



# the Parent LINK

Children's Ministry Edition



December 2011



FBC First Kids  
First Baptist College Station



## Try New Christmas Faith-Boosters

The most wonderful time of the year is a wonderful time to share Jesus—and why he came to earth—with your children. Instead of getting caught up in the holiday rush, focus on what Christmas truly means. Use the Advent season (the weeks of preparation before Christmas) to engage in old and new traditions, make simple crafts, have discussions, and worship Jesus, our newborn King.

Faith-boosters needn't be elaborate or time-consuming. Instead, use materials you already have to reinforce the good news that the angels shared on the first Christmas Eve: Jesus, our Savior, is born!

After you've shared this message with your children, look for simple ways to spread Christmas joy as a family. From caroling and delivering cookies to sending cards and inviting neighbors to programs or concerts, the possibilities are endless for letting your light shine as you celebrate Jesus, the Light of the world.

### POWERSOURCE

#### ASK GOD:

1. To bless your Christmas preparations and to ready your hearts for his arrival.
2. To help your family stay focused on Jesus during the holidays.
3. To replace stress and busyness with calm and peace, so you can treasure family time.

#### INSIGHTS

- In a poll conducted in the U.K., 24% of children ages 7 to 11 said Christmas was about giving, rather than receiving, presents. *(Daily Mail)*
- When asked about the true meaning of Christmas, 70% of children said it's about celebrating the birth of Christ, 39% said it's about being thankful, 37% said it's about spending time with family, and 13% said it's about receiving gifts. *(KidzEyes.com)*



Merry Christmas & Happy New Year from your First Kids Children's Ministry Staff! It is our hope and prayer that you have a most blessed holiday season this year.

Advent and the Christmas season is a wonderful time of the year to pass along personal stories of your own family, but also important faith stories. Read the advent scriptures from the Bible and talk about the many different parts of Jesus' story. Take every opportunity to remind your children of WHO your family is waiting for this year. They are excited - join them in focusing their excitement on Jesus! It is truly the most wonderful time of the year.

Deuteronomy 6:5-7 from The Message reminds us to *"Love God, your God, with your whole heart: love Him with all that's in you, love Him with all you've got! Write these commandments that I've given you today on your hearts. Get them inside of you and then get them inside your children. Talk about them wherever you are, sitting at home or walking in the street; talk about them from the time you get up in the morning to when you fall into bed at night."* The Christmas season is a great time to start building devotion into each day, if you are not already doing so.

We love and are honored to serve your family here at First Baptist Church. We look forward to partnering with you in 2012!

Merry Christmas and may God richly bless you and yours,

Bronwyn, Jennifer, and Heather

So the Word became human and made his home among us. He was full of unfailing love and faithfulness. And we have seen his glory, the glory of the Father's one and only Son. (John 1:14)

At Christmas, we celebrate the good news that God became flesh, in the form of Jesus, to die for our sins.

### While engaging in Christmas festivities, start a conversation by asking older children these questions:

1. What are your favorite Christmas traditions, and why? How do our traditions help us remember the real meaning of Christmas?
2. What are some ways we can add service and outreach to our Christmas celebrations?
3. How would you explain Christmas to someone who didn't know anything about Jesus?

## FAMILY EXPERIENCE

Add a meaningful new twist to your Christmas celebrations by trying these ideas:

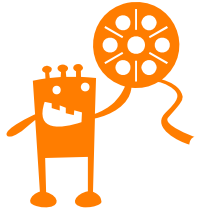
- **Unwrap the Story**—Start a new tradition as you unpack your family's crèche, or nativity scene. Let each person pull out one or two wrapped figures without peeking to see what's inside. Take turns unwrapping figures. When someone adds



a figure to the scene, have him or her say a prayer of thanks for the role that figure played in Jesus' birth. For example, the person holding the stable might say, "Thank you that there was at least a stable nearby where Jesus could be born." The person with a shepherd might say, "Thank you that the shepherds went and told lots of people about Jesus' birth."

After the scene is complete, discuss the role we all can play in preparing for Jesus' birth and in telling people why Jesus came to earth.

- **Parable Ornaments**—Make a different ornament each week that reflects a parable from the Bible. For week one, pour salt into clear ball ornaments (Matthew 5:13). For week two, pour mustard seeds into clear ball ornaments (Matthew 17:20). For week three, tie Goldfish crackers in netting (Matthew 13:47). For week four, pour sunflower seeds into clear ball ornaments (Matthew 13:37). Print the verses and tie them to the ornaments. Then hang the ornaments on a small Christmas tree as a powerful reminder of Jesus' life and teachings.



# MEDIA MADNESS



## MOVIES



**Movie:** *The Adventures of Tintin*

**Genre:** Animated adventure

**Rating:** PG (for adventure-action violence, some drunkenness and brief smoking)

**Cast:** Jamie Bell, Daniel Craig

**Synopsis:** In this motion-capture film based on comic books, a boy and a captain go on a treasure hunt to find a sunken ship.

**Our Take:** With Steven Spielberg and Peter Jackson at the helm, *Tintin* is being hailed as a “must-see” family movie this Christmas.

## MUSIC!



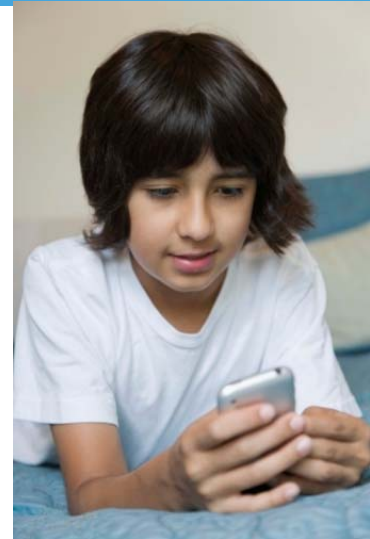
**Artist:** Aaron Shust

**Album:** *This Is What We Believe*

**Artist Info:** Shust, a church worship leader, won several Dove Awards for his 2005 folk-driven album *Anything Worth Saying*.

**Summary:** The singer-songwriter's fourth album contains several heartfelt worship anthems, including “My Hope Is in You.” The moving video is available on YouTube.

**Our Take:** Shust's powerful tunes and lyrics will help listeners of all ages celebrate God's power and love.



## CULTURE & TRENDS

• Last year, 36% of kids ages 10 or 11 owned a cell phone. That number has more than doubled since 2005. Boys are more likely than girls to perform “data-intensive” activities with their phones, such as browsing the Web and downloading games. (*Mediamark, NY Times*)

• Before heading to the ER with their sick children, more parents are now logging in. One in eight parents now checks the Internet for medical information before plunking down an emergency-room copay. (*Reuters*)

## QUICK STATS

• Only 4% of adults ages 25 to 34 in the U.K. believe that the most important part of Christmas is the religious meaning. (*Church of England Newspaper*)

• According to a new study, preschoolers who have trouble resisting temptation and delaying gratification are more likely than their more-patient peers to become adults who lack self-control. (*HealthDay*)



## GAMES

Title	Content	Rating & Platform
<i>Skylander: Spyro's Adventure</i>	This action-adventure game is pricey because it comes with collectible action figures and a sock puppet. Contains cartoon violence.	E10+; Xbox 360, Playstation 3, Nintendo 3DS, Wii,
<i>Centipede Infestation</i>	In this reboot of the classic arcade game, players must kill as many creepy, crawly critters as they can in numerous rounds of play.	E10+; Nintendo 3DS, Wii
<i>FactMonster.com</i>	This free website from Information Please provides a wide range of resources for students, including a “Homework Center” reference desk.	Geared toward elementary and middle-school students



This page is designed to help educate parents and isn't meant to endorse any movie, music, or product. Our prayer is that you'll make informed decisions about what your children watch, listen to, and wear.

# COMING in DECEMBER

- Dec 2**      **First Kids Christmas Festival, 6:00-10:00 pm \* FREE**  
A night for our 1st - 6th graders featuring Christmas games, crafts, movies, and more. A reservation is required and space is limited. Please call Heather to make your reservation.
- Dec 7**      **Children's Discipleship Program End-of-Year Party, 6:30pm**  
A Christmas celebration in our Wednesday night Mission Friends, Bible Buddies, and Bible Drill programs.
- Dec 9 & 11**      **"A Sanders Family Christmas" Musical, in the Sanctuary \* FREE**  
In this hilarious holiday show, the Sanders family travels to My Pleasant Baptist Church to celebrate Christmas in 1941, shortly after Pear Harbor, to have their final Saturday night singing before Dennis Sanders reports for basic training.  
\*\* December 9 at 7:00pm and December 11 at 3:00 & 6:00pm\*  
Childcare only available 6pm, December 11 for babies - 3 years and under.
- Dec 11**      **Children & Preschool Leadership Appreciation Lunch \* Noon**  
A thank you lunch for all our teachers and directors. Invitation were sent mid November. Please call Heather with your response.
- Dec 18**      **Birthday Party for Jesus, 9:45 am**  
for babies - Kindergarten during Sunday School.  
**Family Christmas Caroling, 5:00pm \* Free**  
Singing to and visiting with our homebound members. Meet at the church to carpool. Light refreshments available afterwards in the Fellowship Hall.
- Dec 21-28**      **Church Office & Building Closed starting noon of December 21**
- Dec 21**      **No Evening Activities**
- Dec 24**      **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service, 6:00 pm**
- Dec 25**      **One Worship service only, 11:00 am**  
No Sunday School and no evening activities
- Dec 28**      **No Evening Activities**
- Dec 29 & 30**      **Church Office Open HALF DAY ONLY**  
to receive end of year donations and contributions.

# COMING SOON

- Jan 1**      **Family Sunday Worship starting at 9:00 am**  
Join us for a pancake breakfast and joint family Bible Study.  
**One Worship Service at 11:00 am, no evening activities**
- Jan 2**      **Church Office & Building Closed**
- Jan 11**      **Children's Discipleship Program Spring Kick Off, 6:30 pm**  
The start of a new semester in Mission Friends, Bible Buddies, and Bible Drill.
- Jan 15**      **3rd Annual Chili Cook-Off, 6:00pm in the Fellowship Hall**  
Bring your best homemade chili for a chance to win a coveted title.
- Jan 16**      **CSISD Off in Observation of MLK Day**
- Jan 20**      **Parents' Night Out, 6:00-10:00pm \* \$8/child**  
Sign your kiddos up for Pajama Night! Dinner is served and space is guaranteed through January 13. Pre-paid reservation is required, see Heather.