



faith practices: I N V I T E

- Look over upcoming programs and church activities. Identify occasions that might be natural entry points for unchurched friends who may already have a relationship with you or your children — like day care providers, coaches, teachers and co-workers.
- Invite neighbors and friends to come for an evening where they can experience God's presence in your home as you provide friendship and hospitality.

Consider the call of Jeremiah... "Now the word of the Lord came to me saying... Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you: I appointed you a prophet to the nations. Then I said, 'Ah Lord God! I do not know how to speak for I am only a youth.' But the Lord said to me, 'Do not say I am only a youth, for you shall go to all to whom I send you and you shall speak whatever I command you.'" —Jeremiah 1:4-7

- Open your heart each day and invite the Spirit to use you as an instrument of God's will and God's activity. Be yourself. Let your language and lifestyle reflect God's love to and for others.

R E S O U R C E S

- *101 Faith Place: Entry points for Nurturing Faith in The Home.*
- *Back and Forth: A Family Resource* by Debbie Trafon O'Neal

Both are available from Augsburg Fortress Publishers. 800/328-4648.

Your pastor or church leader has access to number of catalogs that provide information on additional resources. You might also browse local Christian bookstores for other resources.



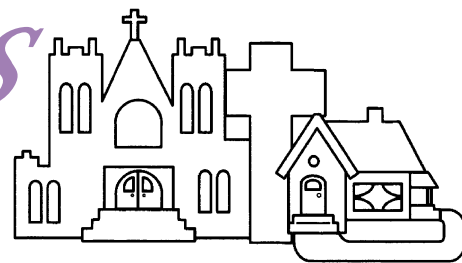
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"Go therefore and make disciples of nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey all that I have commanded you." — Matthew 28:19

- L** As disciples, we are called to do those things that enrich our journey with Jesus. Inviting others to join the journey becomes easier as we experience God's presence and power in our own lives. Shall we join the first disciples in sharing God's Good News through our own life stories?
- C** Yes! Lord, let our lives be invitations to join your journey.
- L** Shall we be open to letting God's love shine through our actions and words so that others may seek Jesus?
- C** Yes! Lord, let our lives be invitations to join your journey.
- L** Leaders in homes and families, will you encourage one another to share stories of God's presence and activity in your daily lives, with friends, neighbors and co-workers?
- C** Yes! Lord, let our lives will be invitations to join your journey.
- L** Will you seek to engage others in conversations that will nurture their faith and increase their desire for growth in community?
- C** Yes! Lord, let our lives be invitations to join your journey.
- L** And will we invite others to join us in our congregational life and worship?
- C** Yes! Lord, let our lives be invitations to join your journey.
- L** Children, will you tell your friends about Jesus and invite them to follow him?
- C** Yes! Lord, let our lives be invitations to join your journey.
- L** Then join me, in prayer, as we honor our call to discipleship.
- C** Thank you Lord for the opportunities you give us to welcome others and to invite them into faith and community. Amen.

nurturing lifestyles

t h a t a r e C h r i s t ' s s t y l e



INVITE

These pages will help people in whatever family relationships they live to honor their call to discipleship as they look for ways to share God's Good News with others.

BRINGING IT HOME

Invitations are fun. An invitation grows out of our relationship with the person who invites us. Invitations often call us to join with others to celebrate life's important events, like weddings and birthdays, and to witness life's transitions, like funerals and retirement parties.

Think of some invitations you have received. Invite your family members to share some, too.

We get hundreds of invitations every day to invest in products and programs. The average child is exposed to 400 ads a day. That adds up to 4,000,000 ads in a lifetime.

Name some ads or commercials. See if you can remember the key phrase or sing the jingles.

Though ads can be memorable, it is more important to remember that a relationship with Jesus has more benefits than a best-selling product. He offers a greater adventure than any party, cruise or safari. Yet we seem to shy away from finding creative ways to get the "good word" out.

But rather than dwelling on the reasons for past failures, let's crash right through our insecurities and think about some ways you might creatively and naturally invite others to follow Jesus.

"The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead and write them on the door posts of your house and on your gates." — Deuteronomy 6:4-9

FINDING GOD'S STORY IN YOUR STORY

Learn to make faith connections in the ordinary places and events of daily life. Consider the following places as stage setters for inviting people to share God's Good News.

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| Gas stations: | Filling a gas tank |
| Connection: | Who fills your "tank" with all the things you need — like love, joy and good things? |
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| Grocery store: | Talking about prices |
| Connection: | Think of some of the things God gives us for free. |
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| Medical clinics: | The amazing skills of doctors and nurses. |
| Connection: | God made our bodies to fight disease, but God gifts people with skills that help us keep healthy. |
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| Natural settings: | Amazing sights and scenery. |
| Connection: | People make lots of beautiful things, but only God can design cloud formations, a sunset or clear, starry nights. |
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| Schools: | People who teach us things. |
| Connection: | God created the knowledge that others share. |
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| Day care: | Lots of people befriend and care for us. |
| Connection: | God provides us with people who uphold and support us. |

Here are a few more ideas. Choose one, two or more. Feel free to adapt these to fit your situation.

- Take some time around the dinner table to identify some friends or neighbors you might invite to worship with you at your church. Pray for the opportunity to invite and for their openness to come.
- Pray that God will inspire your words and deeds to be reflections of God's presence and activity.