

**Chalmers
Presbyterian
Church**

Youth Spirit

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Contact me!

- Ideas, suggestions, comments, new emails? Let me know: lizzt@rogers.com



Sunday Morning Youth

You may recall that in the May newsletter we discussed the possibility of a new name for “Sunday School”. We held voting throughout the month of May and the winning name was... “Sunday Morning Youth”.

Along with the new name, there will be some changes to our programme this year.

Some things remain the same:

Ages 4-12 will continue to meet in the large John Marshall hall upstairs, and will be divided into classes on a weekly basis depending on numbers and our activities. The teen class will continue to meet in “the Upper Room”. All children and youth will begin the service in the sanctuary as part of the congregation, leaving together to go to Sunday Morning Youth.

Some things change:

Once a month, the teen class will join the junior class for “the Gathering”, a time for everyone to come together for 10-15 minutes to get to know each other and play some games. Also once a month, the youngest of the junior class will join the toddler class for a

music time. We hope that both of these times will be opportunities to form friendships regardless of age. We also hope that these times together will give younger children someone to look up to, and the older ones a sense of responsibility for their younger peers.

We will also be testing out a new curriculum this year. In September & October (only 6 Sundays, actually), we will be doing a unit on Esau & Jacob. Talk about sibling rivalry! Then in November we will be doing a unit on Christmas around the World. I’m definitely looking forward to that one (and hoping we can do taste testing along the way!) We have switched to a new publisher for our curriculum this year and are excited about the new possibilities.

We had a good response to our surveys in the spring and look forward to including some new faces from time to time to help out with special events and activities.

We really hope to see everyone out for Sunday Morning Youth. Bear with us as we go through some growing pains with these changes. We’d love to hear what you feel is working, what’s not, and any suggestions you might have. We want SMY to be a time of fun, faith and friendships for everyone.



From the Editor

As September rolls around and we start to plan our year, it's easy to get caught up in the "need" to fill our children's time with clubs, sports, activities, lessons, etc., but we have to be careful.



How do we want our children to identify themselves? If we enrol our children in dance class and make everything else fit around dance, they will see themselves as a "dancer". If we pack in as many practices and games as possible each week, they will see themselves as an "athlete". When money is spent on a particular activity, children can see that it's important to us. When vacations are scheduled around other events, it shows the priority. So our first question must be: how do we really want them to see themselves? What do we want them to grow up to consider a priority?

My children are both still quite young (4 and 1) so we

have not had to make any really tough decisions in this area yet, but it doesn't mean that we haven't started thinking about it. We have tried to give them a taste of all different sorts of clubs and groups, rather than focus on one thing too early. Torry loves to dance but we haven't chosen a "style" for her yet (although she has chosen Highland Dance for herself) and we are still trying to give her a taste of all different styles. I'm already well aware that I will not be raising any Olympic athletes because I simply could not commit to the lifestyle that would involve.



However, one thing that we have decided is that we want our children to grow up knowing that they are children of God. We have made this a priority and everything else must fit in around it. We say grace before every meal, and from the day they are old enough to sit at the table we place our hand on their arm as we pray. By 13 months old, Isla now reaches to take my hand when we sit at the table, knowing what comes next. We gather together each night for "Family Story" before bed. Each child also gets her own bedtime story but family story is a

special time when we read a toddler devotional, a Christian story and say our prayers. We go to church Sunday mornings even when it's not convenient. Until last week, Isla still had a morning nap every day around 9:00. Some Sundays we could get her to sleep early enough that she was awake in time for church, but if not, one of us would bring Torry while the other arrived late when Isla woke up. Before Andrew & I had children, we used to enjoy going to different churches when travelling. That has become much harder with children, mostly because of nap times, but this summer Torry & I managed to go to church when we were in Fergus for the weekend while Andrew stayed at the hotel with Isla. It was a hassle to have everything packed and in the car before church. It was difficult for Andrew to gather up the remainder and pack it up while looking after Isla. But it was worth it to show Torry how important this is for our family.

I challenge all of you to sit down as parents, and as a family, before the busy-ness of Fall really starts and discuss your priorities. Who are you? Who do you want your children to be? How will you show who you are to your children? How will you help your children to grow into the people you want them to become? Hard questions, but so worth it!



What a Quote!

- How long will you lie there, O lazybones? When will you rise from your sleep? Proverbs 6:9

Ontario Early Years Centre

The Ontario Early Years Centres are located throughout Ontario giving parents of children under the age of 6 somewhere to go to play and learn at no charge. I have enjoyed many fun times at the OEYCs here in London with Torry and Isla. When Torry was first born, I was absolutely amazed at this free resource available to all parents where they could go with their children for play time, story time, music, crafts, games, activities, and even workshops. I've gone to workshops on parenting, infant massage, daily use of music and rhymes, infant sign language, etc. Beyond the three centres in London, they

also host playgroups throughout the community at local libraries and other convenient locations.

Until recently, one weekly playgroup was held at the Pond Mills Public Library. To our great fortune, it appears that the number of families attending the Pond Mills playgroup has grown too large for the space so they have had to find a bigger space. CHALMERS! When I received a notice from the OEYC that their new playgroup would be held at Chalmers Presbyterian Church on Wednesday mornings from 9:15—11:30 starting September 9th, I danced, I shouted, I screamed, I jumped around my kitchen! To start with, I'm excited for Torry & Isla because

we now have a local playgroup to go to at a time convenient for us. But more than that, this is a coup for Chalmers. This will bring families with young children into our building every week. What a wonderful opportunity for us to show off our facility and introduce ourselves to those in our community. I encourage everyone to keep this endeavour in your prayers. If you happen to be in the church during a playgroup, extend a warm welcome to anyone you may meet. And let's all think about what we could do to make our facilities even more welcoming to new families.

Ontario Early Years Centres
A Place For Parents And Their Children.



Centres de la petite enfance
Un endroit pour les parents et leurs enfants.

What's Going On?

For many of us, knowing about things a week or two in advance is not enough time to plan. To help out, I'm going to try to include a calendar of events in the newsletter that let's you know about anything coming up in the next few months that involves children and youth in any way.



Some Highlights

Music:

If you enjoy music, there are many ways to get involved at Chalmers. For those ages 7 and up, there's the Children's Choir. For our teens and older, there's the Reach Out Gospel Choir and the Contemporary Worship Praise Team. Check the calendar for the first rehearsal of each.

Retreat:

The first weekend of October is the congregational retreat. My sister and I (Lynn Ball and Lizz Thibodeau) are planning the children and youth component of the weekend. All we need now is some children and youth! Please plan to join us for a weekend of "Nourishing Body, Mind & Spirit"!

Contemporary Worship:

The contemporary worship service will be starting again this fall. It will be held on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of each month.



Calendar

September

9th @ 9:15am — OEYC playgroup at Chalmers (ages 0-6)

9th @ 7:30 — Reach Out: first rehearsal

12th @ 5:00 — Senior Youth: BBQ at Richard Cote's house

13th @ 10:30 — Sunday Morning Youth (SMY) Starts

13th @ 12:00 — Church: Burger Bash

14th @ 7:00 — Contemporary Praise Team: first rehearsal

20th @ 10:30 — SMY: Invite a Friend Sunday

20th @ 10:30 — SMY: Gathering

20th @ 7:00 — Contemporary Worship Service

October

1st @ 6:15 — Children's Choir: first rehearsal

3-4th — Church Retreat: special program for children and youth

11th @ 10:30 — Thanksgiving Sunday (no SMY)

17th @ 1:00 — Church: Car Rally

18th @ 10:30 — SMY: Gathering

December

13th @ 10:30 — Church: Reach Out singing

24th @ 6:30 — Church: Christmas Eve Service



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