

January Family
Devotions

Upcoming Events

Saturday, January 22, 2022
Family Ice Skating Night
6-8:30PM

February 2022
Parents' Date Night
More information coming soon!

Saturday, April 16, 2022
Family Easter Event
Detail TBD

July 18-22, 2022
Summer Blast

July 24, 2022
Summer Blast Family Picnic

Family Activity

- Place four objects together on the table. Make sure three of the items go together and the fourth one is something random. (Example: fork, spoon, knife, and pencil)
- Ask your child(ren) which item is the odd one out.
- Play several times with different groups of objects.
- Talk about Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. Explain that they were the odd ones out. Everyone else bowed to the statue that King Nebuchadnezzar set up, but Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego did not bow. They chose to obey God.
- Talk about how your child(ren) might be the "odd one(s) out" when they choose to obey God.



Week 1 day 1: Fiery Furnace!

When Israel disobeyed God, they were punished. It hurt God's heart to do this, but it was very important so that Israel could learn a lesson. There were 4 boys taken to Babylon in captivity. They were renamed by the Babylonians to Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego, and Belteshazzar (Daniel!) They faithfully served God while they were there.

One day, the evil king Nebuchadnezzar got an idea. He would make the entire city worship a giant statue of himself. He told everyone to bow down and worship it! But Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego wouldn't do this. They were faithful to God. Nebuchadnezzar was so furious that he had them thrown into a massive raging fiery furnace! He overheated the furnace so much that even the mighty warriors that threw them in were killed by the heat.

However, God would rescue Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They knew that they might die, but they trusted God. When Nebuchadnezzar saw how God joined them in the fire and rescued them, he fell on his face to worship. He turned to God and worshiped Him alone. Their faithfulness to God resulted in a change in Nebuchadnezzar's heart.

Week 1 day 2: Change of Heart

Matthew 5:16, "In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in Heaven."

When Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were faithful to God, Nebuchadnezzar had a change of heart. When mean, rude, angry, or upset people are around you, you can be a light to them and bring them peace and hope! When we are a light to those around us we receive a wonderful reward! We bring glory to God! This fills us with joy. And though we don't do this to be rewarded, we will receive more rewards in Heaven.

Week 1 day 3: Impacting Others

John 14:6, "Jesus said to him, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

Jesus freely and gladly offers us forgiveness for our sins (the naughty things we've done) and eternal life in heaven. Jesus stepped in and saved Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego from death itself. Likewise, Jesus saves us from death. The death He saves us from is Eternal death separated from God! Simply turning to Jesus, accepting His gift of forgiveness, and believing in Him alone for salvation gives us eternal life!

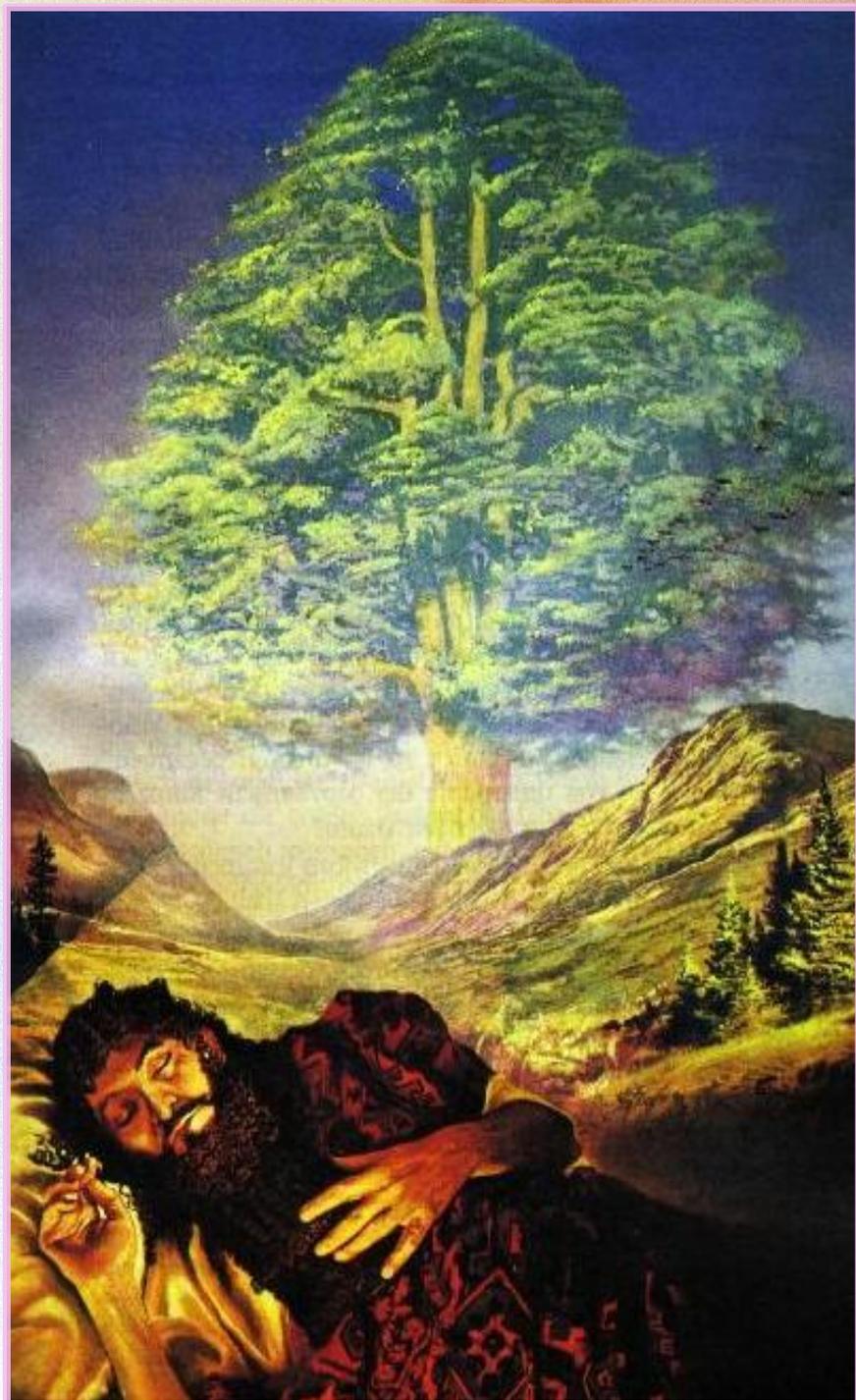


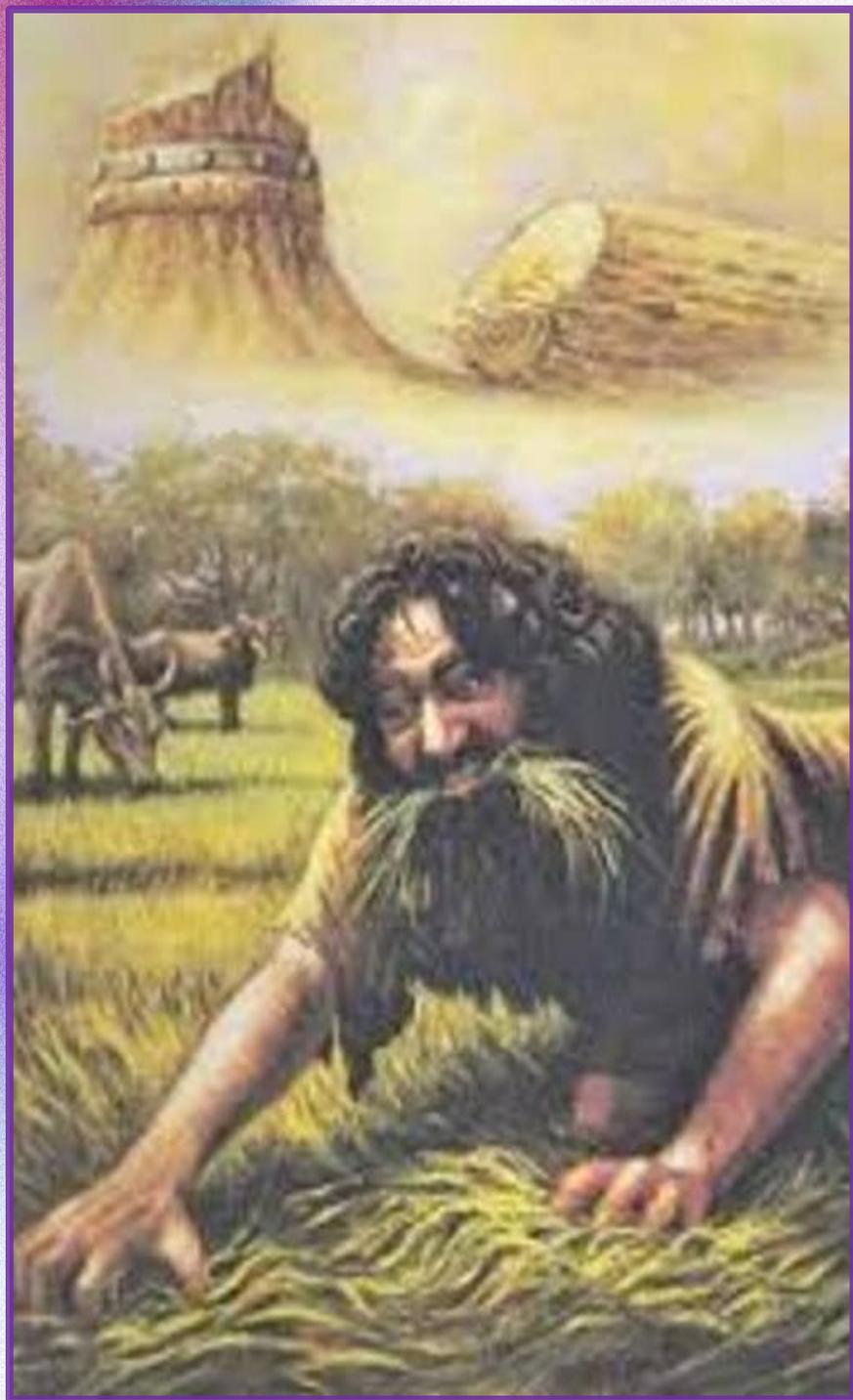
Week 2 Day 1: Mad Man

King Nebuchadnezzar had learned to trust Daniel, one of the Israelite captives. One night, King Nebuchadnezzar had a terrible dream. Little did he know that this dream had been sent to him by God! In this dream, he saw a massive tree cut down and then tied up with metal. The tree's roots were left in place, and then awful things happened to it. He heard a voice explaining a story that he didn't understand about what would happen to this tree.

He was so disturbed by the dream that he called all of his wise men to help him understand the meaning; however, only Daniel knew. Daniel grieved to tell the king that this dream meant he would lose his mind and live in the fields like a wild animal because of his rebellion, arrogance, and pride towards God. This is what happened! King Nebuchadnezzar became like a mad man. He lived in the fields, ate grass, and became wild like an animal.

After 7 years, King Nebuchadnezzar realized that this was happening because of his rebellion against God. He then chose to worship God, submit to him, and surrender his life and kingdom. God restored the king and blessed him greatly for humbling himself! How incredible this all is!





Week 2 Day 2: Pride

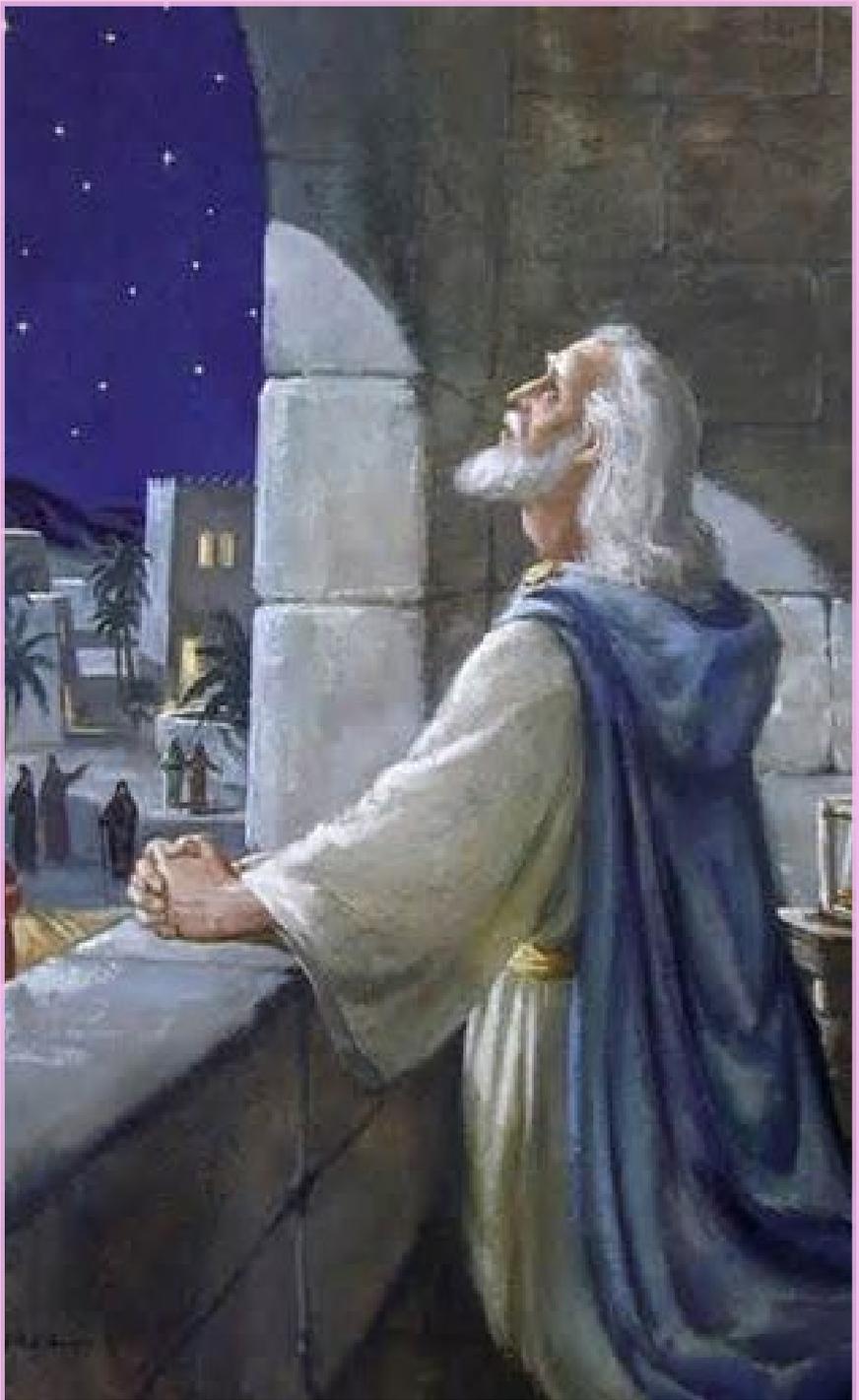
Proverbs 16:5, "The LORD detests all the proud of heart. Be sure of this: They will not go unpunished."

There is nothing evil that does not come back to pride. Sinful pride is pure rebellion against God. When we sin, we are showing our pride. God hates when anyone's heart is proud because it means that they cannot know Him as he desires. Pride is also punished, as we saw with King Nebuchadnezzar. However, Jesus came to forgive pride! He came to make us whole. Remember that it breaks God's heart when we are proud towards him and others. Work hard to show sincere love.

Week 2 Day 3: Humility

Proverbs 11:2, "When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom."

As much as God despises pride, He loves humility. Humility produces goodness, kindness, and wisdom. Those who truly know the love of God are filled with thankfulness and humility towards God and others. Humility is not thinking less of yourself; it is thinking of yourself less. When we live our lives to serve others, be kind to them, and show them grace and mercy, we will be filled with the goodness and joy that Jesus offers. Even today, pray and ask God to fill you with humility and joy!



Week 3 Day 1: Lions

Darius had become the king of Babylon after the Persians had conquered the city. Darius had learned to love Daniel deeply. However, other men of the city were very jealous. They came up with a plan to manipulate the pride of king Darius and get Daniel killed. They tricked the king into creating an irrevocable law that you could only worship the king... or be killed!! Daniel, however, would only worship God.

Daniel was entirely faithful to the one true God of Israel. He would not worship Darius and instead openly worshiped God himself. Unfortunately, by the time Darius realized he had been tricked, it was too late. He threw Daniel into a raging lion's den to be killed and sealed the entrance with a stone. That night Darius could not sleep. He was restless, mourning, and felt terribly guilty. The moment daylight came, he ran to the lion's den.

Miraculously, God had sent an angel to save Daniel! All of the lions were docile and gentle to Daniel. Darius then had the people who deceived him thrown into the den, and they died before hitting the ground. Darius then praised the God who had saved Daniel!



Week 3 Day 2: Worship God Alone

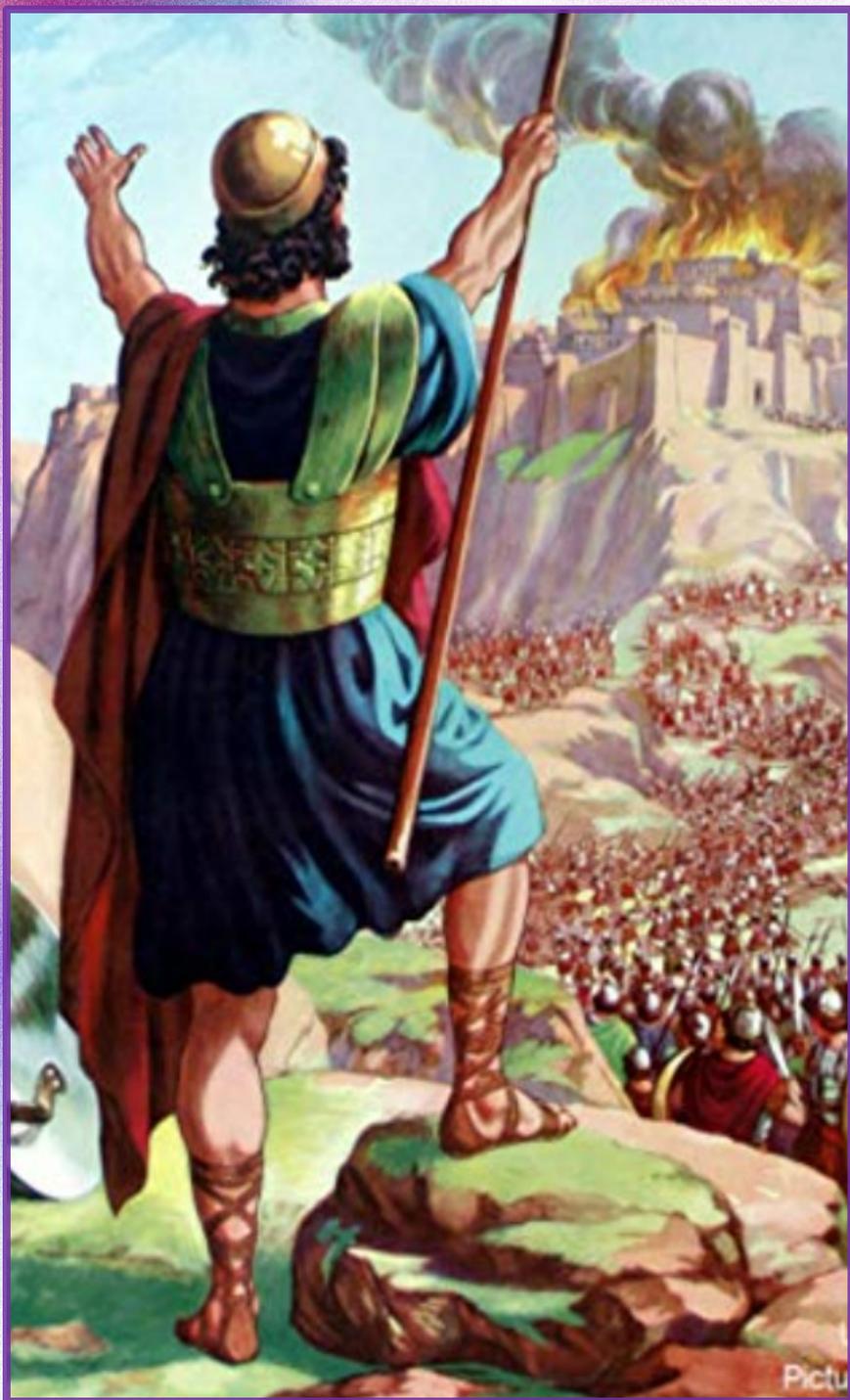
Exodus 20:3, "You must not have any other God but me."

It was perfectly clear that God says it is wrong to worship any god but Him alone. This is why the Israelites were taken into captivity in the first place. Sometimes we are tempted to worship fake gods unexpectedly. We value stuff and things before God, like TV, video games, good grades, people's approval, and so on. These are not always bad, but they are when they come before God. Commit to putting God first by showing His love and being faithful, just like Daniel!

Week 3 Day 3: God is With Us

2 Thessalonians 2:15, "So then, brothers, stand firm and hold to the traditions that you were taught by us, either by our spoken word or by our letter"

Praise God that Daniel has set an example for us even though his life was at risk. God has clearly told us how we should worship Him and Him alone. We worship God in many ways. We pray, sing, give, read His word, and follow His commands. When we do this, the power of God is unlocked in our lives, and we can experience all of His promises. Daniel was put in a lion's den, and we may face hard times; but, God will ALWAYS be with us.



Week 4 Day 1: Obadiah

If you go all the way back to the time of Jacob and Esau, you will begin to understand the story of Obadiah. Obadiah was a prophet who told the Edomites that they would be brought down and destroyed by God. Jacob (who was renamed Israel) had a bad relationship with Esau (who would later be called Edom.) The decedents of Esau mistreat Israel, even helping to fight them so they would be taken into captivity.

God did not find pleasure in this, so He told the Edomites through the prophet Obadiah that they would be destroyed. However, this is only part of the story. God would allow Israel to inhabit Edom as part of His long-term plan. God is patient and kind and looks to bring everyone to Himself. The judgment on Edom sets an example of how serious rebellion against God is.

The message of Obadiah ends with a promise that Jesus will be king over all. This is the good news that Obadiah brings to his people. God will come and make all things right for Israel and Edom. Jesus ultimately was the promised savior and king. He will rule forever, and He will bring together everyone that is a follower of Him. He will rule for all eternity from Jerusalem.

Week 4 Day 2: God's Promises

Hebrews 1:8, "But of the Son he says, "Your throne, O God, is forever and ever, the scepter of uprightness is the scepter of your kingdom."

Jesus is coming to be king! This is the central message of Obadiah. This is terrific news for us! Because Jesus died for our sins and forgives us unconditionally, we get to be with Him forever and ever. Jesus will be righteous (perfectly moral and just) and will be the best ruler the world has ever seen. There will be total peace, no pain, and no sorrow. When Jesus comes as king, the world will be perfect and free from sin and shame. Isn't it wonderful to look forward to Jesus' kingdom?!

Week 4 Day 3: Following God

John 10:10, "The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly."

The enemy, the devil, wants to destroy us. He worked through the Edomites to hurt Israel. But, when Jesus came, He brought perfect and wonderful life! When we are followers of Jesus, life may not be easy; but, we will experience all of the goodness and promises of God. Following Jesus is not always easy because we need to forgive, obey, and be pure. We don't follow Jesus for rewards, but just knowing Jesus is an amazing reward. How can you be more faithful to Jesus today?



Parents,

Happy New Year!

As you look back at the year 2021, I pray that you were able to see God's hand working in your life and in the lives of your children.

And as we enter into this new year, it is my hope that you embrace every new adventure and circumstance as an opportunity to see God working, especially as you disciple your children and teach them to view them this way as well.

We are here to walk beside you as you raise your Jesus followers. And we look forward to helping you in any way we can.

Ann Weimer,

Director of Children's Ministries