



**2009-2010  
MOPS  
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## A "Turtle On Turtle" for Easter

A few years ago a dreaded Spring Toy Catalog from a store who I will not mention landed in my mailbox and before I could send it to the recycle bin my eldest, Elijah, who was 3 1/2yrs old at the time, caught sight of it. He began pouring through the pages filled with toys, games and Easter baskets until he came to the page that held the "glory" in his eyes. It was a Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle on a motorcycle toy. He just had to have it. I found it kind of funny because he had never seen the cartoon of "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles" and after he asked me what it was called and I told him, he continued to call it "Turtles On Turtles" for the next several years -which I never corrected. But, he was desperate for this toy so I thought I'd use his desperation to my advantage. I told him if he really wanted this toy he had to earn it and to earn it he

had to be able to tell me by Easter what Easter was really about. So every night before bed I would either read the "ABC's of Easter" a book that was given to him or I would tell him the child's version of the Easter story....it would go something like this, "God sent his son, Jesus, to the Earth to



teach us how to live and how to love one another. He also sent Jesus to die for our sins. Sins are something we do that is bad and does not make God happy and separates us from Him. So Jesus died on the cross but three days later Jesus rose from the dead and now is with God in heaven and he loves us so much. He does not want us to die, he wants us to live in heaven with him when we leave this earth." Then I'd ask

him to repeat it back to me—with much coaching and prompting, making sure he understood what the word sin meant and reaffirming that Jesus loves us so much that he takes away our sins when say we are sorry to him. I also read to him from "The Child's Story Bible" by Catherine F. Vos, starting at Palm Sunday to Easter Sunday every morning. Eventually, he got it. It took a little while, a lot repeating myself, and a lot of extra study on my part to try to answer his questions correctly but he got it and on Easter Morning he was so excited to see that "Turtle on Turtle" and his motorcycle in his Easter Basket. Three years later he and his little brothers can tell you what Easter is really about.



## Other Great Ways to Teach Your Child the True Meaning of Easter

- Resurrection Eggs—teach your children the true meaning of Easter with a unique dozen of interactive eggs, each containing an item pertaining to the death and resurrection of Jesus. Recommended for children 3yrs and up.
- The Book Benjamin's Box—this book goes along with the Resurrection eggs and tells the story of Benjamin, a boy who is living in the times of Jesus Christ and how he learns the Good News of Jesus. Recommended for ages 4-7yrs.
- Make Empty Tomb Cookies with your children and read the scripture that goes along with each step. Recipe on reverse side of newsletter. All ages!
- Use on-line sources—there are many sites that feature fun crafts focused on the true meaning of Easter, like [www.apples4theteacher.com](http://www.apples4theteacher.com).

### MOPS Silent Auction

**When?** Tuesday, April 13th from 9-11:30am.  
**Where?** Here at First Free Church in Fellowship Hall.  
**What?** An Auction of many, many donated items from local businesses, home merchants, crafters, restaurants, summer camps, etc. There is something for everyone!  
**How?** Just show up and bring your checkbook or cash. The auction will go throughout the entire meeting time and the winners will be announced at the end. There will also be other things to do that morning for those who are not interested in the auction.  
**Why?** To raise money for our group. The proceeds go towards next year and help off set the cost for all registered moms.

## Empty Tomb Cookies

Make these on Easter Eve, right before bedtime with your children. Preheat the oven to 300—this is VERY important! Read the corresponding passages while adding the necessary ingredients.

- 1 cup whole pecans, in a plastic baggie
- 1 teaspoon vinegar
- 3 egg whites
- 1 pinch salt
- 1 cup sugar

1. Preheat the oven to 300 degrees—MUST do this now. Also, gather cooking mallet, kitchen mixer, masking tape and Bible.
2. Read John 19:1-3 -Jesus was beaten for our sins; beat the nuts with the mallet; set aside.
3. Read John 19:28-30 - Jesus drank something like vinegar, sniff the fragrance, dip finger in and taste; place the

- vinegar in mixing bowl.
- 4. Read John 10:10-11 - Egg whites symbolize Jesus' holy, innocent life; add whites to the bowl with vinegar.
- 5. Luke 23:27 - The bitter tears of the women; taste the salt, remember your own sins; add the salt to the bowl.
- 6. Read Psalm 34:8 and John 3:16 - Sweet Salvation! Taste and see the sugar. Add to the bowl.
- 7. Crank of the mixer and let it go while you read from Isaiah 1:18 and John 3:1-3; let the mixer go for about 12-15 minutes. Mixture needs to be very stiff.
- 8. Read Matthew 27:57-60 - Fold the nuts in to the mixture; this symbolizes the rocks in the garden.
- 9. Using a scoop or knife and spoon, drop spoonfuls in to mounds (to resemble rocky tomb); put in the oven and turn the

- oven OFF.
- 10. Read Matthew 27:65-66— the tomb is sealed; use tape to "seal" the edges (symbolically).
- 11. Read John 16:20&22— Consider these passages, then got to bed.
- 12. EASTER MORNING— Read Matthew 28:1-9— Jesus is risen! Behold the empty tomb! Empty—just like Jesus' Tomb!

To see copies of past newsletters and view our speaker/topic list for this year visit our website at:

[www.firstfreewomen.org](http://www.firstfreewomen.org)

follow the MOPS link.

## 7 Tips for Building the Christian Family You Never Had

Adapted from *Building the Christian Family You Never Had* By Mary E. DeMuth

### Read parenting books with caveat of grace.

With every book I read, I berated myself for not being a perfect Christian mom, instead of letting the words encourage me to improve my parenting. Offer yourself grace when reading these books.

### Find or observe a parenting mentor.

If you notice someone you think is parenting her kids well, ask her questions and observe her. There's nothing better than learning from a real live human being.

### Say, "I'm Sorry."

All parents make mistakes. We say painful words that we heard our parents say. The best way to disarm this is to admit it. Asking our children for forgiveness opens the door to improving relationships.

### Understand that parenting it not outside-in, but inside-out.

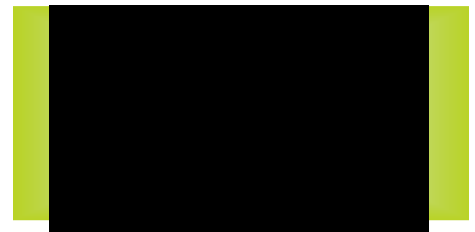
God is in the business of cleaning, healing, and rejuvenating our hearts from the inside out. The greater the healing, the more authentic and effective our parenting will be.

### Forgive your parents.

Forgiveness sets you free— free to love your imperfect parents, free to give grace to your imperfect self as you struggle to parent. Holding bitterness in your heart hinders you from parenting freely in the present.

### Stop the comparison game.

Few acts are more destructive than comparison. God asks us to concentrate on our own families and revel in what he has given us.



### Find Support.

My parenting skills increased when I found other parents who struggled just like me. I realized I was a normal parent with typical struggles. I was able to laugh at my mistakes and continue down the parenting path.

Also found on the March/April edition of MOMSense

## Things you need to know ...

- The childcare rooms open up at 8:45am. You are welcome to come at that time, drop off your children, and join us in the meeting room for coffee and conversation before MOPS begins at 9am.
- In case of bad weather, MOPS will be cancelled if Rockford Public School District 205 is closed.
- In an effort to protect the safety of our

little ones, the childcare doors (entrance B) will be closed and locked at 9:45am. If you are later than 9:45am use entrance A.

- To keep all of our children and staff healthy please wash your children's hands with soap and water before placing them in his or her room.
- Refer to the childcare Health and Wellness Policy sheet in your folder

when your child is ill and for items to bring.

- Babies 3 months and younger are welcome during the meeting. Children older than 3 months should be in childcare.
- Please turn your cell phone ringer off or on vibrate. If you have to answer a call please leave the room quietly.
- When bringing food, you are welcome to drop it at the entrance D where someone will be waiting for you.

The Mission of First Evangelical Free Church is to bring people into a life-changing and growing relationship with Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.

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