

# CUT and Paste

A forum for sharing children's ministry ideas

June 2003

## Welcome to our new format!

After much discussion, we have decided to try a new approach with *Cut and Paste*. Every two months a shorter issue will be displayed on this website, dedicated to a single topic. We hope this will help *Cut and Paste* be more manageable and useful for everyone! Photocopy it for friends and colleagues or forward the website to your wired friends. Above all else, share it around! That is our goal.

— Cathy and Dawn

## We'd love to hear your ideas

Phone (Cathy)  
905-631-1384

Fax 905-333-3042

eMail [fairley@cogeco.ca](mailto:fairley@cogeco.ca)

### Write

Children's Ministry  
Cathedral Place  
252 James Street North  
Hamilton, ON L8R 2L3

## Picnic Sunday!

It's **Graduation Time**

What images does this phrase evoke? Orange drink from McDonald's? Three legged races? Scavenger hunts? Egg tosses and water fights?

Most churches mark the end of the program year with some sort of picnic event. We hope that the ideas included in this issue will help as you plan your day!!

## The last Sunday of the year. Or is it?

More and more churches are recognizing the value of offering children's programs throughout the summer, allowing families to attend all summer long and to be as inviting as possible for visitors and travellers.

But likely, Picnic Sunday marks the last day of regular classes. While we don't want families to think that church is on vacation for the summer, many of us still like to honour the children and leaders who have participated in our programs during the school year.

- Many churches present children who have attended with certificates of participation and small gifts. This can get tricky. We all have been at worship when name after name is read off of certificates, with the children notably absent. What about the child who has only come once or twice but 'shows up' on Picnic Sunday? What about the regular attenders who are absent on Picnic Sunday? There are no easy answers. But be sensitive to the children of your congregation and come up with a process that seems to fit.

An option is to offer a pack of 'goodies' to the children to use during the worship which includes something they can keep, such as a Christian bookmark, bracelet, pencil or something that relates to the work the children have done during the year.

- Some churches have a tradition of presenting bibles to the children finishing grade

three. This likely goes back to the days of moving from the primary to the junior division of school. If that is your custom — and it's a great one — select the bibles carefully. Choose one that will be visually appealing to the children and in a translation that is easy to read. (Try NIRV) After all, we want them to actually open and read them, not simply let them be a momento that collects dust!

What do you do at your congregation to mark the end of the program year? We'd love to hear from you so we can share your ideas with others!

Looking for program ideas for the summer months? Check the *Cut and Paste* back issues for the May 2000 issue, available at [www.niagara.anglican.ca/children](http://www.niagara.anglican.ca/children)



# OUTDOOR GAME IDEAS FOR CHURCH PICNICS

## What do you Think?

Here's a good game to play while the meal is being organized or cleaned up. Count! Measure! Lift! Sniff! Display the items to be guessed at and give families or partners a sheet on which they have to record their answers. When everyone has had enough time to try to figure out the answers, have them exchange papers while you announce the solutions. You can award prizes to the family or pair that gets the most correct answers or for the winner of each separate question. Great prizes for families might include bubbles for the whole family, a watermelon or Christian video with snacks. Here are some ideas to get you started:

- How many communion wafers are in the jar? \_\_\_\_
- How heavy is this package? \_\_\_\_lbs. \_\_\_\_oz. or \_\_\_\_kg
- How many long is the ribbon in this bow? \_\_\_\_inches \_\_\_\_cm
- What is in the box?
- Lift the lid of this jar and sniff – what is in the bottle?
- Look at the baby picture and name this person in our congregation.

## Family Poetry Challenge

Families or small groups are given a picture of something (church calendars provide great pictures) If you want to preserve your resource, laminate the pictures or put in plastic folders. They have to develop a short poem that speaks to their picture. Pictures could include religious symbols, landscapes, people, etc. Families will have a hoot sharing their poems. Incorporate a time limit so things can move along quickly. It might be helpful to have a mobile mike so everyone can hear outside.

## Activity Stations

This also works well and incorporates all ages. Activity stations could be offered such as corn husk doll making, face painting, shaving cream painting, bobbing for apples, and "Name that Hymn." A sheet could be used to record answers to hymns played on a battery operated music box if outdoors.

## Celebrity Ball Game

Adults dress up in bible times costumes and play ball against a team of older children and youth. Adults could wear Christmas Pageant costumes or simply a

cassock, with a dishtowel headpiece secured with an old tie. Players must use their arm to bat a beach ball and regular baseball rules apply. Everyone will have a grand time watching the spectacle of old vs. young.

(Ideas adapted by Dawn Alexander-Wiggins from *Crowdbreakers & Mixers* by Youth Specialities, 1997, Youth Specialities, Inc. ISBN 0-310-22037-8)

## Worship With Children

If all ages are present in worship, it is important to involve and engage everyone. Here are a few tips as you plan your worship for Picnic Sunday.

- Consider reading only the gospel, instead of the traditional three readings. Depending on the text you choose the gospel could be read in parts or even acted out.
- Think about doing a 'children's focus'-type of sermon that involves interaction with the congregation.
- Story-telling is an ideal way to reach everyone of every age. After all, isn't that how Jesus taught?! Children's stories by Max Lucado, Liz Curtis Higgs and classic tales (try any of William J. Bennett's collections, especially *The Book of Virtues for Young People*) are all great places to start.
- Invite a children's class or family to write and offer the prayers.
- Hand out slips of paper for children and adults to draw or write on. Ask them to do something related to the gospel's theme to be collected at offering time and displayed on a poster, hung on a bare branch or pinned to the frontal.
- Include one or two songs that all ages are familiar with - or let the children teach their favourite to the whole congregation during the "children's focus" part of service, to be sung again later on.
- Finally, if the worship is to be held outdoors be sure that everyone can see and everyone can hear. Otherwise, people will be unable to participate in the act of worship! Above all else, relax, enjoy and let the spirit joyfully move through the congregation!!!

## HONOURING OUR LEADERS

There are many creative and inexpensive ways to show appreciation to hard working leaders. How about giving a card that says "You have helped to plant the seeds of a child's faith. Thank you!" Attach or enclose a package of flower or sunflower seeds.

**CUT and Paste**  
A forum for sharing children's ministry ideas

Editor: Cathy Fairley, with help from Olivia Crowe and Dawn Alexander-Wiggins

ISSN 1488-5883

This publication is available over the web at [www.niagara.anglican.ca/children](http://www.niagara.anglican.ca/children)

## Thanks to the support of

Children's Ministry Department of the The Diocese of Niagara  
Division of Congregational Support  
252 James Street North, Hamilton, ON L8R 2L3

Paper copies are available on request by subscription.

Contact the Editor: 905-631-1384 Fax: 905-333-3042 e-mail: [fairley@cogeco.ca](mailto:fairley@cogeco.ca)

Design and layout: Imagine Creative Communications Inc.

©2003 The Synod of the Diocese of Niagara, except where noted. You may photocopy this newsletter for use within your church, but if you copy only a portion of it please be sure to credit the article's author(s) and this publication, *Cut and Paste*.