

SAMPLE

Team Family™

Your Year-Round Guide for
Intentional Family Ministry

Book **Two**



In addition to this book, you'll get access to loads of **downloadable resources** that make your job simple and effective.



Team Family™

Your Year-Round Guide for **Intentional Family Ministry**

Team Family doesn't replace your children's ministry curriculum or strategy—it adds to it! **The Bible content in *Team Family* was specifically chosen based on the natural rhythms and topics of family life during each season of the year.** It's pretty cool!

It's true! The most effective children's ministries are indeed *family ministries*.

As a church, you understand the importance of empowering parents to lead their families spiritually. But when it comes to actually making family ministry theory a reality—well, nothing seems to work. The take-home pages get lost, the emails remain unopened, and the key to unlocking family ministry that works remains a mystery.

We can help!

For years, Group has created experiences that help people grow in relationship with Jesus and each other. And now, we've created an annual guide to family ministry that goes beyond explaining *why* family ministry is important. *Team Family* will show you *how* to purposefully partner with parents of children ages birth through sixth grade to strengthen faith in families all year through. Whether you are a children's ministry leader, a pastor, or someone who loves to plan meaningful events, this book is for you!

This innovative and intentional resource is packed with fresh ideas that'll help you create a year-round family ministry strategy. This guide delivers:

- Intentionality around building community, nurturing faith, and creating strong relationships.
- Bible exploration for families that invites parents/caregivers to engage and grow alongside their kids.
- Fun! Families play, create, worship, and serve—all while growing closer to Jesus.

- Easy-to-implement ideas with low volunteer needs.
- Simplicity—it's easy to plug in any of the ideas to what you're already doing for families, or to start something new.
- Colorfully designed interior pages with additional places to customize with your own ideas, prayers, notes, and reminders.

Formatted around a calendar year of ministry, *Team Family* provides fabulous and fun family experiences each Christmas, Easter, summer, and fall. Do them all or pick and choose what best matches your ministry vision and schedule.

Each seasonal experience connects families to a key Bible verse and Bible point in fun and creative ways. So families aren't just playing together—they're growing closer to Jesus, too!

And we promise, you won't need oodles of volunteers to pull off the ideas in this book. Just a few key volunteers are all you need.

It's not too good to be true! We'll show you what to do.

Plus, find digital copies, publicity materials, graphics, and media files you'll need for each and every experience on Group's Team Family Digital Download Center. Simply follow the instructions on the sticker located inside this book and—ta-da!—digital resources await!



Looking for more digital ways to connect with families? Find social media image files in the Team Family Digital Download Center.

Check out the winter and spring themes and Bible verses! They're relevant and meaningful to families at Christmas and Easter.

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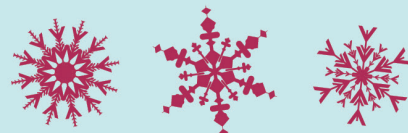


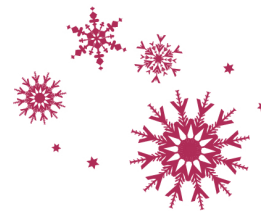
Christmas

We begin with Christmas, **but you can start at any season!**

Simply skip ahead to the time of year closest to when you purchased *Team Family*.

“Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!” Thankfulness is the feeling you have when you get a great gift from someone who loves you.





Christmas Program

This is a sample of what's provided each season for family worship services.

These scripts give you creative ways to provide an interactive, intergenerational experience that people of all ages will enjoy!

An interactive Christmas program for families in your church—or your entire church family!



LIGHTS, CAMERA, ACTION!

Plan this interactive Christmas program to help families in your church unwrap thankfulness this Christmas! Consider offering the service as part of your church's Christmas Eve schedule, on a Sunday morning, or whenever works best for your setting.

See how simple we make it! For every seasonal worship service, you get a complete script and all these easy planning details.

SET UP

Determine where you will host this Christmas program. We recommend having families sit together at round tables with all their supplies ready to go. But if your space doesn't allow for that, circles or rows of chairs will work, too!

Place a table where people can check in and receive their supplies before they find a seat.

Create a stable scene onstage. You could purchase the Nativity Insta-Theme Fabric Backdrop or use favorite stage props from your church. Place a baby in a manger in the center of the



area and three stools nearby where cast members will sit after they've led.

If including everyone in your church family, consider helping singles and couples form "families" so they can easily join the fun, too!

Each person will receive a Nativity Scene trifold bulletin. Download and print these paper Nativity scenes from the Team Family Digital Download Center. This engaging, hands-on piece will be utilized throughout the interactive Christmas program. You'll also need a few crayons and a Christmas bow for each person. Have a volunteer help fold Nativity Scene bulletins, securing the fold with a Christmas bow, and place a few crayons in a small bag per person.

VOLUNTEERS

You'll need four cast members:

- **Host:** friendly and animated; hosts the event and keeps things moving
- **Mary:** warm and caring; tells about the journey to Bethlehem
- **Joseph:** confident and kind; tells about the night Jesus was born
- **Angel:** energetic and happy; shares the news that Jesus is born

You'll also need one or two tech volunteers to run media behind the scenes.

MEDIA

You'll find the following media files in the Team Family Digital Download Center. Download and save them to a computer. Consider placing the files in your church's favorite presentation software for easy playing.

- Christmas Program Slides
- Music Video: "Silent Night"
- Video: "1-Minute Countdown"
- Music Video: "Angels We Have Heard on High"
- Video: "A Gift for You"
- Music Video: "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing"

Play your favorite Christmas music as families craft and chat throughout the program. It may be fun to ask a church member to play the piano or guitar for families!

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

During this one-hour service, families will "meet" key people in the Christmas story and re-create a Nativity scene on paper and onstage.

- Welcome (10 minutes)
- Mary (10 minutes)
- Song: "Silent Night" (3 minutes)
- Joseph (10 minutes)
- Jesus (5 minutes)
- The Angel (10 minutes)
- Song: "Angels We Have Heard on High" (3 minutes)
- Video: "A Gift for You" (3 minutes)
- Closing (3 minutes)
- Song: "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing" (3 minutes)

SUPPLIES

General Supply List

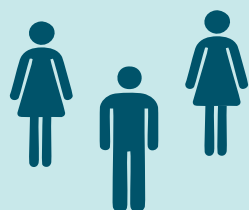
- 4 Bibles
- jingle bells
- baby doll in a manger
- Bible-times costumes for Mary and Joseph
- white robe for the Angel

Supplies for Each Person

- small resealable bag
- "Nativity Scene" trifold bulletin
- Christmas bow
- several crayons
- Christmas cookies or candy (optional)



Check out these
low volunteer needs!



WELCOME!

The Host enters stage right, ringing jingle bells. He or she moves freely around the stage, interacting with the audience.

Host: Welcome! My name is [name], and I'm your host today. I'm so thankful you're here. Turn to someone next to you, give them an elbow bump, and say, "Thank you, thank you, thank you!" Allow time.

You might be thinking, "Wait! Thanksgiving is over. This is a Christmas program!" Well, the "thank-you's" keep on rolling right into the Christmas season. I'll show you what I mean.

When someone gives you a freshly made Christmas cookie, you say...Urge everyone to respond with an eager "Thank you!"

This is a great time to delight audience members with a Christmas cookie or candy! Have volunteers ready to distribute, keeping allergies and gluten free options in mind. If you opt for candy, tweak the script above.

Host: And when it's Christmas morning and you unwrap a brand-new something-or-other that you've always wanted, you shout... Urge everyone to shout, "Thank you!"

With even more enthusiasm. **Then you open another Christmas present and find socks from Aunt Susie!** React with a bored expression. **Still, you smile and sweetly say...** Urge everyone to fake a smile and give a sugary "Thank you!"

Thankfulness is the feeling you have when you get a great gift from someone who loves you. And Christmas is the time when we celebrate the great gift that God gave the whole world to show his love! That gift is Jesus.

So let's unwrap this gift from God and find all the reasons we have to say "Thank you!" to God with joy and gladness! Urge everyone to shout, "Thank you!"

You received a special little paper gift when you arrived. Let's all open them now. Have everyone hold out their Nativity Scene trifold bulletin. On the count of three, have everyone remove the bow and open the present.

Ta-da! Before your very eyes is a picture that shows what the night Jesus was born may have been like. Let's explore the scene and hear from some folks who were there! These special guests will help us find, tweak, and transform this page into a special



gift. Along the way, we'll turn to our families and the people around us to share things we're thankful for! So get ready for talking, crafting, laughing, and having loads of fun.

Since I'm your host, it's my job to keep things moving! So when you hear my Christmassy signal (ring the jingle bells), wrap up your crafting or conversation and get ready for what's next. Hold up the bells. **Let's see if this thing works. Go ahead and talk amongst yourselves.** Pause. **Go on! If you don't have anything to say, sing "Jingle Bells" or something.**

Motion for guests to talk or sing. Then ring the bells to quiet everyone.



Host: Thank you! Please welcome our first guest. She's from a town in Galilee called Nazareth, and an angel once called her God's favored one. **Please join me in welcoming Mary.** Motion for guests to clap and welcome Mary to the stage.

MARY

The Host rings the jingle bells, puts them on the podium, then exits stage right. As the Host exits stage right, Mary enters stage left carrying an open Bible.

Throughout the year, each worship experience will naturally evoke feelings that go along with the theme. **Like intrigue and joy!**

Mary: Read from the Bible. “The angel replied, ‘The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the baby to be born will be holy, and he will be called the Son of God...’ ” Take a deep breath and look up. “I am the Lord’s servant. May everything you have said about me come true” (Luke 1:35, 38). Look at the audience. And it did!

First Joseph and I had to pack up and get to Bethlehem. I need your help to pack up! On your Nativity Scene, find our travel bag and the blank box beside it. See it? Now draw what you’d want to take with you on a long trip. Something you already have now that you’re really thankful for. It might be... Name a few toys or gizmos kids and grown-ups might have and love.



Mary: Whatever it is, take a few minutes to draw that prized possession inside the box on the page.

 Slide: “Christmas Program Slide One”

Allow time, then encourage families to talk with each other and people nearby about what they drew. What prized possession would you take along?

Mary: Ring the jingle bells to get everyone’s attention. We thank God for the good things he’s given us. Let’s thank God for the things we have that we drew. Urge everyone to say, “Thanks, God!”

Now we’re all packed up and ready to go! Bethlehem wasn’t just a couple of minutes away. It was a 70-mile road trip that seemed to take forever. But the emperor wanted a head count, and since Joseph’s family came from Bethlehem, we had no choice but to pack up and go.

Can you count to 70? I’ll show you how long and tedious the journey became. Let’s all count to 70

together. No rushing ahead! Can we do it without getting bored?

Mary starts counting and invites everyone to join her. Mary leads by keeping a steady but quick rhythm and making her voice sound more and more weary as she counts higher.

Mary: Whew! We made it! And so did Joseph and I—just as labor pains told me Jesus’ birth was near. I don’t know why God chose me to be the Savior’s mom. I didn’t have “princess” or “experienced mother” on my résumé. I was just a girl. But I was—and am—the Lord’s servant. I was thankful that God included little-old-me in his great, big plan. Let’s sing a song about that night.

Mary sits on stage in front of the Nativity Insta-Theme Fabric Backdrop while everyone sings.

 Song: “Silent Night”

Host: Ring jingle bells. It’s time to meet our next “Nativity scene star.” He’s a carpenter from the town of Nazareth and a relative of the great King David. Please welcome Joseph!

JOSEPH

Motion for audience to clap and welcome Joseph to the stage. As the Host exits stage right, Joseph enters stage left carrying an open Bible.

Joseph: Read from the Bible. “And because Joseph was a descendant of King David, he had to go to Bethlehem in Judea, David’s ancient home. He traveled there from the village of Nazareth in Galilee. He took with him Mary, to whom he was engaged, who was now expecting a child. And while they were there, the time came for her baby to be born” (Luke 2:4-6).

I had never seen the place so packed with people! People had come to Bethlehem from all over and had taken all the rooms to rent. So the only place left was with the animals. Sigh. It’s hard to describe what Jesus’ delivery room was like. Pause to think for a moment. Let’s try this. Think of your favorite barnyard animals—cows, sheep, roosters, whatever you choose.

On the count of three, I want you to make sounds like your favorite animals. Ready? 1...2...3!

Joseph encourages everyone to make animal sounds. When the noise starts to subside, Joseph motions to keep going until they laugh or get tired.



Follow-up is essential for keeping families engaged with your ministry. You'll find creative ideas for every season, including social media graphics you can download with your digital access code included inside every book!



Christmas Follow-Up

Once the Christmas season has ended, use these fun follow-up ideas to reconnect with families and encourage them to think thankfully in the new year.



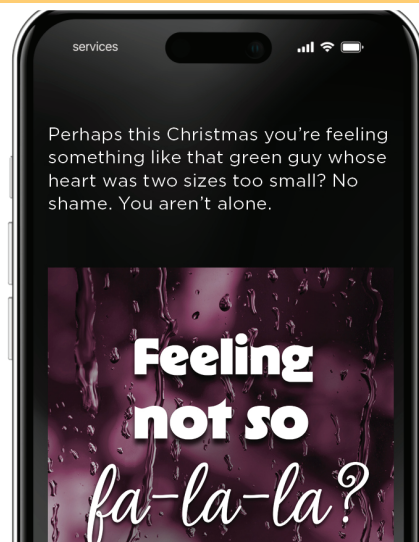
CHRISTMAS CARD FOLLOW-UP

Send each family in your church a roughly 12x12-inch piece of Christmas wrapping paper. Fold the wrapping paper neatly so it'll slip into a standard envelope. Also enclose a letter. Your letter should include the following basic instructions for families.

- On the back of the wrapping paper, write or draw three things each family member is thankful for this year.
- Refold the paper, tape it closed, and tuck it and these instructions away with your Christmas decorations. (Or in a safe place where you'll remember to find it.)
- Next year, as you begin preparing for Christmas, gather and unwrap thankfulness as you open and read your paper.
- Talk about how God's blessed your family over the past year. Celebrate with thanks to God for past blessings and expect more love and care from God as your family looks forward!

Increase your support of families with *Team Family PowerPaks* (sold separately)!

Created with busy families in mind, PowerPaks help families grow faith at home! They're the perfect way to invite or follow up with families for your *Team Family* events because they're focused on the same relevant themes found in this book!



SOCIAL MEDIA FOLLOW-UP

They've attended your event, applauded after the Christmas program, and served your church and community with their children. Parents in your church and community are awesome! Now it's time to encourage their own friendships with God! These short messages help you encourage and disciple parents during the Christmas season and beyond.

No design skills required! We've already created four ready-to-go images for you to post on your favorite social media platform. Simply download the images from the Team Family Digital Download Center and include the message with your post.



Get four social media image files in the Team Family Digital Download Center.

**Team Family™
PowerPak**

**Team Family™
PowerPak**

**Unwrap
Thankfulness**

FOLLOW UP @ HOME WITH TEAM FAMILY POWERPAKS!

Now that families have explored the joyful reasons we can be thankful for Jesus, it's time for families to take this thankful practice home with them through a fun, engaging, and totally doable *Team Family™ PowerPak*.

These family ministry bags of goodies are loaded with exciting ways for families to connect with each other and Jesus. In each *Team Family PowerPak*, you'll get enough supplies to prepare packs for 10 families, including:

1. Unwrap Thankfulness

Family Devotions provide four experiences to help families get into the Bible and creative prayer prompts to get families talking with Jesus.

2. Connect Cards feature four fun-tastic ideas that link families to Jesus and each other. Families may pick and choose their favorites or do all four—whatever and whenever works for them!

3. Make-a-Masterpiece gets families crafting and creating faith-filled memories.

4. Unwrap Thankfulness for Grown-Ups seeks to befriend and support parents and guardians as they guide their children through the seasons of life. This relevant and relatable piece will make parents and guardians feel seen, loved, and empowered to keep going!

Plus! Add a few seasonal "extras" for families to use as they experience PowerPak activities. These simple supplies will give families everything they need to recognize and enjoy God's unconditional love at home.

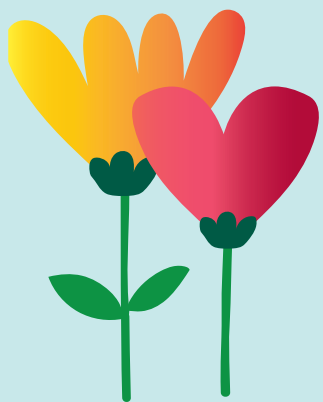
These PowerPaks are relevant, simple, and fun...plus, they're guaranteed to naturally fit into families' everyday lives.

LEARN MORE

Take a peek at what's included in the *Team Family PowerPaks* and purchase enough packs for the families in your children's ministry.



“Love” is a word that we say a lot at church. Through *Team Family*, you’ll help families explore a love that cares for people no matter what. **And knowing God loves us means we’re safe to be ourselves.**



Easter

Wondering what real love looks like?
Well, let's look at Jesus.



Easter Family Event Ideas

Whether you already host family events or have been eager to get some started, these ideas will help you create intentional ways to help families connect with each other and other families at your events. **It's the best way to create connections and help families develop a sense of belonging.** You'll find creative station ideas for every season in this book!

Fun-filled activity ideas to add to (or create!) an Easter event for families at your church.

LOVE LIVES HERE

"This is real **love**—not that we **loved** God, but that he **loved** us and sent his Son as a sacrifice to take away our sins" (1 John 4:10).

These activity ideas offer ways for families to explore God's never-ending love this Easter season. Pick and choose your favorite ideas to add to your church's Easter traditions, or host an all-new, station-based event for families in your church.

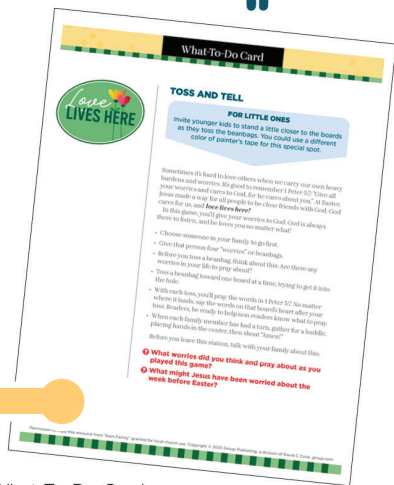


SET UP

Activity stations can be set up at rectangular tables around your event space, or in separate rooms of your church building. Families do not need to attend stations in a specific order. Encourage families to travel to all the stations. If one is full, they can move on to the next and come back. If you expect a crowd, consider setting up multiple tables with supplies at each station.

VOLUNTEERS

Volunteers will be needed for setup and cleanup. Though stations are self-guided, we recommend recruiting a few volunteers to watch over stations, tidy and restock supplies, and direct families when needed. If you do have lots of willing helpers, assign one volunteer to each station. Invite them to use the What-To-Do Cards as scripts to lead families through experiences. Having a volunteer at the Love Lives Here and Good News Mix stations will be extra helpful.



What-To-Do Card

Not a lot of volunteers? No problem! **These “What-To-Do Cards”** serve as directions for families. Simply place them at each station and let parents practice leading the way!

TAKE A LOOK AT THESE FIVE “LOVELY” STATION IDEAS THAT WILL HELP FAMILIES EXPERIENCE AND SHARE GOD’S LOVE THIS EASTER SEASON.

Event Stations Overview

1 Toss and Tell

Families toss beanbag “worries” toward cornhole sets as they declare Jesus’ love for them.



2 God Loves People

Families transport love to others as they use drinking straws to transfer foam hearts.



3 Fingerprint Pendants

Families design their very own pendants to show that they are uniquely loved by God.



4 Love Lives Here

Families craft a work of art that represents the love their family shares. Then they’ll take a lovely family photo with their creations.



5 Good News Mix

Families snack and think about how food reminds them of Jesus’ love.



You won't need to spend hours of time figuring out how to decorate for your events with our striking Insta-Theme Fabric Backdrops (sold separately). **Plus, they can be used to decorate other spaces like hallways or classrooms after your events.**

Make snapping photos of families at your events simple with these theme-based Photo-Op Fabric Backdrops (sold separately).

With your digital access code provided in every book, you'll find loads of tools that make it easy to advertise, invite, and follow up for your *Team Family* events!

BACKDROP
Purchase the At the Cross Insta-Theme Fabric Backdrop from group.com/teamfamily.



(Sold separately from group.com/teamfamily.)

Actual size 20' x 9'

DECORATING

These activities create a heartfelt Easter event—with lots of love! Consider decorating with brightly colored hearts that hang from the ceiling, attaching yellow and pink hearts to the floor to guide families to activities, or drawing colorful hearts on your church sidewalks (using chalk) or windows and doors

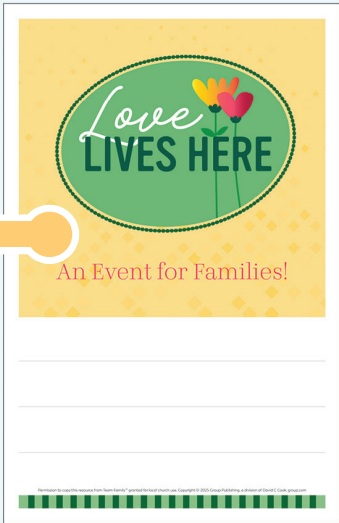


Actual size 10' x 9'

Here Photo-Op Fabric Backdrop and the At the Cross Insta-Theme Fabric Backdrop will help show that “Love Lives Here” at this Easter event.

ADVERTISE YOUR EVENT

From posters in your church to social media graphics, advertising your event is easy with downloads from the Team Family Digital Download Center.



Need help spreading the word about your event? Check out posters and social media templates in the Team Family Digital Download Center.

Here's just one example of how the *Team Family* event stations are **fun, simple, and engaging for all!**

TOSS AND TELL

Families toss beanbag “worries” toward cornhole sets as they declare Jesus’ love for them.

Supplies

- What-To-Do Station Cards (available on the Team Family Digital Download Center)
- at least 2 cornhole boards
- bright cardstock
- clear tape
- permanent marker
- at least 4 beanbags
- painter’s tape

GETTING READY

- Set up the cornhole boards side by side. If you expect a lot of families, consider setting up additional game areas.
- Cut out two large hearts from the cardstock.
- With permanent marker, write on one of the paper hearts: “God, I give you my worries.”
- With permanent marker, write on the other paper heart: “Because you care for me.”
- Use clear tape to attach the hearts near each hole on the boards.
- Use painter’s tape to make a line on the floor to stand behind for the beanbag tossing. Make one line about 20-24 feet away and one about 12-15 feet away.
- Write “1 Peter 5:7” on the painter’s tape line.

FOR LITTLE ONES

Invite younger kids to stand a little closer to the boards as they toss the beanbags. You could use a different color of painter’s tape for this special spot.



STATION EXPERIENCE

These easy-to-follow directions are available on the Team Family Digital Download Center. Look for “What-To-Do Station Cards.” Print and place the directions on the table.

Sometimes it’s hard to love others when we carry our own heavy burdens and worries. It’s good to remember 1 Peter 5:7: “Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you.” At Easter, Jesus made a way for all people to be close friends with God. God cares for us, and love lives here!

In this game, you’ll give your worries to God. God is always there to listen, and he loves you no matter what!

- Choose someone in your family to go first.
- Give that person four “worries” or beanbags.

- Before you toss a beanbag, think about this: Are there any worries in your life to pray about?
- Toss a beanbag toward one board at a time, trying to get it into the hole.
- With each toss, you’ll pray the words in 1 Peter 5:7. No matter where it lands, say the words on that board’s heart after your toss. Readers, be ready to help non-readers know what to pray.
- When each family member has had a turn, gather for a huddle, placing hands in the center, then shout “Amen!”

Before you leave this station, talk with your family about this:

❓ What worries did you think and pray about as you played the game?

❓ What might Jesus have been worried about the week before Easter?





Summer

Unlike Christmas and Easter, there isn't really a Christian holiday in the summertime. So we took this opportunity to choose a Bible verse that's especially relevant to families as they find patience in all the summer activities.

**This year, we chose
Colossians 1:11.**

"We also pray that you will be strengthened with all his glorious power so you will have all the endurance and **patience** you need."

Colossians 1:11

It's a season filled with fun in the sun, free time, family adventures, and countless "Are we there yet?" and "I'm bored!" Patience isn't easy—especially when there is so much fun stuff to do! This summer, help families practice patience and be willing to wait.





Summer Outreach

Churches told us they want to reach more families in their community. These ideas will help you do just that! Families will enjoy serving your church family, your local community, and globally! **You'll find new ideas for every season inside this book.**



Doable outreach ideas to engage families with serving others this summer.

These activity ideas offer ways for families to help others practice patience within their church, community, and world!

In this section, you'll find three outreach ideas to help them do just that. One serves your church family, one serves your community, and one serves locally or globally.

These ideas are meant to be starting points for you. Don't feel like you have to do them all, and don't feel like you have to do them exactly as written. Consider your ministry context and determine the best ways for families in your church to spread patience. May they spark your creativity and inspire you to help families find meaningful ways to serve this season.

"We also pray that you will be strengthened with all his glorious power so you will have all the endurance and **patience you need" (Colossians 1:11).**

In each season you'll find ideas for serving your church family, your community, and people around the world. **Check out this way that families can reach out to people in their church!**

Serve Your Church Family

WELCOME ART

As people wait for service to start, give them something fun to look at!

You'll Need:

- paper
- markers

What to Do:

1. Have kids draw and color welcome pictures to greet people as they arrive at and wait for church to start.
2. Scan the pictures and make a slideshow.
3. Play the slideshow on the screens at your church during the 15 minutes before service begins.

Depending on how your church does things, kids may never have seen the screens in "big church." Give them a tour of the room so they know what they're creating art for.



There are lots of things to think about when planning outreach events!

We've given you a good start, while creating space and opportunities to customize ideas to your community's unique needs.

Serve Your Community

PATIENCE FOR PATIENTS

This summer, bless the waiting rooms in your community with fun games for kids to play as they wait to see the doctor.

You'll Need:

- cereal boxes
- markers
- scissors
- resealable plastic bags

Arrange with a doctor's office ahead of time so you know they'll take these donations. Consider giving your outreach more impact by finding a free clinic for low-income families, that may not be able to fund magazines and puzzles in their waiting rooms.

What to Do:

1. Give each person a panel from the front or back of a cereal box.
2. Have kids draw pictures on the blank side.
3. Help kids cut the cardboard into puzzle pieces, then put the pieces in resealable plastic bags.
4. Donate the puzzles to a doctor's office as a fun way for patients to pass the time while they wait.

Concerned about germs? Have kids make puzzles on regular paper instead, and write on the plastic bags "Do this puzzle and take it home!" Or have kids draw coloring sheets or mazes and make photocopies for doctors' offices.



FAMILY DEVOTION

Lead this brief devotion with families before they make their puzzles or deliver their puzzles to doctors' offices.

Say: Welcome! Happy summer! Sometimes during summer, we can get impatient. Maybe we're bored, and we feel like we're waiting around for something exciting to happen. Or maybe we're looking forward to a trip and it's taking *forever* to get here. Sometimes we might get a little crabby while we wait for things.

And we might get crabby and impatient with our families! Maybe spending so much time with them makes us feel a little irritated, and we can get snappy.

But God helps us have patience! He helps us calmly wait for things without complaining. And God helps us treat each other with patience.

So let's read this Bible verse as a prayer for God to give *you* patience.

 **Read aloud**
Colossians 1:11

Pray: Dear God, thank you for summer's opportunities to rest and relax. Help us enjoy the rest instead of getting impatient. Amen.



YOU'VE
GOT THIS!

Fall

Cheer up and cheer on families!
This fall, let kids of all ages know how awesome they are.



It's back-to-school time! **Ideas and activities in this season will help families gear up for a new year of school.** And they'll help church leaders kick off a great year of ministry!

Hey, leader—there's something in here for you, too! For every season, you'll find practical insights to help you understand families and their unique needs during each season of the year. Plus, spaces for planning, goal setting, reflecting, and praying for the families you serve and want to serve in the future.



“So **encourage** each other and build each other up, just as you are already doing.”

1 Thessalonians 5:11

Encouragement for Families



Why Families Need Encouragement This Fall

Autumn brings change. Leaves alter colors. The temperature outside cools. Attire shifts from shorts and T-shirts to sweatshirts and jeans. As families settle into the fall season, there's often a psychological shift, too. The slower pace of summer ends, and the demands of school, extracurricular activities, and the approach of the holiday season accelerate schedules.

Leaves aren't the only things that fall down in autumn—moods may descend, too. Shorter days and less sunlight affect outlooks and energy levels. These changes can bring feelings of fatigue, sadness, or stress. Psychologically,

many parents face what's known as “parenting burnout,” where the demands of caring for others leave them emotionally depleted. Often, this burnout stems from a deep, albeit well-intentioned, desire to be the perfect parent. And discouragement sets in when parents realize they're just not.

That's where encouragement comes in. When we encourage, we lift someone up when that person's feeling down. Imagine how spirits will soar when moms, dads, brothers, sisters, grandparents, and all those special family members hear how much their mere existence colors your church family in beautiful ways. So cheer up and cheer on families in your church this fall season.

ACTIONS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

Encouragement is more than words of affirmation. Ministry leaders' actions bring encouragement to families, too. Consider these three parental requests this fall.

Notice Kids

“It's such a gift when church leaders notice our kids as individuals. When you remember their names and encourage their strengths, it makes us feel like our family truly matters to you.”

Help Parents Befriend Each Other

“We appreciate programs for our kids, but we also need help building relationships with other parents. Community is critical, and we wish the church would foster more opportunities for us to connect.”

Recruit Consistent Volunteers

“We know volunteers give their time generously, but when leaders change weekly, our kids struggle to build trust. How can we help support efforts to create more consistency in leadership?”

*When we encourage,
we lift someone up
when that person's
feeling down.*

Find encouragement and helpful information for each season!

TEXT MESSAGE MINISTRY

A well-timed text is a great way to share God's love and encouragement with parents in your church. Try these!

Hey, Kai and Rosa! I wanted to drop you a quick line to say I'm so thankful God made YOU the parents of your kids. God chose you and equipped you for this. You're doing great!

Hi, Dex. Thanks for being a dad who prioritizes his kids' friendships with Jesus! Your prayer times and conversations with them show up at church, and it's awesome!

Hi, Gabby! I know parent life can feel heavy this busy time of year. Remember to show yourself grace. God doesn't ask for parenting perfection—just faithfulness. And you are a wonderful, faithful mom!



Looking for more digital ways to connect with families? Find social media image files in the Team Family Download Center.

Encouragement for Ministry Leaders

Why Ministry Leaders Need Encouragement This Fall

Do you ever feel like a family ministry farmer? You work hard to cultivate soil, plant seeds, and use a nutrient rich fertilizer, yet a prosperous harvest is out of your control. Sometimes you see fruit. But sometimes the growth is slow, and your work seems to be in vain.

Paul writes to spiritual farmers in Galatia, saying, "So let's not get tired of doing what is good. At just the right time we will reap a harvest of blessing if we don't give up" (Galatians 6:9).

This fall, as a new ministry year ramps up, as holiday planning begins, as you implement and communicate policies and procedures—don't give up. Listen to those who are cheering for

you! Let the voices of the kids you serve encourage and lift your spirits. When you're feeling down and discouraged, let kids' excitement, their affection, and even their wiggles encourage your heart and remind you that you're pretty awesome.

Because you are. You're doing a good job. You've got this!

Let the voices of the kids you serve encourage and lift your spirits.



Ministry is all about relationships. **This page helps you pause, think about the families you serve, and pray for them.**



Ministry Goals

Establish some goals for ministry to children and families this fall season. Ultimately, how can your church family encourage them and build them up? Choose some from the list below and write a few of your own.

- ☐ **Refill snacks and candy stash (for the kids, too!).**
- ☐ **Put new paper backing on bulletin boards—time to cheer them up!**
- ☐ Show parents what you love about the children's ministry curriculum.
- ☐ Encourage and celebrate volunteers.
- ☐ Create a list of kids' schoolteachers, and pray for them regularly. If you know them personally, send encouraging texts each week.
- ☐ Update and confirm families' contact info and medical forms.
- ☐ Follow at least two other children's ministries on social media. Notice great things they're doing and cheer them on!

☐

☐

☐

Now talk with God about the goals you've selected. Ask if there are other goals he'd like you to consider. Thank God for his help and guidance—and his Word that brings encouragement to you!

Fall Season at a Glance

Write in names and events to celebrate.



BIRTHDAYS

Dear God, thanks for these kids in our church who have birthdays this season:

September	October	November
-----------	---------	----------

May they trust in you, Lord, with all their heart and not lean on their own understanding. May they seek your will in all they do, and please show them the path to take. (from Proverbs 3:5-6)

ANNIVERSARIES

Dear God, thanks for these couples in our church who celebrate wedding anniversaries this season:

September	October	November
-----------	---------	----------

May they give all their worries and cares to you, God, because you care about them. (from 1 Peter 5:7)

EVENTS

Dear God, guide us as we plan these church events this season:

September	October	November
-----------	---------	----------

May I not worry about anything; instead, pray about everything. I'll tell you, God, what I need. Thank you for all you have done. (from Philippians 4:6)



Team Family™

Effectively reach and engage families of all shapes and sizes!

Team Family™ gives you a practical year-round strategy for partnering with today's families to strengthen their faith and their relationships with each other, with other families, with you, and with Jesus.

Look inside to find fresh, innovative, and intentional ideas for all four seasons of the year—focused on themes that are relevant to families. This book's themes include:

- Unwrap Thankfulness (Christmas)



- Love Lives Here (Easter)



- Go With the Flow (Summer)



- You've Got This! (Fall)



For each season/theme, you'll find all this—do everything or pick and choose what works best for your church!

- **Family event ideas** and experiences designed to grow relationships within families and build friendships with other families.
- One script for each season to host an interactive, intergenerational **family worship service**.
- Creative ways for you and your families to reach out and **serve your community** inside and outside your church.
- Practical insights for you to **understand families** and their needs.
- **Friendship-focused follow-up ideas** to inspire families to return.
- **Ways to center your heart on the families** you serve by recording details like prayer requests, birthdays, and anniversaries.
- Plus, spaces to **add your own plans**, ideas, and reflections.

Jump inside and discover your annual go-to guide for practical, easy-to-implement ideas that help you effectively partner with families!

What are you waiting for? **Order your Team Family Book Two right now!**



Check inside the front cover for your online access code to download resources like promotional tools, social media graphics, printable posters, invites, and more!

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