

Little Bridges News



December 2021

Calendar of Events

Harbor House Toy Drive

Drop Off Gifts By 12/3

PreK Conferences

11/29 – 12/3

Festive Sweater Day

Wednesday 12/15

Christmas Parade

Thursday 12/16
4:00 PM

CLOSED – Christmas

12/23 & 12/24

CLOSED – New Years

12/30 & 12/31

School Age

Holiday Camp

12/27 – 12/29
1/3 – 1/7 & 1/10

CLOSED – MLK Jr. Day

Monday 1/17

Canyon Creek Church

In-person or online

Sunday Services &
Sunday School 10am

Christmas Eve Service 4pm

Harbor House Grab-A-Tag Gift Drive

Please join us as we participate in supporting the Harbor House Christmas Store again this year. Harbor House is a Christian nonprofit organization located in east Oakland that provides many services to low-income families.

Grab a tag off one of our trees and then either purchase a similar gift at a store and drop it off under the Little Bridges office tree by Friday Dec. 3rd, or scan the QR code on the back of your tag, purchase the gift off the Amazon Harbor House Wishlist and it will be delivered straight to the Harbor House.

Please consider helping another family this year. Your actions will warm your heart, spread kindness to a family and show your own child the true gift of giving this season.

Little Bridges Christmas Parade 12/16

This year we will be having an outdoor Christmas parade to celebrate the birth of Jesus. Each class will “parade” up to our outdoor stage and perform a song or two before parading off as a class.

Stay tuned for more details as the day gets closer. We ask that everyone be masked (even though this is an outside event). The children will take their masks off briefly to sing as a group on stage. The parade will start at 4pm and we will serve hot chocolate for all parade goers afterward.

Thank You!

We collected over 2000 pounds of food during this years Contra Costa County Food Bank Drive. Thank you for supporting this very worthy cause!

Festive Sweater Day

Send your child dressed in their most festive Christmas gear on Wednesday, December 15th. Let’s get in the Christmas spirit and celebrate!

Christmas Eve Service 4pm

Join Canyon Creek Church for a family friendly Christmas Eve Service on Thursday, Dec. 24th. Come share the joy of Jesus and celebrate our Lord’s birth at 4pm. The service will include a short message, music and a children’s bell choir.

Thoughts From Ms. Jacque (from the archives)...

Giving with Strings Attached?

Recently, I was talking to my children about giving to others. They came up with the generous idea of sorting through their toys and setting several aside to give to “needy” children. Taylor, now 12, said, “And wouldn’t it be cool to take the toys and hand them over in person!”

Now, this may sound like my child’s heart was in the right place –but the idea of giving used toys to others and then handing them over as a noble gesture really bothered me.

I pointed out to my kids that even though that was an admirable idea, I thought their charity fell short in a very important way. Giving, or at least, the kind of giving I want to teach my children to do, is about grace. Giving is not about toys, things, or possessions and shouldn’t be about what you get out of it. I believe Taylor was on the right track, but his gesture was all about him and how he would feel.

Grace is the ultimate gift. It is something given freely, not earned. It has no ulterior motive. It is selfless. It is a force more powerful and more loving than any human emotion, need or want.

Grace lies at the heart of every true gift. If grace is present, the humblest gift warms and expresses love. Without grace, even the costliest gift is cold and heartless.

But you can’t give with grace if you’re thinking of yourself first! Or if your gift comes with strings attached, or sends a mixed message to the recipient. There’s no grace in the coerced gift, the I-don’t-want-to-but-it’s-expected gift, the gift that is designed to nudge the recipient in some vital way.

When we ask our children to give, do we teach them to give with grace? Or is it merely, a learning experience without thought for the recipient?

How do we teach our children to give? To give in the spirit of grace, to reflect God’s love which has been poured out so generously upon us?

Give year-round

First, we need to bring giving into our lives all year long. During the holiday season, it is easy to share our good fortune. Food drives, bell ringers, charity functions help us remember the needs of others.

People are hungry the other 364 days of the year! Do our children see us model charity and giving from January through November?

Make giving real

Second, we need to make giving real to our children. Best strategy: get them involved.

One effective method is to have your kids actively participate in the Harbor House Toy Drive ministry we are doing. Get your child involved in picking a tag, buying a gift and putting it under the tree.

When my children were younger, our family sponsored youngsters of the same ages, and my children did the shopping for the gifts. It makes giving very, very real when a child chooses to buy another child the radio-controlled car he hopes to find under his own tree!

Give in secret

Third, make sure your right hand doesn’t know what your left hand is doing. Jesus, exposed the fallacy of the ostentatious giver, whose abundant charity depended upon whether anyone was watching.

Give in secret, and tell your children why: it is no gift when we expect gratitude, appreciation, or attach strings to our offerings. We give, instead, to relieve need; to share the abundance with which we’ve been blessed; and to reflect to others the good that we find in the world. Giving with grace is reward enough.

Allow your children to sacrifice

Finally, give your children the chance to experience sacrifice in order to give. Even a small sacrifice on their part will reinforce a lesson on giving more than any other factor. Have them dip into their allowance money to buy gifts for others. Your children will see the direct connection between their little sacrifices and their ability to give.

And they’ll do it without having to hand an old toy to another child.