

the

JUNE 2009 EDITION

FOCAL Point

CENTERED ON ACTIVITIES OF TOLEDO FIRST SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH FAMILY

* A Christ-Centered Church *

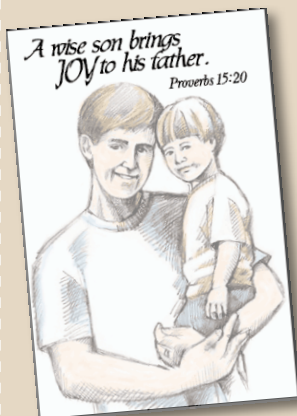
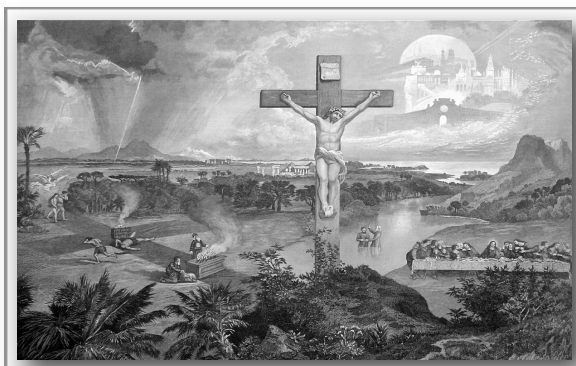
Growing from the Children's Divisions up a Christ-centered church shouting the Gospel with our lives.

Eighty-one percent of Seventh-day Adventist youth said that they “must live by God’s rules in order to be saved” according to a study of over 12,000 young people conducted by the Seventh-day Adventist church. This study, called *Valuegenesis*, also revealed that only twenty-eight percent said “there is nothing I can do to earn salvation.” Sixty-two percent replied that “the way to be accepted by God is to try sincerely to live a good life.” Forty-four percent answered that “the main emphasis of the gospel is on God’s rules for right living.”

In short, regardless of reality, the perception among emerging generations is that they have been raised in a performance centered church. One that is focused on behaving instead of belonging. And behaving is important. Because what we do says something about who we love. That’s why Jesus encouraged us to “*Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven.*”

But living like crazy, rightly understood, is always the result of knowing you’re loved like crazy. Romans 1:5 and 2:4 says obedience comes from the life of faith and grace, not the

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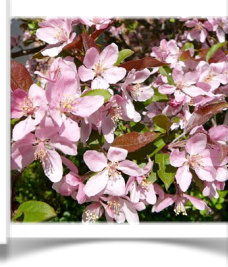
A man’s children and his garden both reflect the amount of weeding done in the growing season.

chuck

—Ruth Renkel
Sometimes the poorest man leaves his children the richest inheritance.

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Ah-h-h, Spring has sprung at Toledo First!

Scenes from Jeff Batchelder's pictures in May show a very welcome sign—the weather has definitely improved in Toledo, Ohio. The first picture shows a few of the Toledo Junior Academy stu-

dents singing during their Spring program on May 14. Photos 2 & 4 were taken at the Mother's Day Tea. Both Marilynn Marsh and Shirlie Heiney were happy to have their daughters attending with them.

The photo on the right shows a few of the youth during Sabbath School enjoying the sunshine [and Sonshine!] while they study God's Word with Pastor Rachel. And...we couldn't leave out the beautiful

dogwood blossoms at our entrance which we gladly welcome each May.

Thank you, Jeff, for taking the pictures which we share here. ##

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JUNE 1
Church Business Meeting, 7 PM

JUNE 3, 4
Graduations: Kindergarten & 8th @ 7 PM

JUNE 7-14
Family Camp @ Camp Mohaven

JULY 25
Evangelistic Picnic

Remember: You can see this newsletter in beautiful color by visiting toledofirstadventist.org

Graduations and Farewell

Toledo Junior Academy will celebrate two graduations as the school year closes. Eight students in the Kindergarten class are looking forward to graduation on Wednesday, June 3, at 7 PM. Seven are community children and one child is from Parkwood Church. Seven of the graduates will return for first grade at TJA. Their teacher, Cindy Naus, said they will recite memory verses individually and as a group. They will also sing during the program. The following night, Na Hyong

Kim will graduate from 8th grade. She came here from Korea and has been a TJA student for 2 1/2 years. Her plans are not yet finalized for next year. We wish our graduates all the best.

The end of the school year brings mixed feelings as always. Along with the sense of accomplishment and relief at the close of school, is the sadness that two of our teachers, Kells and Vicki Hall, will be leaving. Next school year Mr. Hall will be teaching grades 6, 7 & 8 at Mount Vernon Elementary School in Mount Vernon, Ohio, where he will also be

principal. Mrs. Hall is seeking a position in the area and Daniel will be a sophomore at Mount Vernon Academy.

Everyone is invited to the special farewell potluck after morning worship on June 6 to say goodbye to the Hall family, who have been a part of our church family since 2002. Community families who have students at the school are joining us for this potluck, so please help them to feel welcome and comfortable.

For all potlucks, please remember to give time for the Kid Connect team to tear down the props and put them

away. With everyone staying a little longer in the foyer or sanctuary until the tables and chairs are arranged, it will be a big help. Thank you. ##

Keep these dates

July 25 and August 15 are the dates when we'll go to Wildwood Metropark following morning worship. Plan to come to these important picnics. We've intentionally scheduled fewer of these picnics this year. Come and let's do evangelism in the park!! ##

Christ-Centered *[Continued from front page]*

other way around. So at Toledo First, we are unapologetically lifting up Christ trusting His Word which says that doing so will “*Draw all people to Him*” [John 12:32]. The last couple editions of Focal Point have talked about how we are intentionally and sincerely “Shouting the Gospel with our lives” and “Growing from the children’s divisions up.” This month, we’re explaining the significance of building a “Christ centered church.” How are we trying to do that?

One way is by preaching expository sermons about Christ. Why? Because Thom Rainer in his book *Surprising Insights from the Unchurched* explains that expository preaching really appeals to unchurched people. But what is expository preaching? Well, it is a way of explaining the Bible without jumping all over the Bible to do so. It does not ask a topical question and then look up a slew of Bible texts to answer the question. The question and the answers come primarily from the passage everyone has read. Research has revealed that unchurched people aren’t bored with the Bible. They just want to know how to read it and make sense of it. And since Jesus said in John 5:39, “*These are they that testify of me,*” it’s becoming easier to lift up Christ by doing so.

Here are some other ways we’re trying to be Christ centered:

Prophecy— We believe in prophecy. And will continue to teach it primarily in Membership Classes and Circle groups and Sabbath School classes. But it will not be the all-consuming passion that it is in many Adventist churches. Instead, we will focus our evangelistic resources on

living grace year round through ordinary outreach opportunities while simultaneously treating every week in church as an evangelistic opportunity. Why? Because the Bible says love is more important than prophecy. 1 Corinthians 13:1-7 says, “*If I speak in the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.*” For more reasons why traditional Adventist church sponsored prophecy semi-

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nars and evangelistic methods with accompanying literature will not be prominently displayed throughout the church, please download a copy of the Toledo First Assimilation Manual from our church website [www.toledofirstadventist.org] or secure a copy from the church office.

Adornment— How people dress is not an issue at Toledo First. Instead, every baptismal candidate and new member is taught the principles of Christian witness and modesty and stewardship leaving individuals to decide how they wish to represent Jesus. If that means we have to explain the principles of true beauty instead of merely saying, “Your church doesn’t believe in jewelry” so be it. For help in talking about those principles of true beauty, please download a

copy of the Toledo First Assimilation Manual from our church website [www.toledofirstadventist.org] or secure a copy from the church office.

Sabbath Keeping— The Bible says the Sabbath kept right is a delight and a holy special day [Isaiah 58:13-14], but it leaves it up to each family to decide what that means for their family. So do we.

Diet— We teach people the principles of a good diet and the advantages of a vegetarian life-style but we do not mandate it. In appropriate venues, we also teach the health risks of caffeine but do not mandate that people cannot drink it or that it cannot be served to those who do at church. We also leave ashtrays outside the church for smokers even though we teach people the risks of smoking and we ask people to commit to stop smoking when becoming a member.

Worship— We believe sincere and authentic worship leaders using their unique spiritual gifts should lead a unified congregation of engaged worshipers into actively learning about, focusing on, and lifting up Christ. A variety of worship styles and leaders provide a unique variety different from week to week. —Pastor Mike ##



The Focal Point is published monthly by Toledo First Seventh-day Adventist Church ~ 419.882.6200 ~ toledofirstadventist.org

How good God is...

During a recent visit, my 3-year-old granddaughter told me that her father, an associate minister at a Presbyterian Church, sometimes preaches the sermon.

“Does he tell the people how good a girl you are?” I asked her.

“No,” she replied. “He tells them how good God and Jesus are!”

—Roscoe E. Puckett, Jr.

Richmond, VA

Dads are most ordinary men turned by love into heroes, adventurers, story-tellers, singers of songs.

- Pam Brown

What a father says to his
children is not heard by the world,
but it will be heard by posterity.

- Jean Paul Richter

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**June/July**

Family Camp

TY - Work Bee

calendar