



PARENT CONNECT

A BRIDGE BETWEEN PARENTS AND YOUTH MINISTRY



THE BENEFITS OF COLORING

Not only is coloring fun and conducive to conversation, but medical journals also tout the physical and mental perks. In fact, psychologists have prescribed coloring to patients for more than 100 years!

So lest coloring seem like a waste of time, ponder these benefits:

Relaxation

Stress reduction

Hand-eye coordination

Increased communication skills

Expanded individualism and creativity

Better long-term focus

GRAB YOUR CRAYONS

Adult coloring books were the rage this past holiday season, so you might have several around your house. You may even be trying your hand at a renewed artistic expression from your elementary days.

Where did this sudden surge come from, and why are older kids buying into it so quickly?

These days, teenagers are inundated with more responsibility than ever. Homework is prolific and more demanding, and the grades-race never ends. Constant messages of “succeed, succeed, succeed” overwhelm kids, starting as early as elementary school.

In contrast to your adolescence, teenagers have very little expendable time now. Their schedules are filled to overflowing with school demands, extracurricular activities, after-school jobs, and so on. Plus, students must deal with pressures from parents and counselors to start considering colleges earlier than ever.

So adult coloring books have come along at just the right time. The intricate designs offer just enough challenge to engage brains with the perfect amount of childhood throwback to capture teenagers’ hearts.

This “new” medium offers parents a golden opportunity to communicate with teenagers. Sit down and color together for a while. Something amazing happens when teens can engage part of their brain in what appears to be a “mindless activity.” Defenses are lowered, and kids start talking!

Remember coloring with your kids when they were little? That simple activity provided time for sharing dreams and ideas, as well as building compassion. For busy teenagers—and parents—it can supply restful Sabbath moments that are so difficult to seize.

So grab those crayons, plus some cookies and milk. And don’t worry about staying in the lines!



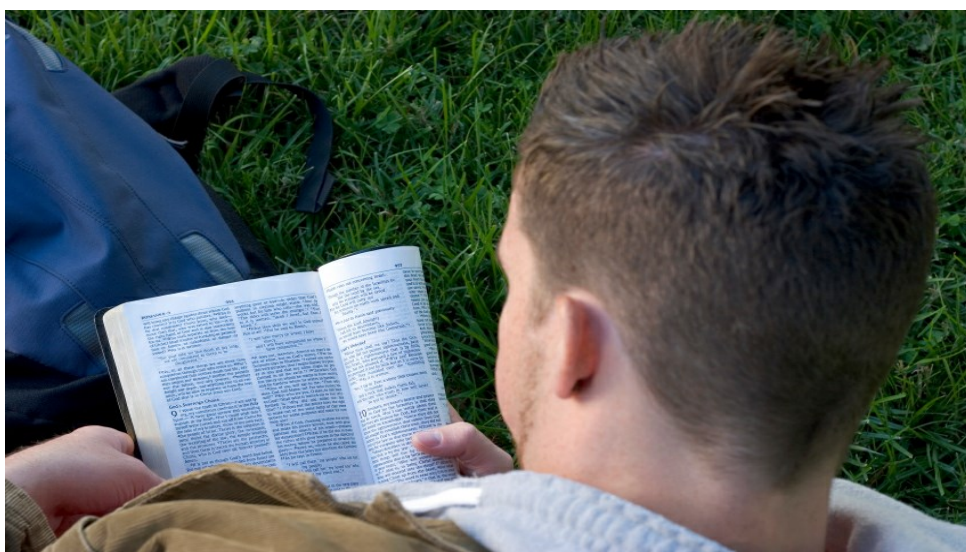
YOUTH CULTURE

A WORD FROM THE WORD

So commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these words of mine. Tie them to your hands and wear them on your forehead as reminders. Teach them to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up.

Write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates, so that as long as the sky remains above the earth, you and your children may flourish in the land the Lord swore to give your ancestors.

Deuteronomy 11:18-21, NLT



FAITH, FRAILTY, & CONFIDENCE

As parents, we have the privilege and responsibility of being the primary faith-influencers for our kids. But for many of us, that task feels daunting and even unattainable. Many of us are insecure about our Bible knowledge or still struggle with our own faith and obedience issues. How can we tell our kids anything about becoming a Christ-follower?

The best way to communicate matters of faith to teenagers is authentic honesty. Unfortunately, many parents feel as if they need to supply every answer and prevent kids from making the same mistakes and missteps we did. So we try to present something shiny, new, and, frankly, unattainable for them.

Your greatest ally in pointing your kids to Jesus isn't your impeccable knowledge of Scripture or the ability to effectively convey "do-as-I-say-not-as-I-do." The most poignant, life-changing moments will occur when you say things such as "This is what I wish I'd done,

and not doing it led me down this path." Or "I'm not sure I know the answer to that question; let's look together to see if we can discover it, and if not, let's ask someone." Or "Sometimes I'm not 100% sure about all this, but I'm learning to trust Jesus as we go along."

Embracing an authentic faith—and introducing your kids to their own—must include your honesty and frailty, as well as confidence and security. Be resolute about what you know and honest about what you don't.

JESUS-CENTERED BIBLE

Wait. Isn't the Bible already Jesus-centered? Of course, but this unique resource offers helpful insights to grow your faith.

You're probably familiar with the New Testament's "red letters" in some Bibles. Those are words Jesus spoke during his time on earth. But the new Jesus-Centered Bible takes that a step further, using blue text to highlight the Old Testament's many references to Jesus.

With a "chapter a day" reading plan, provocative questions for personal or group discovery, and a bee-line focus on Jesus in every single book, this new study Bible will be a game-changer in your teenager's understanding of Christ. It's great for moms and dads, too!

The Jesus-Centered Bible is available at local Christian bookstores and online at [LifeTree Family](#) and [Amazon](#).



IN THEIR WORLD

STUDY APPS FOR TEENS

If your teenagers need help studying, recommend these apps:

Talkboard (free)—Helps with collaborative group projects.

30/30 (free)—Useful for managing tasks and time.

Quizlet (free)—Study tool for memorization.

Notability (\$5.99)—Intuitive note-taking app.

Google Drive (free)—Organizational system for building and sharing files.



COLLEGE EXAMP PREP

Few things strike fear into teenagers' hearts like college-exam day. Kids wonder and worry: "Will I be smart enough? Can I remember everything? How will my score impact my ability to get into my dream school—or *any* school, for that matter?"

Although cramming is the norm, nothing replaces routine, ongoing study as the most effective means of preparing. These apps can help:

- **The Official SAT Question of the Day**
—From the maker of the SAT, this free app offers a daily question from each of the test's primary sections: math, critical reading, and writing. Students can explore the reasons behind each correct and incorrect answer.
- **SAT Up**—Highly ranked as one of the most conclusive, beneficial prep tools for the SAT, this free app offers more than 400 questions from every

section of the test. It can even tally scores and percentiles to see where students land in national rankings to help estimate actual test-day scores.

- **ACTStudent**—Makers of the ACT developed this app using actual test questions. It's lauded as the most reliable test prep for the ACT, especially for students on the go.
- **ACT for Dummies**—This app (\$9.99) offers more than 150 test questions and two complete sample tests. It offers timed-testing similar to that of actual testing day and features a countdown clock for the big day.

CollegeBoard.org and ACTStudent.org offer registration and test-date information so parents can help their students stay on track for college-entrance benchmarks.



FEBRUARY 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31 Youth Sunday!	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 Super Bowl Subs	8	9	10 7 p.m. Ash Wednesday	11	12	13
14 6-8 Youth Group	15	16	17 6 p.m. Soup Supper 7 p.m. Worship (The People vs Jesus of Nazareth)	18	19	20
21 6-8 Youth Group	22	23	24 6 p.m. Soup Supper 7 p.m. Worship (The People vs Jesus of Nazareth)	25	26	27
28 6-8 Youth Group	29	1	2 6 p.m. Soup Supper 7 p.m. Worship (The People vs Jesus of Nazareth)	3	4	5
6 6-8 Youth Group	7	8	9 6 p.m. Soup Supper 7 p.m. Worship (The People vs Jesus of Nazareth)	10	11	12



Dear parents,

As we round the bend of winter and begin dreaming of warmer days and new beginnings, remember that we're praying for you and your family during every season.

Whether your kids are just entering adolescence or you're about to launch the last one from the nest, we're here for you. Raising teenagers is challenging and exciting, scary and amazing. But we're standing with you as you guide your kids into adulthood.

Thanks for continuing to influence their faith walk. It's an honor to support you—and it's a responsibility we take very seriously. Know that we love, admire, and pray for you. We love being part of your family!

Your Youth Ministries Team at St. Paul Lutheran Church

