

# JANUARY 2025

## “COMPANION PLANTING”



**Spiritual Practice:**  
Hospitality



**Bible Story:**  
Jesus' Life



**Memory Verse:**  
Hebrews 13:2 NLT

*“Don’t forget to show hospitality to strangers, for some who have done this have entertained angels without realizing it!”*

## FORMATION ACTIVITY



### PARENTS:

Watch the Formation video to learn about January with Growing Families. Laura Hunter will share about a practice that increases the spiritual vibrancy of Christian families.

Parents, please read the curriculum outline to familiarize yourself with the resources before or soon after opening the Resource bag with your family. Put the paper copy in your binder to use throughout the month. After reading all the options, choose what works with your family schedule and create a grace-filled family rhythm. The weekly plan below is only a suggestion. As you enjoy spending time together you may choose to do more than you planned.

# FORMATION ACTIVITY (cont.)

## Week 1:

- Watch the Formation video early in the first week. (5 minutes)
- Use your Advent wreath with your Nativity set on Sunday, January 5th. You have a curriculum page with a liturgy for Epiphany. Monday, January 6th is the worldwide day of Epiphany, a day that God's people celebrate the wise men's journey and the revelation that Jesus was born to be King of the world. (10 minutes)
- Watch Valerie Stark tell God's Story. (20 minutes)
- Look at the Resource page on Hospitality. Watch some of the YouTube videos together, especially the Songs for the Family section, and start a spiritual conversation with your family.

## Week 2:

- Read aloud the book, *If Jesus Came to My House*. Wonder together and have a spiritual conversation about the book. (5-10 minutes)
- Drink your hot cocoa and tea. Use your Hospitality Checklist and discuss your Family's hospitality plan. Choose your date and send the invitation for your meal with guests. (15 - 30 minutes)
- Tell God's story with your family. (20 minutes)
  - Use the God's Story script and props, the comic, or the toddler rhymes.
- Begin reading, *The Spiritually Vibrant Home*.

## Week 3:

- Mom tell your faith story to the family this month. Dad, if you have not told your story, it is time. Have a spiritual conversation about each of your faith stories. Let the children ask questions about your story. (10 - 15 minutes)
- Decorate your Table Runner in preparation for your guests. Ideas are in the Hospitality Checklist. (This could last as long or as little as you like)
- View Dr. Hall's video and complete the worksheet. Find a time to discuss this as parents. (15 minutes)

## FORMATION ACTIVITY (cont.)

### Week 4:

- Enjoy your guests.
- Have a conversation with your children about how each of you experienced the hospitality planned event. You may want to write responses or draw a picture about the event in your journal.
- Review the Age Level of Faith Formation document in your resources. Every child matures spiritually at different ages. Read to see what topics you have covered with your children concerning their belief in God.
- Go over parts of the curriculum you didn't get to cover or go back to a prior month and revisit.

## TELLING GOD'S STORY (6 min.)



### FAMILY:

Watch the video together as a family:

“The Life of Christ - God’s Dangerous Rescue Plan”

- Take time once a week to watch or retell the story using the gold bag of props. You don't have to use the script; tell it in your own words.
- Toddlers can tell the story with rhyming cards
- Elementary-age children can tell the story with the story people and props
- Youth can tell the story using the comic strip
- Parents can use any of the above

### For families with teens

- Watch as Steph Peterson leads your family through Visio Divina (an encounter with God through images). Each of you will respond with a work of art.

### For families with babies and toddlers

- We have another fun rhyme to introduce your babies and toddlers to God's Story this month. Watch this sweet video and practice it together – as many times as they ask.

## COUNSELING VIDEO (20 min.)



### PARENTS:

Watch the video - “God, Help Me to Accept the Things I Cannot Change” with Dr. Russell Hall.

This month Dr. Hall talks about the temperament each child is born with stays with them but parents can still influence their children’s character traits. You can celebrate a child’s unique qualities while still guiding them toward holy living. Watch this encouraging video about accepting the things we cannot change and having the courage to change the things we can.

## SPIRITUAL PRACTICE AND SERVICE PROJECT



This month we are single-minded in our pursuit of becoming a restorative community through the act of hospitality. We are asking you to create one hospitality experience this month but you may invite people to your home more often.

