

TOUCHSTONE II

Volume IV, no.3

April 2008

NEWS TO HELP YOU STAY IN TOUCH
with the children, youth, and family
ministries of St. Stephen's Church

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Our Communication Skills and God's Good News

1- I Care...

Articulate your unqualified, unconditional love

2- I See...

Describe (calmly, specifically, objectively) the behavior/situation that has triggered your concern

3- I Feel...

Own your feelings

4- I Want...

Name what you want

5- I Will...

Articulate your own boundaries and response

We're approaching Pentecost (May 11). On the first Pentecost, the disciples received the gift of the Holy Spirit and with it the ability to communicate the Gospel in many different languages, so that many different people could hear and respond to God's Good News.

On Pentecost at St. Stephen's we will celebrate a baptism, and renew our own baptismal promise to "proclaim by word and example the good news of God in Christ."

Good communication is an essential element of Proclaiming God's Good News; and what better place to start than with those we love most—our kids and our partners?

Last month I attended a community forum on teen binge drinking in Marin, hosted by our neighbors at Westminster Presbyterian Church. The speaker kept emphasizing the importance of talking with your kids about alcohol use and abuse. Finally, one member of the audience asked for specifics—what might that conversation look like? How, exactly, might you start that conversation?

The speaker offered a 5-step map for communication, developed by family therapists. It is a very helpful guide for those of us seeking more healthy (and faithful) patterns of communication. The 5-steps are:

I care...I see...I feel...I want...I will...

I suspect that this "map" for communication could improve all of our conversations—with our partners, with our toddlers, and with our teenagers. If 5 steps is too many to remember, just start with step 1— "I love you". If we can get that first message of unconditional love and acceptance across, the rest of our message might actually stand a chance.

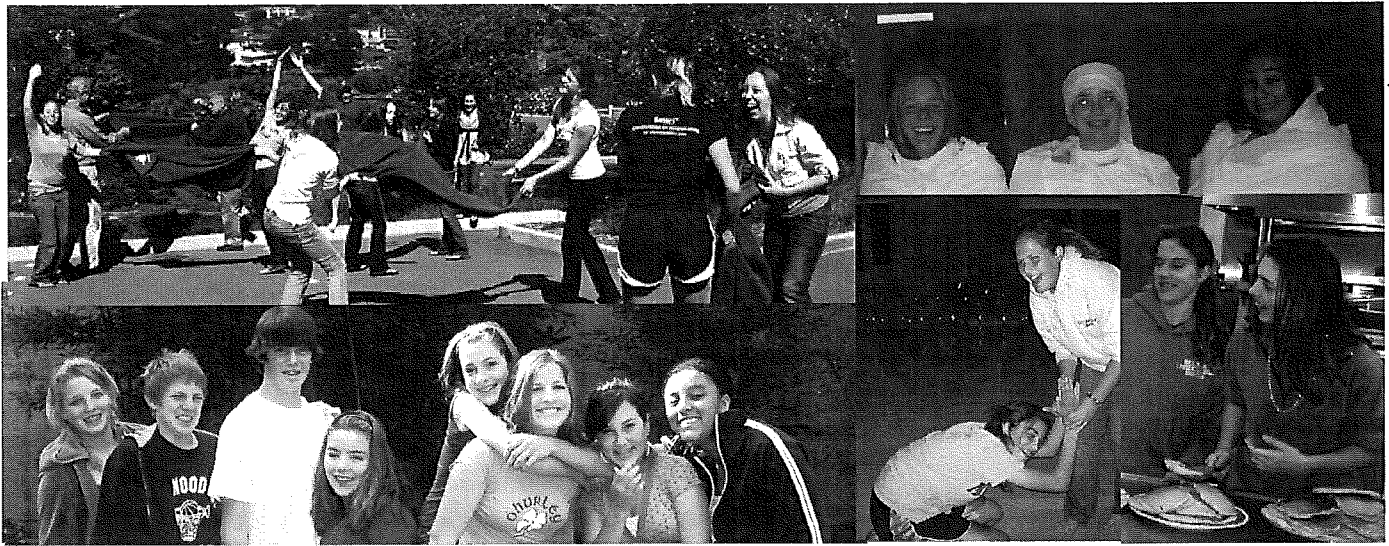
After all, isn't the Good News that God's message to us always begin with love?

Example -Your toddler

(If you practice with the little stuff, then it will come more naturally when you encounter the big stuff)

1. Alexandra, **I love** you so much.
2. **I see** that you have no shoes on and that it's snowing outside
3. **I feel** worried that your feet will be cold, and I feel frustrated because it's time to go.
4. **I want** you to put your shoes on right now.
5. If you don't put your shoes on before I count to ten, **I will** put them on for you.

Year End Youth "Retreats"



Middle & High Schoolers: set aside **one Sunday afternoon** this spring for a half-day "mini-retreat" including **a movie & a meal;**

relaxation & reflection;

friendship and fellowship.

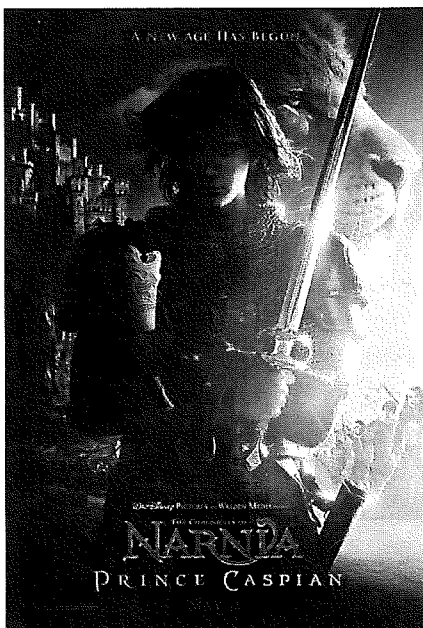
(So my affinity for alliteration is totally out of control, but please come anyway...)

May 4th-Juniors and Seniors

May 18-Freshmen and Sophomores

June 8-Middle Earth (Grades 6-8)

More details to come. Contact sylvia@ststephenschurch.org to help with planning.

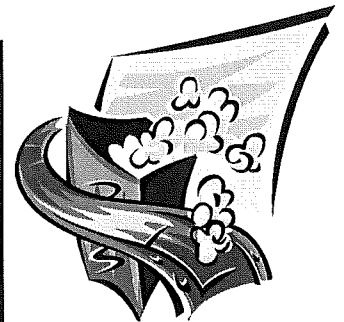


St. Stephen's Youth and Families

Meet at the Movies

Saturday, May 17 to see Prince Caspian

Details (time and place) in the Sunday bulletin 5/11
or email sylvia@ststephenschurch.org





Rebuilding Together—Saturday, April 26

Time Frame: 8:30 AM- 3:00 PM (you are more than welcome to come for just part of the day)

Location: San Rafael-Terra Linda

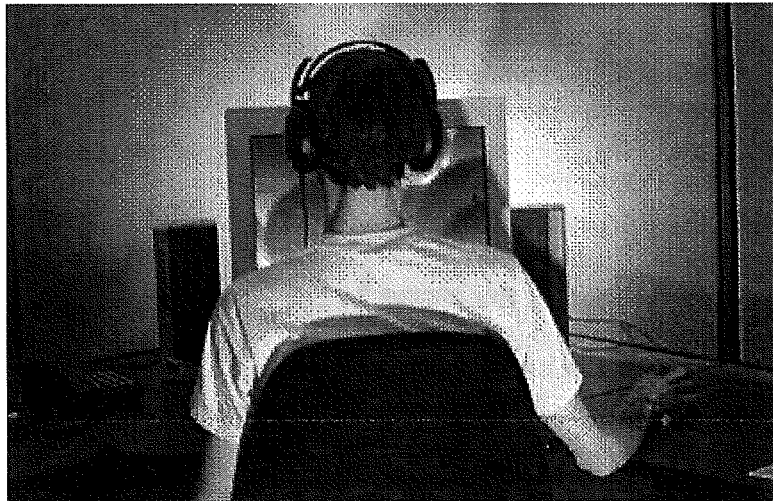
Our Resident: is 60 years old, suffers from multiple sclerosis, is paralyzed below the neck and is wheelchair bound. She lives by herself with the assistance of several part-time caregivers.

Work: There are various tasks for skilled carpenters. The majority of us will devote ourselves to outdoor work to help spruce up our resident's yard!

Contact: sylvia@ststephenschurch.org (youth); Bill.Brinkman@hdrinc.com (adults & skilled workers)

GROWING UP ONLINE

Intergenerational Movie Night



Teens and adults: join us for a viewing of the Frontline program, followed by special break-out sessions for teens, parents of young children, parents of adolescents, and other concerned adults. Pizza and Dessert provided.

WHEN: Friday, May 9th; 7:00pm – 9:30pm

WHERE: St. Stephen's Church

WHO: Everyone is welcome! Childcare available.

RSVP by Monday, May 5th

Sylvia Miller-Mutia (St. Stephen's) 435-4501 x14 | sylvia@ststephenschurch.org

Co-Hosted by St. Stephen's and St. John's Episcopal Churches



Favorite Books for Summer Reading

Parents, youth, and kids...

Make a list of your favorite (positive, inspiring, or faith-building) books to share with others at St. Stephen's. We'll publish a list of St. Stephen's Youth & Families Summer Reading Favorites in our next edition of the Touchstone II.

Email your list to sylvia@ststephenschurch.org by May 15.

Coming up...

Saturday, April 26: Rebuilding Together-Community Service Project for teens and adults

Saturday, April 26: "Wild West Hoot 'n Holler", (fun, fundraising, and farewell for Sylvia)

Sunday, April 27: Confirmation Candidate Sermons at 8:00 and 10:30

Sunday, May 4: Year End Youth "Retreat"-Juniors and Seniors

Friday, May 9: "Growing Up Online" Film, Dessert and Discussion (for teens and adults); 7-9:30 PM

Saturday, May 17: Confirmations at Grace Cathedral

Saturday, May 17: Youth & Families Meet at the Movies to see Prince Caspian (details in Sunday bulletin 5/11)

Sunday, May 18: Year End Youth "Retreat"-Freshman and Sophomores

Sunday, June 1: Workcamp Carwash and LAST Workcamp meeting

Sunday, June 8: Year End Youth "Retreat"-Middle Earth (Grades 6-8)

June 16-20: Vacation Bible School

June 21-29: High School Workcamp in Hammond, Indiana

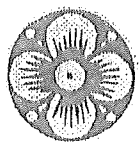
July 8-13: National EYE (Episcopal Youth Event) in San Antonio, TX

July 28-August 2: Camp Create Jr. Directors Program

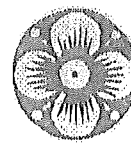
August 1-2: Camp Create Counselor Program

August 4-8: Camp Create

For more information on these events, contact sylvia@ststephenschurch.org or 435-4501 x14



St. Stephen's Children
get a taste of



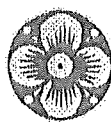
Traditional African Dance & Storytelling
and help us celebrate the feast of Pentecost

Join renowned instructor Nana-Dictta Graves as she
teaches us the African Basket Dance

Sunday, May 4th

9:45-10:30 (During Sunday School) All Children

10:30-11:15 (After Sunday School) Continued practice for
children who would like to dance for the Pentecost Service



Join us for the Feast of Pentecost
Service and Celebration

Sunday, May 11th

9:15 Dancers Warm-Up and Review Session

10:00 Pentecost Service



Praise God with tambourine and dance! (Psalm 150:4)