

Dear Faith Shapers,

Spring is finally here! It's time to get outside and enjoy God's creation! I love to garden. My family loves to eat the fruits of the garden so I rope them into being gardeners too. If you need a good project that can turn into a ministry, why not try a community garden. Ask congregation members to donate a plot and have a community or church garden. Congregation members can work together to plant, weed and harvest the garden. You can set up a table to share the bounty of your garden. Bring extra food to your local food bank, shut ins or nursing homes. Everyone loves fresh fruits and veggies. An alternative to a community garden would be to grow some seeds into seedlings and then give them away to be planted. Ask those who take plants to donate 10% to help others. A garden tithe! Sunday school students could even start the seeds. A new ministry is created!



May what we grow be a blessing to others!

Lisa Kammerer  
Associate in Ministry

## Using the Psalms for bedtime prayer

Need a new idea for bedtime prayers? Try reading and reciting some verses from Psalms. The Psalms are a beautiful way to add meaning to our bedtime prayers. The Psalms fill our children's minds with God's truths as they drift off to sleep. The extra bonus is we are teaching them to memorize scripture.

Here are three Psalms to try.

### Psalm 121

This Psalm celebrates a God who is with us throughout all our travels. I especially like verse 3-4. ..."he who keeps you will not slumber. Behold, he who keeps Israel with neither slumber nor sleep." Psalm 121 assures us we have nothing to fear, even in the night.

### Psalm 139:7-12

One of David's most notable songs. Verses 7-12 remind our kids that nothing can separate us from God's presence— not even the darkest night. I really love verse 12... "even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is bright as the day, for darkness is as light with you."



### Psalm 63:5-8

David wrote this song at a troubled time in his later life. If we find it hard to sleep, we can be like David and meditate on God. Verse 6 says it beautifully, "I remember you upon my bed, and meditate on you in the watches of the night."

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Northeastern Iowa Synod-Home Life Network  
for use by families and local congregations.

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# 6 Ways to Celebrate Earth Day

**Renew a commitment to care for God's creation.**

List ways to reduce, reuse and recycle. Pick one project or life-style change to do as a family.



**Plant a Tree and Save a Tree!**

Plant one tree and save another by stopping junk mail!

**Recycle for God's Creatures!**

Make bird houses or bird feeders from recycled items. Make bird-seed garland from items in your pantry— raisins, old cheerios, dried fruit, bread cubes & popcorn.

**Plant a backyard garden!**

Now is the perfect time to plan a summer garden or plant cool weather crops. Even a small garden can help kids feel close to God through His creation. We can also share what we grow with our neighbors!

**Read about God's creation**

Read Genesis 1:1 –2:3. Talk about what God made on each day. Cut out big numbers from recycled cardboard. Have kids write or draw on each number what was created on that day. Say a prayer thanking God for one thing created on each day!

## Technology Corner



**Word Swag:** Need a cool app to add words to pictures you are posting? Want to make your own inspirational word picture? Try Word Swag. \$3.99



**Group Games:** In a pinch and need a quick game? This app has over 120 group games. Games are sorted by category such as no supplies, ball games, get to know you, camp games, food games, and more. You can also find games by group size: small, medium or large. Free app.

**Plant a community or church garden**

Work together to plant a garden. Extra produce can be offered to others at church. Make a "God's Garden Table" to share produce. Extra produce can also be donated to your local food pantry, shut ins, or nursing homes. Don't have room for a big garden? Start some seeds and when they have grown, offer them for free to people to plant. Ask people who take the plants to share 10% with others. What a difference a garden can make in our communities!