now shifting their focus to Elkhart, IN where HCJB has a technical support center and Jack has the skills they need. HCJB is active in "radio planting" (putting more than 75 local radio outlets on the air), international broadcasting, program production and training. Specific prayer requests (sort of a re-cap) include the following:

Pray that...

- Raising support will be a huge faith builder and is accomplished (they are 54% of the way to their goal).
- God continues to make His way known as we consider Elkhart,

IN as our place of ministry. Jack has the technical skills HCJB needs there and it would keep us close to the medical support our newborn requires.

- We continue to lean on the Lord.
- HCJB radio ministry be effective in "radio planting", international broadcasting, program production and training.

Monte and Jen, with their children, plan to move to Dallas where Monte will be one of the teachers training Wycliffe missionary candidates for overseas ministry.

They would like you to pray for the following:

- They are at about 66% of their monthly needs for Dallas. Pray for 40 more churches, families and individuals to join their support team.
- Wycliffe recruiters are looking for more candidates to become field leaders, which in turn increases the effectiveness of translation work. Pray for more missionary candidates to enroll in the fall training program.
- One of the mother-tongue



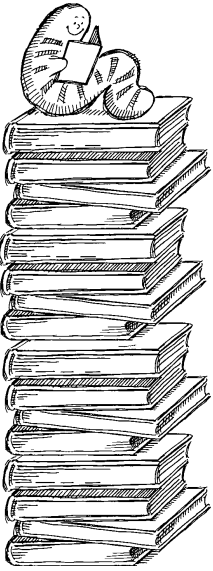
translators in the group they served in Southeast Asia got dengue fever. This is a tropical fever that stays very high for a week or more, causes severe muscle and bone aches, and then has a very long recovery period. Victims can be weak for months and may experience up to a year of depression. Please pray that he will be spared the worst effects of this disease and that he can take the necessary time off from his many duties so that he can recover well. Also pray that he won't get discouraged, but will know that God is still with him.

- Pray for our personal spiritual growth in our marriage and parenting.

More Books coming to the Resource Table!

Just before this newsletter went to press, I got a few more books that are hot off the press! They are by Mark Holmen, one of the best authors in the Faith at Home movement. These three small books are Faith Begins @ Home Mom, Faith Begins @ Home Devotions and Faith Begins @ Home Prayer. I highly recommend these, and will likely get more copies, especially of the Devotions books. These are quick reads, incredibly practical and will help you begin TODAY to actually bring your faith home to your family. I am excited about these new resources (can you tell?)

Books of the Month



"A cold unfriendly church contradicts the gospel message. Yet unfriendliness stands out as one of the most common criticisms people have of local churches. It doesn't take people long to figure out that there is a 'churchy' love among Christians that ends at the....parking lot."

This quote from The Hospitality Commands by Alexander Strauch really gets to the message of all 3 books I will review. He describes hospitality as the basis for true fellowship as well as a "launching

pad for the gospel". He discusses the New Testament commands relating to hospitality and the last chapter contains some practical hints. This is a worthwhile book to help understand the 'whys' of hospitality: "We cannot know or grow close to our brothers and sisters by meeting for an hour and fifteen minutes a week...in a church sanctuary. The home is the ideal place in which to build relationship and closeness."

If you want really practical help and inspiration, Practicing Hospitality by Pat Ennis and Lisa Tatlock is for you. The authors get very detailed about what it means to be hospitable—and how that works out in real life. They discuss how extending hospitality affects families, how it develops

Biblical character in us and how it opens our eyes to other cultures. All of this is bathed and backed up with Scripture—and even recipes! This is a really helpful book whether you are just stepping out in this area or you are a 'seasoned pro'.

Finally, Open Heart, Open Home by Karen Mains is the classic book on hospitality. She develops the principle of using your home to care for other people. She helps us discern the difference between entertaining and hospitality (as do all three books) and reminds us that we are not seeking to impress, but to serve.



you, memorizing week by week! And it has been great to see the rest of the congregation join in with us in memorizing Scripture. I pray that this will be an encouragement to your family as you see others reciting the verses you are learning in your family. May God keep us motivated to hide His Word in our hearts, for His glory!

Fighter Verses

Here are the schedules for both Fighter Verses and Foundation Verses for the next couple of months. Both groups are learning Psalm 121 in April!

Fighter Verses

March	7	Ps. 73:25-26
	14	Ps. 77:13-14
	21	James 1:2-3
	28	James 1:12
April	4	Ps. 121:1-2
	11	Ps. 121:3-4
	18	Ps. 121:5-6
	25	Ps. 121:7-8

Foundation Verses

March	7	1 Chron. 16:34
	14	Proverbs 1:7
	21	FREEZE!
		Review 10 verses!
	28	Psalm 56:3
April	4	Psalm 121:1-2
	11	Psalm 121:3-4
	18	Psalm 121:5-6
	25	Psalm 121:7

I am hearing really encouraging reports about the continuing diligence of so many of you in doing memory work, whether it is Fighter verses or something else. I'm right there with

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Evangelical  Community Church



Easter Egg Hunt!

ECC's 4th Annual Easter Egg Hunt is coming!

This is a great opportunity to bring friends to enjoy our wonderful property and a fun day of egg hunting and games. Here are the details:

Date: Saturday March 27

Rain date: Saturday April 3

Time: Check the bulletin

Place: South end (Office end) of the ECC property, 2192 Springdale Road.

Note: We ask that you park at the Church

building and walk down. This keeps cars and children far apart from one another!

What to bring: A basket for collecting eggs, a long-handled spoon for the Egg Roll (4-10 year olds), salty snacks to share (optional).

What will happen: As families gather, there will be a story about Easter. Children up through 6th grade will hunt for eggs, including some that have symbols of Easter in them instead of candy. The children who find these Resurrection eggs will get special prizes, with the most special prize for the Empty Tomb egg. Once all the eggs have been found, there will



be games for various ages, concluding with the Egg Toss for ages 12 and up.

Come celebrate the season with us, and bring a friend or two or three!

