Discover how to have a close, loving, vibrant family!

Forever
Family

Spring 2012 - Volume 4, Issue 1

Have a Safe Flight
Happier with Less
Encircled by Love
Pause & Ponder

“We have not yet begun to use kind words in such abundance as they ought to be used.”
— Blaise Pascal

Have you been blessed by Forever a Family? We would love to hear from you!

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Busy! This word is not only a part of our vocabulary, but it is the reality of our lives. The days, weeks, months, and yes, even the years, seem to fly by as we try to keep up with the demands of life. We receive wedding invitations and baby announcements sharing the joys of life. We also receive calls or emails informing us of a family member or friend who is battling cancer, has been in an accident, has lost a loved one, or is facing some other life altering event.

In the busyness of life we need to take time to relax, be refreshed, and be renewed by God’s amazing love. Life is too much for any of us to navigate alone – whether it is in good times or those more challenging times. We need the Lord to lead, comfort, strengthen, and carry us through this world in preparation for eternal life where busyness will no longer be our reality.

As you take this time to connect with the Source of Life, we pray you will be encouraged to prioritize what is most important. It is also our prayer that Forever a Family magazine will help in this process. We are excited to introduce our new section, Health & Lifestyle, and trust you will be blessed by upcoming articles that will help you to experience a more vibrant life in 2012!

Alane Waters
Editor
Time is a precious gift. When my children were very young I didn’t realize how quickly time would pass. Now I look with surprise at how my little ones are now in their teens. As I look back it doesn’t matter so much now if the house was kept in perfect order, or if the garden was completely weeded, or if all of the canning was accomplished. Those things were important but not important enough to sacrifice time with my children. I remember them asking me to play. I wish I had played with them more but I thought there just wasn’t time. There was too much to be done. I have come to realize the work can wait but time doesn’t. We can become so busy with the cares of this life that we neglect what is most important to us.

Nonetheless, the house did need to be cleaned and meals needed to be prepared. I found a few things to be helpful. The less you have the less there is to clean and pick up. Going through all of our toys and belongings and choosing what to part with was our first step. We boxed these items and put them away for a time, discovering in the process that we didn’t miss them and could part with most after all. Some of the boxed things we would rotate monthly, bringing a box out while putting one away. More material things will not make our children happier or more content. I found the opposite to be true.

I also discovered how beneficial it was for children to have practical things like a broom, rolling pin, mixing bowl, etc. They could pretend to be doing the things they saw us doing without extra toy purchases or clutter. How wonderful to have them doing the work with us! Tasks usually take much longer when we include our children but it is precious time together. They feel good when we appreciate the “help” they provide and as our children grow they will become more and more helpful. This patient investment of time in training our children will reap large returns in family togetherness and their future usefulness.

Paula and her husband, David, live on a small farm in North Carolina with their four children.
Conventional wisdom is sometimes correct but can often be wrong. An example of what is often believed but is not actually true has to do with the subject of kids and snacks. Many, maybe even most, people believe that children actually need snacks to make it through the day and do well in their tasks. They worry about blood sugar and “energy levels.” This thinking stems from piecing together information that leads to an incorrect conclusion. If young children had historically been given three regular meals per day the addition of snacks might not have achieved such a foothold in society. Unfortunately, breakfast consumption declined over many decades and eventually it became common for school age children to skip breakfast entirely. As the breakfast meal was omitted, the idea of having something to “make it through the morning” coupled with a correct understanding that children who are well nourished do better with their studies provided the rationale for having a mid-morning snack. Soon this resulted in the idea that the afternoon deserved the same consideration. Soon, with the help of those who wish to sell us more than we need for health and well-being, it became a common belief that children actually need snacks. The problem was the lack in the breakfast, not the need for a snack.

The truth is children can go without snacks provided they receive a nourishing breakfast. A consistent healthy breakfast would serve them far better than snacks because a good breakfast helps prevent other health problems; most notably the risk of obesity which is an alarming problem in our society. Snacking may also contribute to tooth decay and, in some cases, sleeping problems (presumably from altered digestion).

Frequent between-meal snacking is very disruptive to normal stomach emptying and can actually delay normal processing. Snacking is a bit like lifting the lid on your washing machine and thereby making the cycle start all over again. It makes it difficult for digestion to progress properly. The inevitable consequence is that the “tummy ache” that results is attributed to hunger when it may just be disrupted digestion.

Do what is best for your children; skip the snacks and focus on providing the real need of well planned nutritious meals, particularly breakfast.

Ken is a physician with fellowship training in Pediatric Gastroenterology and Human Nutrition. He and his wife, Julie, still live in Maine where they and their four children “grew up together.”
Matthew lives in Montana where he works as a computer programmer and is learning the benefits of frugality and saving.

• Develop a written budget and don’t exceed it.
• Avoid credit. Credit puts tomorrow in debt for today.

In Matthew 6:19-21, Jesus gives us some pertinent advice for managing our money today: “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal: For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.”

Even if we live in an area where thievery is common, we are much more likely to lose our money to spending than to theft. Not only does Christ’s savings plan deposit our money in a safe place, the desire of our heart will be for heaven. Investing in eternity will make both our future self and our present self the happiest that they can be.

Hey!” said Tomorrow to Today, “You are using my vacation money!” “Well, I want to go see my girlfriend for Christmas this year,” Today replied impulsively. Tomorrow looked mournful: “You already bought her perfume, an expensive handbag, and took her out to dinner so many times that I am living on beans and rice! You don’t seem to care about me at all!”

Such are the discussions that go on inside our minds everyday as we decide which self to please. Our present self wants to have its desires met now. Our future self wants us to save today so that we will have something for tomorrow. Unfortunately, our future self is at a severe disadvantage. We live in the present and spend or save our money in the present. Considering how our present actions will affect our future well-being can help us make better financial decisions today.

Often, simple changes in how we manage our money can greatly affect our long-term financial success. Here are a few ideas that I have found helpful:

• Upon receiving your paycheck, deposit your savings as soon as possible. This strategy reduces the temptation to spend it impulsively.
• Delay spending with a wish list. Often what seems essential right now loses its appeal as time goes by.
Janet lives in California with her physician husband, and is passionate about studying the Bible with others. 

I’ll never forget the day reality set in when the majority of my home schooling career was over. It was only 8:00 am and a very long day loomed ahead of me. Our daughter had just landed her first nursing job away from home, our son was attending an out of state college, and I felt sick inside.

Sure, I had been away from my two precious children before, but after giving up a full-time professional career to become full-time mom, homemaker, and teacher, breaking that deep day-to-day bond with my children was painful.

Most of us have experienced changes that have affected our lives greatly. We transition through moves, relationships, jobs, and health challenges. Maybe we or a loved one have acquired a life-threatening disease, become disabled, or have lost someone through death or divorce. With the current economy and present world events, major changes may be affecting our living situations, livelihood, or health. Whether we are experiencing common changes as a part of life or we are facing disasters that are affecting us profoundly, it’s how we choose to respond that makes all the difference.

Our brains have been designed to reinforce and make mental pathways that anatomically allow us to succeed or fail. Smelling the roses is much better than being pricked by the thorns we experience in life. Following are some ideas that may bless you as they did me:

• Truly give any situation you are struggling with fully to God by mentally and verbally committing it to Him and do not take it back!
• Practice responding to every negative thought or feeling with one or more of God’s promises.
• Experience the presence of God by continually communicating with Him in your mind.
• Take specific time to pray alone and network with prayer partners.
• Memorize scripture promises. This can be doubly beneficial if you do it while exercising.
• Thank God for everything and list specifics, even negative situations. “Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be known to God” (Phillipians 4:6).
• Take the focus off yourself by helping others.

God can make all things wonderful in His time and remember that “all things work together for good to them that love God ...” (Romans 8:28).
When our family went for the ultrasound to see our youngest child for the first time, we expected nothing unusual. My wife’s four previous pregnancies had all been normal and we had no reason to think this one would be any different. It was very different. When we asked if everything was okay, the doctor just smiled and said we would talk when she was done. We waited in a cubicle while she reviewed the images.

After what seemed an eternity, we were informed of several malformations involving our baby’s bladder and rectum, the kidneys, and the heart. The bladder and rectum issue was usually fatal. My wife was in tears. I was numb. We questioned God, “Why?” His response, “Just trust Me.” So we prayed and tried to trust.

Future ultrasounds revealed the worst diagnosis was false. There were problems with the bladder and one kidney. The heart seemed fine. By the time Josiah was born, we knew he had one good kidney and that there were cysts in his bladder, but everything worked and we went home thinking we could settle down to enjoy our baby.

By three months we realized Josiah was not growing as he should and took him to our pediatrician. After listening to his heart she said, “He has a significant heart murmur.” She made an appointment with a cardiologist who discovered that he had a hole in his heart. It was not large enough to warrant immediate surgery, but required careful monitoring. Again, our question for God was, “Why?” His response, “Just trust Me.” So we prayed and tried to trust.

Josiah’s growth needed to meet certain minimums to avoid surgery and we returned home determined to help him grow. He didn’t nurse well so my wife pumped breast milk to provide him the best nutrition and, for the next few weeks, he just met those growth requirements.

About this time our daughter was asked to be in a wedding in Montana. We had planned to make a vacation of it, camping the whole way. A doctor friend suggested we take oxygen and an oximeter as a precaution, since we would be at high altitudes. We requested these items from the cardiologist, but she felt these measures weren’t needed since high altitudes ordinarily relieve the symptoms of a hole in the heart.

Heading up the mountains west of Denver, Josiah began to turn blue around the lips and show signs of distress. At the
emergency room, his oxygen levels tested low. After a phone consultation with our doctor friend, we decided it would be safe to proceed on our trip – with oxygen. We made it over the mountains. It was Friday evening.

By Sunday morning Josiah was not well. Our other children had the flu, and it appeared he had it as well. He looked bad enough that we cut our visit to Arches National Park short and headed for the children’s hospital in Salt Lake City.

There, on Monday morning, we discovered Josiah was a very sick baby. He had a viral infection which, coupled with the hole in his heart, had sent him into congestive heart failure. We spent a week at the hospital as he recovered from his infection and as the fluid was cleared from his lungs. Yet again we asked God, “Why?” His response remained the same, “Just trust Me.” So we prayed and tried to trust.

The rest of our trip was a blur of oxygen tanks, tubes, and beeps. The wedding, visiting friends, and three days of camping on our way home; all were overshadowed by our intense focus on Josiah’s oxygen levels. We arrived home exhausted, thankful, and with a different attitude toward surgery. We were ready!

At ten months, Josiah had open heart surgery to repair the hole in his heart. It’s impossible to describe our feelings as the nurses took our son from our arms and walked down the hall. We wondered, “Why? Why us? Why our son? What purpose could there possibly be in all this?” But God whispered again, “Just trust Me.” So we prayed again – and trusted! It was an incredible experience. God’s presence had never seemed so real. It was almost as if we could see His arms of love encircling us. We didn’t worry; we just rested in His presence.

Surgery was very successful and Josiah’s heart is working fine now, however, along the way we discovered that his problems were caused by a genetic condition which has additional symptoms. Having seen multitudes of specialists, we now praise God that his symptoms are mild compared to what they could have been. His development is delayed and he requires several kinds of therapy, but he is the joy of our lives. We are no longer asking, “Why?”

This experience reminds me of something I once read; “The Father’s presence encircled Christ, and nothing befell Him but that which infinite love permitted for the blessing of the world. Here was His source of comfort, and it is for us. He who is imbued with the Spirit of Christ abides in Christ. The blow that is aimed at him falls upon the Saviour, who surrounds him with His presence. Whatever comes to him comes from Christ…. Nothing can touch him except by our Lord’s permission, and ‘all things’ that are permitted ‘work together for good to them that love God.’” The truth of this quote has become very real and precious to us. We have learned that we don’t need, or even want, to know why. All we need to know is that we are encircled by His love.

Rob lives in Missouri where he is blessed to work from home. He enjoys time with his family, gardening, traveling, and being in nature.
Flying an airplane takes skill and planning. Likewise, piloting our marriages and families through life also requires more planning than most people realize.

To pilot a plane, one needs a pilot’s license, which requires diligent study and practice. Marriage also requires a license. Unfortunately, getting a marriage license is easier than getting a pilot’s license, yet both come with serious responsibilities that affect many others.

Prior to flying, a pilot studies the maps and ensures that he has the necessary navigational tools. In navigating our marriages, the Bible and prayer tell us whether we are headed in the right direction. Heeding God’s counsel is critical to a safe journey.

In an airplane, an instrument called the attitude indicator tells the position or attitude of the airplane. Spouses and family members need to be watchful of their attitudes, too. It is easy to get irritated over minor things. Beware of attitudes such as blaming, bitterness, jealousy or anger. Replace these attitudes with understanding, forgiveness, and love.

Weather is a major consideration in flying. A wise pilot won’t fly a small plane into the middle of a thunderstorm. If a pilot finds himself in a storm, however, slowing down and keeping the wings level enables him to reach safety.

Storms can enter marriages and family life, too. Stay calm, slow down, and prayerfully ride it out, without overreacting or fighting against each other. Remember the storm is your enemy — not your spouse!

In aviation, air traffic controllers willingly help pilots who get into challenging situations. So in our marriages, God promises to guide us out of trouble.

Ensuring the plane has enough fuel is critical. Many emergencies have resulted from inadequate fuel. In our marriages that fuel is love. Lack of love has caused thousands of marriages to fail. While aviation fuel is expensive, true love also costs something. Self must die when it wants to stay alive.

1 Corinthians 13 describes this fuel of love; “Love is patient and kind. It’s not envious, boastful or proud. It honors others, isn’t self-seeking, or easily angered. It doesn’t record wrongs or delight in evil but rejoices in truth. It protects, trusts, hopes, and perseveres. Love never fails.”

If we ask, God will ensure we have abundant selfless love that will endure the trials of life. Our prayer for you is that this fuel of love will last forever, and that your marriage will safely soar with increasing togetherness, love, and joy.

Darryl & Cheryl enjoy marriage, their family, flying, gardening and many outdoor activities.
n a recent review of 1 Samuel 4, I was impressed that life’s battles are for courageous men. The world needs men with heart and conviction. We need to be those men who will devote time and effort to represent the Creator in practical ways that will make our families a strong witness in this world.

My nephew spends a lot of time building muscles in order to achieve a desired sculpture and he obtains good results. Similarly, men must devote time in the Word of God to build spiritual muscles, and have the perfect image of Christ imprinted in them. This is achieved through the daily exercises of personal prayer, reading His word, and following the counsel of the Holy Spirit.

Several years ago I nearly defrauded my family of the peace and security they deserve. Against all counsel I was determined to pursue my selfish course but the Lord had mercy and averted what would have been certain financial disaster. I praise God for breaking my stubborn will. Here, I had to bring the muscles of my will to bear on my own personal decision making. This was only possible when I said no to greed and fraud and yes to my wife’s tearful pleas. It was only then that I truly showed strength of character. I am happier now for choosing integrity over dishonor.

When life’s challenges demand heavy lifting, the muscle can only go where the mind has already been. The muscles obey the mind as a rule and in this chain of command the wonderful union of body and mind form a harmonious unit. If men would resolve to stand on principle and do what is right for their family and the gospel’s sake, they would avoid much misery.

Let us be devoted to becoming a wholesome structure; body, mind, and spirit consecrated to be mature men of Christ. Let us be men in whom our families can trust, and on whom society can depend. Truly, the want of the world is the want of men who cannot be bought or sold.

When this symbiosis of the muscle and the mind is fostered then that man emerges; the man of God.

Alrick is an independent contractor in White Plains, NY where he lives with his wife and children.
My nephew’s spiritual welfare had long been a subject of concern. His mother, my younger sister, had given the Lord her heart amidst tears and pain before she died, almost six years ago.

My hope now is for her to one day meet again the son that she had barely begun to raise. That the Lord would make it possible for me to have a larger influence in my nephew’s life became my prayer.

My husband and I had just enjoyed our first year in our very roomy, rural home. Our grown son was well on his way toward his goal of medical school. I, in my fifties, was looking forward to the usual age-appropriate life focus.

Then, almost overnight, doors began to open. One obstacle after another was removed and miraculously we were named legal guardians of my then seven-year-old nephew. I was thrilled to have my prayers answered in such a spectacular way. Then the apprehension and questions began: “Lord, I’m not sure I’m fit for another round of full-blown motherhood. Lord, what about this arthritic back of mine, not to mention a few other worn out parts? Can I do this?”

There was only one way forward: to keep our eyes on the Lord’s leading and not on the challenges. A child needed a good home and the Lord had chosen us to provide it. Jesus continually drew my mind to focus on the way He had led through past trials.

We have had to meet great challenges during this past year but as we look back we see that it has been our weaknesses and shortcomings that have caused the most grief. We would be ashamed to detail our failures along the way as we have needed as much, if not more, transforming than this young boy. But the Lord has never failed to say, “Rise, take up your bed and walk.” “My strength is made perfect in weakness” (John 5:8, 2 Corinthians 12:9).

Our greatest discovery – the most miraculous progress happens for the child when the adults have completely submitted hearts. A year ago it was plain for us to see that a small child needed help, but what the Lord saw was that there were three children in need of transforming in this family.
Do you like to help your parents by doing special things for them? We like to surprise our parents. One of our favorite surprises when we were younger was to make a “restaurant” for our parents. Our names both start with “A”, so we called our “restaurant” “The Double ‘A’ Café.” We would make the meal and make a menu. Our menu consisted of a drinks section, a main dish section, and a sides section. Amanda would make the food and put it on the plates, while Anna would be the server. We would make it very fancy and Anna would then tell our parents what the “special” was (which they always ordered). We’d eat in the kitchen so they could have their meal alone. We would also find a way to make the meal free. Then, of course, we’d clean up. When our brother, Adam, was born, we changed the name to “The Triple ‘A’ Café.” We made a few more dishes for them to choose from and we let Adam be the server. Galatians 5:13 says, “…but by love serve one another.” Jesus showed service when He washed the disciples feet the night they were in the Upper Room. Can you think of someone you can serve this week?

Activity: See how many different words you can make out of the letters in the title of this article. We found 92; see how many you can find!
This issue marks the beginning of our **fourth year** of publishing *Forever a Family* magazine. Over the past three years we have received feedback on the magazine and have appreciated hearing from you.

At this time we would like to request more specific input from our readers. We value your opinion and ask that you share your thoughts with us. Please send an email, give us a call, or drop a note in the mail to let us know:

- **What you like about the magazine and what areas you feel could use improvement**
- **If there is a particular section that you have found to be a blessing**
- **If there has been a specific article that was especially encouraging or that you especially enjoyed**
- **If there has been a specific article that has made a positive difference in your life**

It is our desire to produce the best magazine possible that will continue to be a blessing to our readers. We look forward to hearing from you!

God bless,

The FAF Staff

P.S. We would also like to suggest that you consider using FAF magazine as a sharing tool. We have back issues that may be purchased for 50¢ each plus shipping. You may want to share magazines with friends, co-workers, neighbors, or extended family members. Some of our readers have placed *Forever a Family* in their doctor’s or dentist’s office. The possibilities are endless! If you have been blessed by the magazine please pass it on to others so they may receive a blessing, too!
2012
UPCOMING EVENTS

March 10 TROUT CREEK, MT
Trout Creek SDA Church
Contact: KaDene Evans
(406) 827-0676 kadene@juno.com

March 16 KIRKLAND, WA
For Young Adults
Kirkland SDA Church
Contact: Calvin Kim
(206) 579-9279 chksda@gmail.com

March 17 SEATTLE, WA
Southcenter SDA Church
Contact: Calvin Kim
(206) 579-9279 chksda@gmail.com

March 23 & 24 AMERICAN CANYON, CA
New Life SDA Church
Contact: Sheryl Spake
(707) 333-9875 sspake@cisco.com

April 4 – 8 OKLAHOMA FAMILY CAMP
Hosts: Mike & Connie Opeka
(417) 683-6740 ok@fcmhost.info

April 26 – 29 ROMANIA
Biserica Adventista Medias
Contact: Horst Mueller
drmuellerh@aol.com

May 3 – 7 UNITED KINGDOM FAMILY CAMP
Hosts: Jack & Joy Rayne
+44 (0) 1550-740-353 uk@fcmhost.info
From within UK, (01550) 740-353

May 16 – 20 NEW JERSEY FAMILY CAMP
Host: David Pritchard
(570) 807-3744 nj@fcmhost.info

May 30 – June 3 WASHINGTON FAMILY CAMP
Hosts: Ed & Jean Schlittenhart
(509) 292-0836 wa@fcmhost.info

June 13 – 17 CALIFORNIA FAMILY CAMP
Hosts: PeeWee & DeeDee Santoyo
(714) 360-3406 ca@fcmhost.info

June 28 – 30 BRITISH COLUMBIA FAMILY CAMP
Camp Hope, BC
Host: Tom Glatts
(604) 565-4246 glatts2cu@gmail.com
Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore.— Psalm 16:11