

Sharing the love of Jesus with grandchildren

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In Texas, [534,729 grandparents are raising their grandchildren](#). These senior adults are stepping in to raise their grandchildren when the children's own parents are not able or willing to do so. In the United States, 2.9 million grandchildren live in the home of their grandparents with no parents in the home.

Whether grandparents are custodial or simply spend time together, sharing the love of Jesus with youngsters is vitally import.



Larry Megason,
minister to senior
adults at First Baptist
Church in Frisco

Larry Megason, the minister to senior adults at First Baptist Church in Frisco, realizes the value of grandparents to their grandchildren. "We believe that the role of grandparent to a grandchild is God's plan for families," Megason said.

"Because this relationship is so significant, Frisco First has implemented

several programs to build bonds between the two groups while instilling Christian values,” Megason added. “Recently, the church developed a program known as ‘Grand Life.’ Presently, we have 60 grandparents who are equipped to help and plan to increase this number in the future.”

Activities for grandparents

Grand Life includes activities like the following:

Letters from Granddads. Grandfathers are trained to write letters for special occasions and milestone events in a child’s life.

For example, when a grandchild graduates from high school, the child takes the letter out of a box and reads its message, such as how proud the grandfather is, advice for living or how the grandchild can trust Jesus. Other occasions include when a grandchild marries, has a first baby or purchases a first home.

There will be times when the grandfather no longer is living, but the grandchild remembers those special times spent together. Each letter contains a Christian message.

Weekly notes. Megason encourages grandparents to write a short, handwritten note each week and to send it by regular mail. Include such thoughts as: “Thinking of you,” “Praying for you,” “Congratulations on those good grades,” or “Proud of you!”

Grand Camps. Frisco First plans time for grandparents and grandkids to spend together. Whether one day, a weekend or a week, these times include curriculum enabling seniors to be intentional grandparents.

The church recommends books and movies they can share and identifies Bible verses to learn.

“There are so many activities that bring families together in a Christian setting,” Megason said.

Sending cards. Look for Christian cards that contain a Scripture verse, such as, “[Children] are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from him” (Psalm 127:3, NIV). Another verse appropriate for children is, “A new command I give you: Love one another” (John 13:34, NIV).

Creative ways to show God’s love

Grandchildren are a gift from God. If you are fortunate to have a precious grandchild or grandchildren, you are blessed. You also have the opportunity to share the love of Jesus with them. In addition to the ideas Megason suggests, consider the following.

Give the gift of time. Spending money on expensive gifts isn’t what makes grandchildren happy. They need—and want—you. Suggest that they think of ways to give of themselves to serve God and others.

Plan adventures as gifts. An individual trip—just grandparents and one child—and the planning, scheduling and packing can make a memory they will tell their own children one day.

Bible Trivia Q&A. Take turns with a grandchild to find answers to Bible questions on the computer.

Volunteer for mission opportunities. Have you considered volunteering for a church mission trip along with an older grandchild? [Texas Baptist Men Disaster Relief](#) goes to places where natural disasters have changed communities. The need for missions is everywhere—even in your own community.

Technology: Facebook, email, YouTube. If you live away from

grandchildren, don't allow the miles to separate the love of family. Use technology to connect with them.

Watch wholesome family movies. Discover Christian movies that are age-appropriate for your grandchild. As you watch, stop the video in different places and ask: "What do you think will happen next?" "Could a different decision be made?" "What would be the consequences of this action?" "What if ...?"

Attend Christian concerts. Youth and teens love their music. Although their music may not be your choice, offer to purchase tickets to a Christian music concert and attend with your teen.

Find opportunities to teach Bible lessons. Who would have thought a bar of soap and a plastic knife could teach about Jonah and the whale? And yes, you can carve a piece of soap into a fish or a whale. And while you and your grandchild are whittling away, tell the Bible story. Many lessons are unplanned. Seize the moment.

Encourage the skill of writing. Focus on the five senses and how God uses these in our lives. Poems, inspirational thoughts and putting thoughts into words can be a fun activity while teaching skills for life-long learning.

I've known retired couples who have taken on the responsibility of raising their grandchildren. They put their retirement plans on hold while taking on a parenting role. These seniors wouldn't trade anything for the love these little ones have brought to their lives. And somehow, God provides the necessary energy to make this work.

Carolyn Tomlin writes for the Christian magazine and newspaper market and teaches the Boot Camp for Christian Writers. Tomlin believes that a day spent with a grandchild is one of the best!