

# parenting

## CHRISTIAN Teenagers & kids

December 2017 a newsletter for families of children & youth



Project Feed 2017



ROCKY RIVER  
UNITED  
METHODIST  
CHURCH

19414 Detroit Road  
Rocky River, OH 44116  
www.rrumc.org

**Children's Ministry**  
Age 3-grade 5  
Quinn Bennett, Director  
qbennett@rrumc.org  
(440) 331-7676 ext. 234

**Youth Ministry**  
Grades 6-12  
Rachel Burns, Director  
rburns@rrumc.org  
(440) 331-7676 ext. 233

## Teach Children & Youth What to Treasure

### POWERSOURCE

#### ASK GOD:

1. To bless your family's Christmas preparations and reflections.
2. To help your children feel satisfied with what they have.
3. To show your family the value of spiritual things rather than material things.

Despite Christians' efforts to honor the true meaning of Christmas, each December we must do battle with our consumer-oriented culture. The temptation to overindulge our children isn't limited to the holiday season, either. All year long, kids are bombarded by ads for "must-have" items. Parents often give in, either because they can or because they don't want their kids to feel deprived or left out.

From a spiritual standpoint, materialism shifts our priorities and dependence from God and heavenly things to what the world offers. From a developmental standpoint, overindulged children are less able to cope with stress, often lack self-control, and are at risk for being self-centered and depressed,

researchers say. As the Christmas season approaches, keep these tips in mind.

**Don't rely on gifts as substitutes.** Children desire time with you and emotional security. Deep down, they want relationships more than things.

**Emphasize the importance of nonmaterial values.** Prioritize spending time together as a family, whether you're engaged in experiences and activities or spending quiet time at home. Watch the example you set regarding shopping and spending.

**Help children explore their values.** Instead of just saying "no" to every request, use the moment to discover what's important to kids.

# Children's Ministry (PreK-5th Grade)



## Christmas Eve Morning Services

830am- Chapel Service  
10am- Sanctuary Service



## Christmas Eve Services

3pm- Contemporary  
5pm- Family Friendly  
8pm- Candlelight Service  
11pm- Candlelight Service



Merry  
CHRISTmas!



This month the children will be learning all about Jesus' birth. Luke 2:1-20 describes Joseph and Mary and their continuing struggle. Certainly it had been difficult for them to overhear the snickers of acquaintances who noticed that Mary had become pregnant prior to the completion of her marriage. Now she and Joseph had to travel from his home in Nazareth to his ancestral home in Bethlehem, a journey of about 70 miles through mountains (although the Bible calls them hills) and desert.. All while riding the donkey and ready to give birth to the baby who would change the world. The exact date of Jesus' birth is impossible to calculate. According to Luke the census occurred when Quirinius was governor of Syria. His first term being from 6-4B.C., so Jesus was likely born between those dates. Unfortunately, the Christian calendar was created before we realized the calculation of Christ's birth was wrong. This should be a fun December! In Projects-With-A-Purpose, the little ones will make an angel ornament to remind them of the announcement made to the shepherds the night of Jesus' birth while the older ones continue getting a little deeper using their journals. Surprise Station will include making a snack for the road just like the shepherds would have probably done before they left.

## Questions to Ask Your Children After Each Session

**Surprise Station:** How would you feel if angels suddenly appeared before you? How has Jesus helped your family? What are ways you can help your family this week?

**Projects-With-A-Purpose:**

**PK-2:** What do you think it was like for the shepherds to see the angels? How can you use your ornament to help you tell others about how Jesus came to save us? What are ways that Jesus has helped you at school?

**3rd-5th:** Read Luke 2:1-20. When reading the passage did something stick out to you? Why do you think that is? Read Hebrews 1:1-4. It talks about who used to tell us about God and now who does. Why do you think God made the change?

## What's Coming Up?

December 3rd at 3:30pm - Community Meal at Bethany UCC  
December 8th at 6pm - Mission Possible, "An American Tail"  
December 24th at 5pm- Family friendly Christmas Eve service  
January 14th at 4pm - Twice Blessed Family Night

## Mission Possible

Come help us on **December 8th at 6pm** as we help out the organization Building Hope in the City. We created welcome home kits for this organization earlier this year. This time we will be making school supply kits for home use. After the children settle here, they begin to attend school. Most of them, however, do not have the supplies at home to do their homework. We will make this possible for them. Please come and

help us put the school kits together and then watch the movie "**An American Tale.**" We are in need of the following items: 24 count crayons, 12 count colored pencils, pencils, erasers, scissors, large glue sticks, and pencil sharpeners. If you are interested in donating these items, please have them to Quinn Bennett or the church office no later than December 5th. Thank you for your support.

# Children's Ministry Teachers 2017-18 (Part 2)

I asked our Sunday School Teachers to answer a few questions about themselves and their faith in an effort to help you get to know the men and women who teach your children each week. I hope you enjoy it! The questions we asked are below:

1. One word that describes God to you
2. One word that describes Jesus to you
3. One word that describes the Holy Spirit to you
4. What service do you attend?
5. What do you do for a living?
6. Hobby



Amber Kramer Harbor  
PWP 3-5

1. Love
2. Teacher
3. Guide
4. Harbor
5. Client Relationship Manager for Jason M Orsky Wealth Management
6. Standup Paddleboarding



Ellen Polston  
Sanctuary SS K-2

1. Loving
2. Savior
3. Comforter
4. Harbor
5. Stay at home mom
6. Reading



Chris Penitz  
Sanctuary SS 4-5

1. Love
2. Wise
3. Ubiquitous
4. Depends
5. Supply Chain Management
6. Games and Science Fiction

Tammi Belko  
Harbor PWP 3-5

1. Creator
2. Love
3. Peace
4. Harbor
5. Teacher
6. Writing and Reading

Patsy Demaree  
Sanctuary SS 4-5

1. All encompassing
2. Faith
3. Guidance
4. Sanctuary
5. Office of Advancement at Magnificat High School
6. Reading, gardening, cooking



Carrie Miller  
Harbor PWP K-2

1. Loving
2. Forgiving
3. Comforting
4. Harbor
5. 3rd grade teacher
6. Time with family



Bethany Harry  
Sanctuary Worship

1. Amazing
2. Savior
3. Transformer
4. Sanctuary
5. Wife and mother,
6. Foreign Missions and everything about it! Just finished a book about my trip to Ecuador

Cheryl Reitz  
Sanctuary PWP 3-5

1. Love
2. Humility
3. Guidance
4. Harbor
5. Registered Dietician/Diabetes Educator
6. Interior Design



Laura Lazzaro

1. Divine
2. Love
3. Guide
4. Sanctuary
5. Parttime merchandiser for American Greetings and full time mom of three
6. Drawing and reading



ROCKY RIVER  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
**YOUTH**

Join us  
in December!

Our youth Sunday School classes will follow the Advent sermon series.

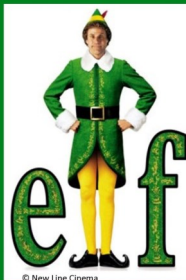
Dec. 3 Week One ~ All in Worship "A Carpenter Named Joseph"

Dec. 10 Week Two ~ "Whose Child Is This?"

Dec. 17 Week Three ~ "Raising a Child Not Your Own"

Dec. 24 Week Four ~ 10am service only "The Journey to Bethlehem"

Dec. 31 ~ "All Things New" (not part of Advent)



CROSSROADS

Knowing  
Jesus

Featuring Buddy,  
the elf

Dec. 3, 6:30-8pm



CROSSROADS

Transformed  
Heart

Featuring  
The Grinch

Dec. 10, 6:30-8pm

This Christmas...let's give back.

Blankets & Burritos

Come make blankets to be gifted to our Twice Blessed Free Store Families. Please bring 2.5 yards of fleece and fabric scissors. Sign up to contribute to our meal at [rrumc.org](http://rrumc.org).

Dec. 17, 6:30-8pm

Christmas Break ~ Youth @ Sky Zone!

Wed., Dec. 27, 6:15-7:45pm

Purchase tickets for the 6:30pm 1 hour jump time online (\$10) or at the door (\$16). Sky Socks are required, if you do not have some, you may purchase for \$2. Parent must complete the Sky Zone waiver online or at drop off. Pizza and drinks will be provided!  
Sky Zone Westlake 31500 Viking Pkwy, Westlake, OH 44145  
<https://www.skyzone.com/westlake>



ROCKY RIVER  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
**YOUTH**

Join us  
in December!

Youth, Families, & Friends,

December is here and it's going to be great! In Sunday School, we are following the Advent sermon series based on the book *Faithful* by Adam Hamilton. At Crossroads we're going to have some fun with short clips from *Elf* and *The Grinch* which will help us understand the true meaning of Christmas, knowing Jesus and having a transformed heart. At our Christmas event, Blankets & Burritos, we will have dinner together and make fleece tie blankets for Twice Blessed (come in Christmas clothes for a chance at the prize drawing). Then, while everyone is on break from school, we will have a fun night at Sky Zone in Westlake! Check out the details on the previous page and the calendar on the back page of this newsletter.

Don't forget our Open Forum on Dec. 12th at 6pm for youth and/or parents to share about our youth ministry and ask questions. Our topic will be *Looking Into 2018*, but the discussion will be open to your own questions and concerns. Lastly, don't forget to sign up for our summer mission trips. This is the last month for the early bird rate!

2017 has been an awesome year to lead our youth ministry. I'm incredibly blessed by each of you! Merry Christmas!

Many Blessings ~ Rachel Burns, Director of Youth Ministries

## 2018 Youth Mission Trips

*Appalachian adventures await!*

### MIDDLE SCHOOL

June 14-17, 2018

Athens County, Ohio

### HIGH SCHOOL

July 1-7, 2018

Wyoming County, West Virginia

*Take me home, country roads.*

Register now for your 2018 summer mission trip!

<https://www.rrumc.org/youth-mission-trips/>



## Nurture Generous Hearts

Jesus gave us the best guidance for living in a culture that overflows with materialism. In Matthew 6:33 (NLT), he challenges us to “seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously, and he will give you everything you need.” When we trust Jesus to provide, we can be generous and find joy in giving to others. Helping children develop a heart of gratitude is the best cure for a sense of entitlement. Gratitude moves the focus off ourselves so we can consider other people’s needs and act generously in response. Start by talking with your children about sharing. Then discuss why God wants us to be generous—and how sharing our blessings with others becomes a blessing for them. Try these ideas to nurture generosity and a giving spirit this Christmas.

### TEACHABLE MOMENTS

#### The Greatest Gift

Beforehand, wrap a small gift for each family member. (Choose a variety of items that anyone would enjoy.) Sit in a circle and give each person one gift to hold.

Say: **As I read the Christmas story, pass your gift to the person on your right every time I say “God,” “Lord,” or “Jesus.” When I’m done, I’ll say “amen,” and you’ll keep the gift you’re holding at that time.**

Read aloud Matthew 2:1-12; Luke 1:26-38; and Luke 2:1-20. Then say “amen.” Have family members hold their gifts while you ask these questions: **What did you have to do to receive the gift you have? What did we have to do to receive the gift of Jesus? What is most exciting to you about the Christmas story, and why?**

Say: **Jesus is the greatest gift of all! He freely gave his life for us out of love. Because of Jesus, we’ll live forever with him—and so will everyone else who loves him.**

Close in prayer and open your gifts.

**Hearts for Jesus** Make a big stocking with the name “Jesus” in glitter. Let children make felt or paper hearts with their names on them and give their “hearts” to Jesus. (After all, that’s what he wants the most at Christmas!)

**12 Days of Serving** As a family, come up with 12 acts of service you can perform together during December. For example, shovel snow for a neighbor, donate extra blankets to a homeless shelter, and deliver cookies and hot cocoa to homebound senior citizens.

**Try Tithing** When children receive money for Christmas, have them use 10 percent to help someone else, whether they donate it or buy a small gift. Together, keep a journal detailing how children use that 10 percent—and see how the blessings add up!

**Adopt a Family** Purchase gifts and a holiday meal for a family in need. Then deliver everything on (or right before) Christmas Eve. You can do this anonymously.

**All-Night Anticipation** Curl up in sleeping bags beneath your tree on Christmas Eve. Before going to sleep, talk about what Mary and Joseph experienced on the journey to

Bethlehem and in the stable. Before opening gifts in the morning, emphasize that Jesus is the first—and best—Christmas gift.

**Baby Blessings** Older kids can throw a baby shower (complete with birth announcements!) for Jesus and then donate items to a local crisis-pregnancy center.

**Anonymous Angels** On Christmas morning, have family members draw names. During each of the next 12 days, angels should anonymously do something special for their person (do a chore, leave a note or drawing, make a treat, etc.). On January 6 (Epiphany), have an Angel Party and reveal your identities. Serve angel food cake and discuss what it was like to bless others—and to be blessed by others.

**Bearing Gifts** Fill lunch sacks with small treats and tape them shut. Read aloud Matthew 2:1-12 and say: “After Jesus was born, wise men traveled a long way to bring him gifts. Let’s pretend to be wise men and camels!” Take turns being wise men who guide camels on all fours—carrying a sack on their back. Then talk about what gifts the wise men gave Jesus and what gifts we can give him.

“Store your treasures in heaven ...  
Wherever your treasure is, there the desires of your heart will also be.”  
—Matthew 6:20-21

# MEDIA MADNESS



## MOVIE

**Title:** *The Star*

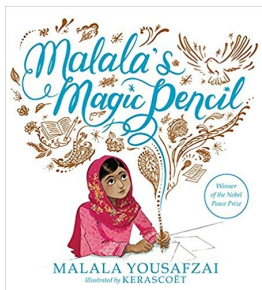
**Genre:** Animation, Adventure, Comedy

**Rating:** PG

**Cast:** Tyler Perry, Oprah Winfrey, Kristin Chenoweth, Zachary Levi

**Synopsis:** A brave donkey yearning for adventure teams up with some eccentric stable animals. When the new friends follow a star, they become unlikely heroes of the first Christmas.

**Our Take:** This major Sony Pictures release includes lots of big-name talent, including a title song by Mariah Carey. Based on the trailer, the movie seems to offer more comedy and animated antics than religious insight. It is refreshing, though, to have a holiday release that actually focuses on the reason for the season—Jesus.



## BOOK

**Title:** *Malala's Magic Pencil*

**Author:** Malala Yousafzai

**Synopsis:** The 20-year-old Nobel Peace Prize winner, who advocates for human rights and education, offers inspiration in this new picture book. While sharing her vision for equality and opportunity, she encourages young readers to change the world.

**Our Take:** Despite Malala's experience surviving an attempted murder, this book remains age-appropriate for kids ages 4 to 8. There's a suggestion of danger and hardship, but Malala's message about educational ideals and the goodness of people is positive. Older kids may wonder what the author endured, and the book may provide a great opportunity to discuss the basics of Christian faith versus other faiths.



## CULTURE & TRENDS

**An Eye-Opener** Spending more time playing outdoors has a protective effect on children's eyesight, say researchers. Lots of exposure to outdoor light may also reduce kids' chances of needing glasses for nearsightedness. (*cnn.com*)

**Moods Are Catchy** Children whose friends deal with bad moods are more likely to report being in bad moods themselves, according to a new study. The opposite is true for children whose friends are generally happy. (*time.com*)

## QUICK STATS

**"Spoiled" Alert!** 46% of parents say they've gone into debt buying something their children want. (*cnbc.com*)

**Tipping the Scales** The number of obese children and teens worldwide now tops 124 million. That's more than 10 times the number from four decades ago. (*The Lancet*)

**Pardon Me** About half of parents say they're interrupted by their smartphones at least three times a day while talking with their kids. These interruptions contribute to negative behavior among children, research reveals. (*telegraph.co.uk*)

## Games, Sites & Apps

### Anaxi

In this lighthearted card game, which won a "best family fun" award, players make creative connections between words. The goal is to brainstorm people, places, and things that have qualities in common. Answers can be challenged. For ages 8 and up.

### AutismHwy.com

This site, launched by the mother of an autistic boy, features fun games for children who are on the autism spectrum. It's also filled with lots of helpful information for parents, including a blog, articles, resources, events, and specialists. Users must create an account to access site material.

### Leela Kids

This free educational app for kids ages 3 to 15 curates podcast content based on topics and age groups. Topics range from science and space to music and animals. Kids and parents can rate and share any episode or story. Parents can hide certain age categories as desired.

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parenting  
CHRISTIAN kids

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Real. Bold Love.

This page is designed to help educate parents and isn't meant to endorse any movie, music, or product. Our goal is to help you make informed decisions about what your children watch, read, listen to, and play.



ROCKY RIVER  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
**YOUTH &  
CHILDREN**

# Family Calendar December 2017

Color coded for your convenience:

Children's Ministry (age 3-5th grade) Youth Ministry (6th-12th grade)

Combined Children's & Youth Ministries

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2
3 8:30, 10, 11:30am Worship (No Sunday School/ Confirmation) 3:30pm Community Meal at Bethany UCC 6:30pm Crossroads	4	5	6	7 6:30pm VIP Ministry Team	8 6pm Mission Possible	9
10 10/11:30am Sunday School 10am Confirmation 6pm Youth Choir 6:30pm Children's Choir 6:30pm Crossroads	11	12 6pm Open Forum "Looking into 2018" 7pm Youth Steering	13 7pm Children's Ministry Team	14	15	16
17 10/11:30am Sunday School 10am Confirmation 6pm Youth Choir 6:30pm Children's Choir 6:30pm Crossroads "Blankets & Burritos"	18	19	20	21	22	23
24 10am Sunday School (No 11:30 service) <b>Christmas Eve Services</b> 3pm Contemporary 5pm Family Friendly 8pm Candlelight Service 11pm Candlelight Service	25 <i>Happy Birthday</i> <b>JESUS</b> Merry Christmas!	26	27 6:15pm Youth at Sky Zone	28	29	30
31 10am Sunday School  New Year's Eve						

This month, please donate soap, shampoo, and conditioner for Twice Blessed Free Store. Take your items to Sunday School or to the bin outside room 210. Thank you!