

Connect @Home

Summer 2017 Family Guide

Lake Highlands Baptist Church

May, 2017

Dear LHBC Families,

Summer is just around the corner. Gone are the demands of schooling, and ahead are wide-open days to fill with vacations, camps, summer projects, and fun! We want to challenge you to commit to using this “free-time” to grow deeper together as a family and as believers in Christ!

LHBC is a church of connections: Connect to God, Connect to Others, Connect to Service and Connect to the World. We have been stressing the importance of Faith@Home, acknowledging the significance of a parent’s role in instilling God’s truths in our children’s hearts. Now we want to combine all of those into a special challenge this summer. We challenge you to use this summer to Connect@Home!



Here’s the Challenge:

LHBC wants to encourage and equip you to intentionally engage with your children this summer. There is a saying: If you aim for nothing, you’ll miss every time. We don’t want to be aimless this summer. We want to give you a target. We encourage you to focus on four areas together this summer: **Grow**, **Rest**, **Serve** and **Play**.

- **Grow** (Psalm 1:1-2): We want to increase in our knowledge of God’s Word and in faith
- **Rest** (Matthew 11:28-30): Our world is a fast-paced society. We need to remember that God created Sabbaths because He saw value in resting from our work. Let’s strive to teach our children the importance of rest.
- **Serve** (Mark 10:45): Each and every believer is commanded to serve and to care for others. Let’s spend time demonstrating to our children the value of serving others, of loving our neighbor.
- **Play** (Psalm 16:11): Children are a blessing and are intended to bring joy. Let’s provide some more joy for our families through simple, but fun activities!



How do we do this?

- Beginning June 4th and on through August 13th, we will send out weekly challenges to focus on one of the four areas. Included in those challenges are weekly scriptural focuses and suggestions for how your family might **grow, rest, serve, or play** together. It is up to you how you choose to implement the challenge.
- All resources will be available on our website and in hardcopy form in the Faith@Home Center.
- Share your experiences with the rest of us to encourage and challenge each other on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/LHBCChurchDallas/> and/or share them via Instagram #connectathome. If you don't use social media, you can also email Tami Groves (tami@lhbc.com) and share your experiences that way.
- Every four weeks we will host a Connect@Home Family Event on a Sunday night where we can come together, share our Connect@Home experiences, and have some fun!
- There will be prize drawings at each event for those families who have been participating in the weekly challenges. All families that share via social media or through email will be entered to win! Families will receive one entry, for the drawing, for each time they share via social media/email prior to the event.
- Our Family Events are always open to guests. Individuals or whole families are welcome to attend! They don't have to be participating in Connect@Home to come.

Why are we doing this?

- Summer is the perfect time to change things up. Schedules are different and afford us a chance to spend more time as a family.
- We believe that parents are the most vital influence in our children's spiritual future. It is our role, as the church, to support you in those endeavors and offer help and resources to accomplish that goal.
- We intend to use this as our Children's Ministry activities during the summer. We wish to give our Awana volunteers a good long rest. There will be no Mid-week activities for children during the summer. Instead, we hope you will use those Wednesday nights (or another night that works better) to Connect@Home. You might spend the evening with your journey groups working on the challenge together.

However you choose to take on the challenge, have fun and tell us about it!

In His Service,

Tami Groves

LHBC Children's Ministry Coordinator





Week 1: June 4—10

GROW: Becoming More Like Jesus

Psalm 1:1—3

Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.

Weekly Devotion



Pick one night to stay up late playing games, or watching a movie. At the end of your activity draw attention to the time and the need for rest. Begin your conversation with these questions:

- Why do we need sleep?
- Does God sleep?
- How do you know?



Read Psalm 121

Ask:



- Who do you usually go to for help?
- What does this psalm say about God?
- What does He do?
- Is it good that God doesn't sleep?
 - Why?
 - Has God ever helped you?
 - Are there times when you forget to ask God for help?
 - What can God help you with right now?

Praying together. Ask for His help in your lives with your concerns. Thank Him for the ways He has helped in the past.

Weekly Challenge: Increase your knowledge of God's Word.

Suggestions:

1. Bible Reading Plan:

- Books of the Bible: maybe your family will begin by reading through a particular book of the bible during the course of the summer.
- Have younger elementary and preschool kids? Read through the Jesus Storybook Bible by Sally-Lloyd Jones. (*Available in the Faith@Home Center*)
- Check out: Old Story New: Ten Minute Devotions to Draw Your Family to God by Marty Machowski (New Testament Study) or his Old Testament book, Long Story Short: Ten Minute Devotions to Draw Your Family to God. (*These books are available in the Faith@Home Center*)



2. Memorize scripture together

- Check out: www.faithgateway.com/bible-memory-verses-for-kids-scripture-memorization/
- Try learning Psalm 1, Psalm 23 or 1 Corinthians 13
 - Memorization Tricks:
 - a) Put each word on a sticky note and place it in a prominent place of your house. Work together to read the verse repeatedly, taking one word away at a time.
 - b) Write words on blank paper. Mix them up and play hopscotch jumping from word to word.
 - c) Act out your verse. Find motions that match words or phrases.



3. Focus on Godly Character Traits

- www.kidsofingrity.com have great devotions from which to choose
- or check out www.characterjournal.com for suggestions
- <http://www.thrivingfamily.com/Additions/family-faith-archive.aspx> has a large list of devotions for the family





Week 2: June 11—17

PLAY: Enjoying God Everywhere

Psalm 16:11

You make known to me the path of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence,
with eternal pleasures at your right hand.



Weekly Devotion

Dress up in weird outfits. Maybe you borrow things from each other. Be silly and show off your creations.

Read Colossians 3:12-14.

Ask:



- Paul encouraged God's children to put some things on? What were they?
- Can you purchase "kindness" clothing in a store? So what did he mean?
- Are some of these harder to "wear" than others?
- What should we do when we forget to clothe ourselves as Paul suggested?

Pray for each other. Ask for God's help to clothe ourselves properly each day with everyone we come in contact with (even our family members.) Ask for forgiveness for the times we didn't treat others the way God wants us to.

Weekly Challenge: Create a fun memory this week

Suggestions:

1. Journey Group Play: schedule a pot-luck meal, have a picnic in the park, plan a field day or a trip to the zoo, or attend a summer concert together

2. Family Movie Night:

- www.pluggedin.com has great ideas. Click on "Movie Nights" for ideas, discussion questions and activities.
- Set up a projector and sheet outside and invite the neighbors.
- Pick a favorite movie from your childhood and share it with your kids.

3. Neighborhood Playtime

- Water balloon fights
- Kickball or relay races
- Sidewalk chalk art competitions
- Popsicles and Frisbee





Week 3: June 18—24

REST: Remembering Who Reigns

Matthew 11:28—30

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

Weekly Devotion

Build a fort using blankets, and furniture. Put in some pillows and blankets. While you are building, ask the kids what forts are used for. Ask: Did you know that God called himself our fortress?



Read Psalm 59:16-17.

Ask:



- How does this Psalm explain how God is a fortress?
- What does refuge mean?
- What are other words David uses to describe God?
- Do you need protecting?
- How can God help?
- Can we trust God to be our refuge?
- What are some things in your life that need God's protection?

Pray, asking God to forgive you for the times you didn't trust His promise to protect you. Ask Him to help strengthen your faith in Him and to trust him during difficult times. Lift up any current concerns you have and thank God for being your refuge.

Weekly Challenge: Unwind: enjoy the lack of schedule and change of routine

Suggestions:

1. Unstructured Time: make sure you find some time this summer where there are no planned activities. Stay in your pajamas. Play board games. Sleep in or take a nap.



2. Family Meal Time: Designate at least one evening each week where all members of the family sit down to a meal together. (This helps build feelings of security and developing relationships.)

- Kids can help plan and prep dinner.
- Order in. You get even more rest that way!
- Have a picnic in the living room or in the backyard.
- Ask questions!

3. Technology fast: Set a specified time where all family members (mom and dad included) turn off all devices. Spend time face-to-face. Be intentional about building relationships.





Week 4: June 25—July 1

SERVE: Showing Others God's Love

Mark 10:45

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve,
and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Weekly Devotional:

Create art together. Get some butcher paper, or a large piece of cardboard. Spread tempera paint on the soles of your feet and make patterns. The point is to get your feet really dirty (maybe you have a better idea.)

When you are done, wash your children's feet and talk about the time that Jesus washed his disciples' feet.



Read John 13:1-17.

Ask:



- How would you feel if you were Jesus and washed all those stinky feet? Remember they all wore sandals and the roads were dusty.
- What does the word servant mean?
- How did Jesus serve His disciples? Did the disciples deserve to be served?
- What was Jesus trying to teach them by washing their feet?
- Jesus served us in another way. He served us in the biggest way. What was that?
- If we are God's disciples, then we should be serving others. How do we do that?

Pray and ask God to give you a heart like Jesus: one that is willing to serve others.

Weekly Challenge: Teach your children the importance recognizing needs and finding ways to meet them.

Suggestions:

1. Serve your neighbors

- Pick up trash
- Care for pets
- Invite to dinner
- Make treats



2. Serve Your World



- Check out www.kidsofcourage.com Kids all over the United States and the world are participating in projects to help persecuted Christians and to raise awareness about persecution. What can your kids do?
- www.focusonthefamily.com/magazine/summer-adventure-kit Pray with your kids for people all over the world.

3. For more service ideas, check out our “Ideas for Serving with Your Kids” brochure in the Faith@Home Center. It is also available to download at: <http://www.lhbc.com/ministries/kids/>





Week 5: July 2—8

GROW: Becoming More Like Jesus

Psalm 1:1—3

Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.

Weekly Devotion

Are you planning to watch fireworks or buy sparklers? When you are celebrating our nation's freedom this week, talk to your kids about our ultimate freedom we receive from Jesus.



Ask:

- Why do we celebrate July 4?
- What is it about?
- What does freedom mean?
- What is the opposite of freedom?
- What does it mean to be a slave or in bondage?

Read Romans 8:1-2.

Ask:

- What do these verses say we are free from?
- How are we set free from sin and death?

Thank Jesus for freeing us from sin by dying on the cross and rising from the dead 3 days later.



Weekly Challenge: Increase your knowledge of God's Word.

1. Memorize scripture together:

- a. Have kids in Awana? Work on reviewing and learning their verses together.
- b. Don't know the order of the Bible? Memorize the books of the Bible and it's divisions.
- c. Memorization Tricks:



- ⇒ Make up a song or rhythm or use a common tune.
- ⇒ Pick up a Seeds Family Worship CD from our Faith @ Home Center. Each CD has contemporary music set to words straight from scripture (NIV).
- ⇒ Check out: www.theversesproject.com and www.Walkingbible.org for other scriptures set to music

2. Family Devotions

- a. Focus on the Names of God: God's Names by Sally Michaels this summer.

There's a resource available to download at:

<http://www.lhbc.com/ministries/kids/>

- b. Family Nights: create intentional family events:

www.itstartsathome.org/familynight/



3. Focus on a certain character from the Bible.

- a. www.thrivingfamily.com/free/summer-calendar.aspx
- b. <https://www.jellytelly.com/blog/old-testament-heroes-new-5-minute-family-devotional-plan>





Week 6: July 9—15

PLAY: Enjoying God Everywhere

Psalm 16:11

You make known to me the path of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence,
with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

Weekly Devotion

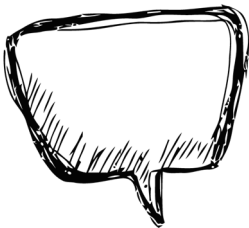
Give each person a tube of toothpaste and have them race to see who can empty their tube first. Now, who can put it back in the fastest? What? You can't get it back in?



Read Matthew 12:34-36

Ask:

- What came out of the tube as you squeezed it?
- Was it easy to put the toothpaste back into the tube? Our words are kind of like that toothpaste.
- What did Jesus say about our words? Where do they come from?
- What does it say about our hearts if our words are mean?
- Once you say something, how easy is it to take those words back?
- What are ways we sin with our words?
- How can our words show love to God and others?
- Pray, confess to God the times you used your words to hurt others. Ask Him for help to speak words that show honor and respect to others.



Weekly Challenge: Create a fun memory this week

Suggestions:

- Kid Dates: Make special time to spend with each of your children whether playing at home or going somewhere special. Have your kids name something fun to do at home, outside, and to visit in the city. Write answers on slips of paper and choose an activity.



- Family Day trip: Pretend to be tourists and check out the local culture
- Try Geocaching or Letterboxing
- Check out the GeO-deck at Reunion Tower
- Go to the Stockyards or visit the Western Currency Facility in Ft. Worth
- Visit a museum
- Check out local spray grounds
- Family Game Night
- Pull out the board and card games
- Play Minute to Win It (check out

<http://www.incredibleevents.com/minutetowinlist.html>
for ideas)

- Play Pictionary, but use pudding and plates to paint the pictures instead of paper and pen.



- Go Bowling. Bring a bag of M&M's. Before each person bowls, he/she must pick an M&M out of the bag without looking. The color of the M&M will tell them how they will bowl (blue: bowl backwards between your legs, green: granny style, yellow: put ball down and push with your foot, orange: bowl normally, red: someone bowls for you, brown: bowl with your opposite hand)





Week 7: July 16—22

REST: Remembering Who Reigns

Matthew 11:28—30

Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light.



Weekly Devotion

Have a big water balloon fight. Maybe even invite the neighborhood kids to participate. When it is over, ask the kids if they know what a spiritual battle is.

Read Ephesians 6:10-18.

Ask:

- What do these verses say we are fighting against?
- Can we fight them with our fists? How do we fight things spiritually?
- What were the things that Paul suggested we put on?
- Where do we get our “armor” from? How do we put it on?
- What does Paul tell us to do in verse 18?
- Besides prayer, how else can we be armed for battle?



Talk about the verses you’re memorizing this summer. Encourage each other to use those scriptures when faced with temptation or hard times. Pray, asking God to give you strength through the Holy Spirit when the enemy attacks.

Weekly Challenge: Unwind: enjoy the lack of schedule and change of routine

Suggestions:



1. Family Slumber Party: Build a blanket fort, set up a tent indoors, or just throw down the sleeping bags, blankets, and pillows. Read books, color, watch tv together, play games

2. Family Read Time

- Choose a book and read aloud each night (Here's a list to get you started: <https://www.goodreads.com/shelf/show/childrens-classics>)
- Take turns reading
- Use different voices for the characters

3. Take A Nature Walk: Getting outside brings God's creation into focus

- Go to the Arboretum or one of the local State Parks
- Stay out after dark and stargaze
- Walk alongside a lake or river





Week 8: July 23—July 29

SERVE: Showing Others God's Love

Mark 10:45

For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.

Weekly Devotional:

Combine devotion time and service together. Visit a park and pick up trash. When you're done, go grab ice cream or a drink and talk about the difference between trash and treasure.



Read Philippians 3:7-8.



Ask:

- Are there any words in these verses that you do not recognize or understand?
- What is a “gain”? What was Paul talking about?
- If you think something is a loss or rubbish, what does that mean?
- When you were picking up trash, what kinds of things did you throw away?
- What did Paul say was trash compared to Jesus?
- What did Paul want to gain? What was he willing to “throw away”?
- What is your greatest treasure? How can you show God that He is most important of all?

Pray that God will reveal the Greatest Treasure to your children and to you. Ask Him to reveal things that you hold in greater value than Him. Ask for forgiveness and strength to put Him first.

Weekly Challenge: Teach your children the importance recognizing needs and finding ways to meet them.

Suggestions:

1. Serve your family (live out Romans 12:10)



- Have “Secret Service Week”: write family members’ names on slips of papers. Each member draws another member’s name and finds ways to serve that person without them knowing about it. Follow up at the end of the week to find out who did what to whom!
- Make “King/Queen of the Day”: Names are drawn each day. The rest of the family find ways to help that person on that day to make them feel special.
- If your family has assigned chores, work together rather than individually. Help one another.

2. Serve your Church: check out our “Ideas for Serving with Your Kids” brochure in the Faith@Home Center. It is also available to download at: <http://www.lhbc.com/ministries/kids/>





Week 9: July 30—August 6

GROW: Becoming More Like Jesus

Psalm 1:1—3

Blessed is the one who does not walk in step with the wicked or stand in the way that sinners take or sit in the company of mockers, but whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night. That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers.

Weekly Devotion

Send the kids on a treasure hunt or play hide and seek. Once they find the booty or the hidden person, talk about how determined Jesus is to seek out sinners.



Read Luke 15:1-10.

Ask:

- What were the two parables about?
- What was the same about them?
- How hard were you looking for the treasure/person?
- What did our parables tell you about how Jesus feels about sinners?
- What does the word “repent” mean? (To turn around and go the complete opposite direction)
- What do the angels do when someone repents?
 - Who can we be praying for that they will repent from their sins?
 - Do you want to repent of your sins?



Pray together for those that come to mind. If your child wants to repent, listen to them lovingly and encourage them to ask God for forgiveness. Remind them that God heard their prayers and forgave them.

Weekly Challenge: Increase your knowledge of God's Word.



Suggestions:

1. Backyard Bible Club: Host one in your own home/backyard for your neighborhood or apartment complex. Check out our Faith@Home Center for a sample 5-day curriculum packet. It is also available to download at:

<http://www.lhbc.com/ministries/kids/>

You can get more details on activities to add to the curriculum at:

<http://passporttothenations.com/sewing-gospel-threads-curriculum-introduction/>

2. Family Night: create intentional and fun family events that have an eternal purpose. Check out <https://www.heritagebuildersglobal.com/family-resources>

3. Memorize Scripture:

- Choose some of the verses used in our Connect@Home Devotions.
- Review previously learned verses and create new memory verse challenges for the upcoming school year.



- Memorization Tricks:
 - a. Doodle and draw pictures to go with the words of the verse.
 - b. Are you crafty? Write or print out your verse on cardstock, attach to cardboard and cut into pieces to make a puzzle.
 - c. Post your verse everywhere: bathroom mirror, dining room, refrigerator or microwave, dashboard of your car





Week 10: August 7—12

PLAY: Enjoying God Everywhere

Psalm 16:11

You make known to me the path of life;
you will fill me with joy in your presence,
with eternal pleasures at your right hand.

Weekly Devotion

(Note to Parents: We realize that marriage may be a sore subject for several of us. Some had poor parental examples, difficulties in our own marriages, or divorce. Others of us may still be waiting to marry. Regardless of our own experiences, God created marriage and gave us instructions how we are to live. As we will see in our devotional, He wanted us to have a picture of what a relationship with His Son looks like.)



Let's teach our kids what a godly marriage is. Sit down together and draw pictures together of what you and your kids think they will look like when they are grown and married. (If you want, look through your wedding album or watch your wedding video with your kids. Talk about how you and your spouse met.)

Ask if they have ever heard Jesus described as a groom and us as the bride?

Read Ephesians 5:22-33.

Ask:

- What did you think about our wedding pictures/video?
- What were some things you noticed?
- What is a husband and a wife?
- What does it mean when a man and woman get married?
- What does Ephesians tell us that wives are supposed to do? And husbands?
- What does Paul compare marriage to?



Pray for your children's future spouses and marriages. If you are married, pray for your marriage. Ask God to help you to love each other like Jesus loves the church. If you are divorced or a single parent, pray for the child's father/mother. Ask God to bless them.
(For more biblical examples, read the book of Ruth together, or read 1 Corinthians 13.)

Weekly Challenge: Create a fun memory this week

Suggestions:

1. Parent's Night Out:



- If you are married, don't neglect time together to Connect this summer. We can get caught up in all the kids' activities and miss alone time with each other. Make plans to swap kids with a member of your journey group so each couple has a night off and you can avoid babysitting fees.
- If you are a single parent, ask members of your journey group for help with the kids while you take a much needed evening to yourself or with friends. Maybe a youth is interested in earning service hours and would be willing to watch your kids for free!

2. Have a Nerf gun battle, or if you're really bold, a food fight in the backyard.

3. Have a taste testing night. Choose 4-5 different brands of your favorite foods (ice cream, popcorn, soda, pizza...) and determine which is your favorite.

