

# Parents' Connection



A Newsletter for  
FBCA Parents

June 2020



FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH  
**ALEXANDRIA**

## Reach Out in Your Neighborhood

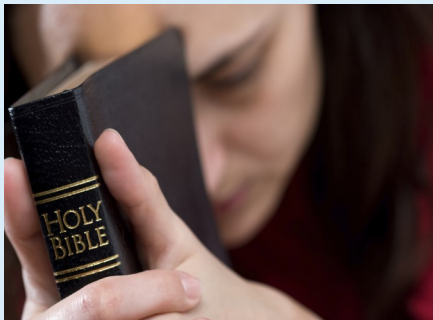
During the past few months, the coronavirus pandemic has caused lots of stress, separation, and cancellations. Yet several bright spots have brought much-needed light to the dark times.

For example, families, neighbors, churches, and communities are coming together in creative ways to offer support and to meet a variety of needs. Acts of love, whether simple (waving or posting signs) or more involved (running errands for the elderly or donating gift cards to the unemployed) are lifting spirits and easing tensions.

These deeds forge connections among people who may not even know one another's names. And they give family members purposeful projects to tackle together while much of society must remain unnaturally apart.

As social-distancing restrictions gradually ease up in some areas, outreach options may expand a bit, too. But that doesn't necessarily mean serving your neighbors will require more time and money—unless you have extra you'd like to give.

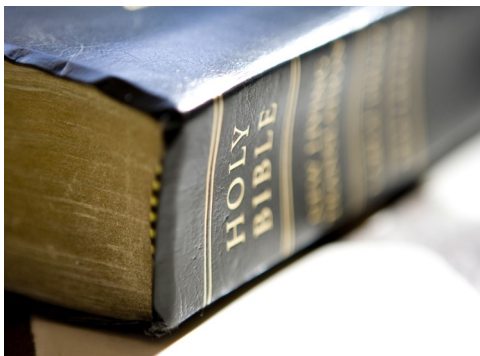
In fact, parents can use this out-of-the-ordinary period to show kids just how far a little kindness can go. Resist the temptation to self-isolate (unless you're sick, of course). Instead, search for ways your family can make life a bit easier—and more cheerful—for people around you. To get started, check out the suggestions on the following page. May God bless your outreach efforts!



## POWERSOURCE

### ASK GOD:

- To help your family form close ties to neighbors of all ages.
- To show you areas of need in your neighborhood—and ways you can help to meet them.
- To give family members a heart for reaching out to all people.



*All these commands and all others are really only one rule: "Love your neighbor as you love yourself." ...Loving is obeying all the law.  
—Romans 13:9-10, NCV*

## TEACHABLE MOMENT

### The Samaritan Shuffle

Use this activity to teach kids about neighborliness while helping them release pent-up energy. On slips of paper, write one of these events from the parable of the Good Samaritan:

- A man walks to Jericho.
- Robbers beat up the man.
- A priest walks past the hurt man.
- A Levite walks past the hurt man.
- A Samaritan stops to bandage the man's wounds.
- A Samaritan puts the wounded man onto an animal.
- A Samaritan takes the wounded man to a safe place.
- A Samaritan pays a man to care for the man.

Put each slip into a different balloon. Inflate and tie off the balloons. Have family members bat the balloons around. When you yell, "Stop and pop!" everyone grabs a balloon (or two), pops it, and retrieves the slip. Read Luke 10:30-37. Work together to figure out the correct sequence. Pray, thanking Jesus for opportunities to love your neighbors.

## Who is My Neighbor?

In Luke 10:25, a legal expert asks Jesus about the path to eternal life. Jesus tells him to follow the two greatest commandments—love God and love your neighbors. Yet the man presses for more detail, following up by asking "And who is my neighbor?" (verse 29). Then Jesus tells the parable of the Good Samaritan, teaching that neighbors can be anyone, not just people who look, act, and believe as we do. In this era of wariness and extra caution, it takes effort to know our neighbors, let alone to serve them. But serving others helps us get to know people as individuals and also allows Jesus to work through us, as living examples of his love.

**Rockin' the Walk** More people are taking walks these days, so provide walkers with some inspiration. Paint rocks with bright colors and write or draw simple messages on them. Set them along sidewalks or near flower beds to make people smile. Kids also can write Bible verses on your sidewalk with chalk.

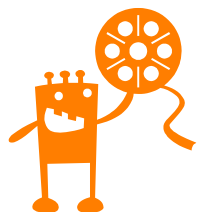
**Give & Take** If you're handy, help kids build a Little Free Library or a Little Free Pantry (instructions are available online). Contributors can fill a library with books and Bibles and a pantry with toiletries and nonperishable food items.

**Sing 'n' Serve** Teach children the joy of serving by finding age-appropriate tasks they can do with your supervision. Summertime examples include washing cars, watering plants, and watching a neighbor's pet. With younger kids, sing simple refrains while you work. To the tune of "London Bridge," for example, sing "God loves me, so I love you, I love you, I love you. God loves me, so I love you. Love each other!"



**Prayer Pals** Craft-loving kids can make colorful cards for elderly people who remain home-bound. Include your phone number on a note that says: "Please let us know how we can help you—and how we can pray for you!"





## MEDIA MADNESS



### TV

**Title:** *Thanks a Million*

**Network:** Quibi

**Synopsis:** Quibi, the new short-form mobile video platform, has shows with very brief episodes. In this docu-series, celebrities such as Nick Jonas, Kristen Bell, and Kevin Hart surprise people with financial gifts to start chains of gratitude. The "pay it forward" premise is uplifting and often very emotional. Note that some of the people have been through traumatic situations.

**Our Take:** This feel-good series demonstrates the powerful ripple effects of kindness. It might, however, give viewers the impression that only wealthy people can make a significant difference in people's lives. Discuss how kids can launch similar gratitude chains without much (or any) money.



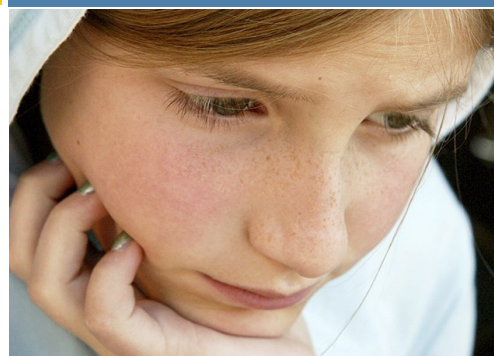
### MUSIC

**Artist:** Big Daddy Weave

**Title:** "I Know"

**Synopsis:** For two decades, this group has produced inspirational, award-winning contemporary Christian music. While social distancing this spring, the five members recorded a new Zoom-style version of their #1 single "I Know." That song is from the group's newest album, *When the Light Comes*.

**Our Take:** Frontman Mike Weaver says "I Know" emerged from a time when his own family was going through a lot and was asking why. The lyrics emphasize God's goodness, kindness, and constant presence. For example: "I don't understand the sorrow / but you're calm within the storm. / Sometimes this weight is overwhelming / but I don't carry it alone."



### CULTURE & TRENDS

**Pandemic Parenting** Moms and dads working from home while trying to homeschool must embrace flexibility and show compassion—to themselves, as well. Parenting experts say it's okay to give children more free time. "Think of the quarantine as an AP class in chilling," writes Lenore Skenazy. "You can help your kids ace it by stepping back." (*Washington Post*)

**Pets & Potty Pros** Among the positive trends emerging from lengthy lockdowns are spikes in pet adoptions and potty-trained toddlers. Being stuck at home apparently brings out the need for comfort creatures—and provides "bonus" time to housebreak them *and* the human kiddos! (*various sources*)

### QUICK STATS

**Music to Young Ears** While the music industry could lose \$12 billion in 2020 due to canceled concerts, festivals, and albums, streaming of kid-friendly music and videos has increased by double digits. (*USA Today*)

**Boom or Bust?** Jokes about a pandemic-related baby boom abound, but demographers say economic and health uncertainties make that unlikely. Others predict a "baby blip" may occur this winter, with a mere 2% increase in births. (*various sources*)

### GAMES, SITES & APPS

Title	Content	Platform
<b>Time Capsule</b>	For a break from screen time, try this free activity created by a Canadian mom. Natalie Long's Covid-19 Time Capsule is filled with fun ideas for kids and families. They range from jotting down facts and feelings to interviewing parents. Download pages here: <a href="https://tinyurl.com/y7rx4w9e">https://tinyurl.com/y7rx4w9e</a>	website
<b>The Kids are All . . . Home</b>	This new "by kids, for kids" series includes homemade podcasts with helpful tips for getting through the pandemic. Creators share ideas for at-home activities, safety tips, snacks, and more. Listeners will feel less alone and might even be inspired to create their own podcast episode.	podcast
<b>Smash Your Food</b>	In response to the pandemic, Spotify expanded its kid-friendly app, which now offers a playlist of 8,000 fun and educational songs. It's free for subscribers of the company's premium family plans. Music ranges from Disney tunes and dance hits to lullabies and bedtime stories.	app

