

In the Loop

VOLUME 9 ISSUE 2

SEPTEMBER 9, 2008

From Our Ringleader

Welcome to MOPS. It's impossible for me to explain to you what MOPS means to me, but I'm going to try anyway by telling you some of my MOPS story. I joined MOPS about six years ago in the spring with a three-year-old and an infant. I had no family in town and no regular babysitter. Yet I hadn't realized how badly I needed a break until I came to MOPS and actually got one. I went home and told my husband, "There's all these things that I do for the kids but MOPS is something I want to do for myself." The thought of doing something for me sounded peculiar. But I liked it. So, I was addicted to MOPS right from the start. I

wish all of you the refreshing break that I have experienced at MOPS. God knew much more than I did how much I would need MOPS over the years, in different ways, and much more than in just needing a break. The following winter, my toddler developed Reactive Airway Disease. That's not contagious but I needed to keep her away from other children because of how her body over-reacted to colds with some frightening wheezing. I stopped taking her anywhere at all, even church, and my husband and I took turns attending. It's fair to say I had more than a little



case of cabin fever.

One of the mentor moms at the time, Joyce Collins, coaxed me out of being a recluse and invited me to attend MOPS, keeping that child with me in the back of the room. My little girl was amazingly quiet and cooperative, and so I did get to continue to participate in MOPS. It had become like a lifeline to me.

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Please bear with us as Tates Creek Christian Church undergoes construction this year. We will be meeting in room 304 instead of the Fellowship Hall. Just follow the signs and don't be afraid to ask for directions!



Meet our Mentor Moms

Zella Simpson is one of our three wonderful mentor moms. Zella was born on a farm in northern Ken-

tucky and grew up in Grant County. She and her husband Tommy moved to Lexington in 2004. Tommy

Simpson is the Senior Minister at Tates Creek Christian

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Mentor Moms, cont.

Church and is our speaker for today.

Zella and Tommy celebrated their 22nd wedding anniversary in May. Their daughter Elizabeth is 20 years old and is a senior at Georgetown College. Their son Joel is a freshman at Johnson Bible College outside of Knoxville, Tennessee.

Zella became a mentor mom in the fall of 2004, and when asked about serving, she said,

“ I think the neatest thing about MOPS is that young

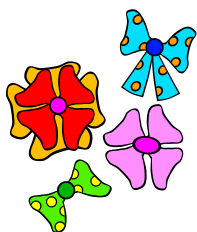
moms can come together with concerns and worries about their children and families, and leave knowing that they experience the very same things that other young moms experience.

I remember as a young mom without my own mom (she died when Elizabeth was 4 months old) wondering whether or not what I was experiencing was normal. Was I supposed to do this or do that? Were my children supposed to do this or that? Some days I thought I was a bad mom

and even a bad wife. I did not have other young moms to talk with or a mother to ask advice from. MOPS allows us to come together and share and become part of a group that actually encourages the mom to be the best mom she can be. And that 's what all moms want to be isn 't it? The best mom they can possibly be. I like that about MOPS ”

Zella can be reached at 523-3990 or email at wz.simpson@insightbb.com
♦ Featured next month: Meet Anne Layton!

Do you have a home business? Please contact Celena Keeney at celenakeeney@yahoo.com to add your name and business to the list.



MOPportunities

Embroidery

Shannon Dunn 312-5988, sdunn14@hotmail.com

MaryKay

Theresa Stanley 227-7115, theresastanley@marykay.com

Southern Living at Home

Kristin Dyson 523-3820, queenof1010@yahoo.com

Tastefully Simple

Daelena Potter 254-7858, dpotter@insightbb.com

Arbonne Skin Care

Robin Baskette 278-8150, rbaskt@yahoo.com and Carla Washnock 231-0325, cwashnock@windstream.net

Hair bows

Teresa Geyling 225-0986, t_geyling@yahoo.com and Megan Hayden 254-3357, megan.hayden@qx.net

Silpada Jewelry

Norma States 859-879-8181, nsstates@windstream.net

Uppercase Living

Teresa Geyling 225-0986, t_geyling@yahoo.com

Discovery Toys

Ann Combs 271-8197, macombs2@hotmail.com

Custom Hat Racks

Cheri Eastwood 543-2210, cherjess@insightbb.com

Computer land

This year we can stay in touch with an online directory and the Tates Creek Christian Church MOPS Yahoo group.

Once you register for MOPS, you will receive an email invitation to join the TCCC MOPS Yahoo group.

You can continue to use your current email ad-

dress; you do not need to have a yahoo email account in order to join.

Keep in mind that if you hit 'reply' to a message, you will reply to the entire MOPS Yahoo group.

The Yahoo group will

have the directory, the calendar, and other essential communications.

If you do not have a computer or wish to have a paper copy of the directory, please contact

Cathy Cramer.



Recommended Websites

www.vistaprint.com

Visit for stationary, business cards, magnets, etc

www.KRPC.com

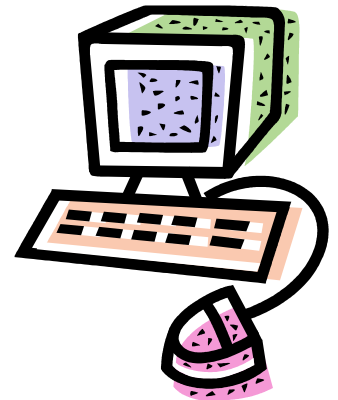
Kentucky Regional Poison Control Center

www.Funinthebluegrass.com

Learn about various regional museums, non-profit, and education resources.

www.uky.edu/arboretum/

Lots of programs for kids!



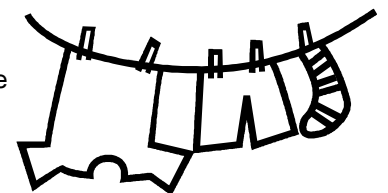
Have a website you would like to share with other moms? Please email celenakeeney@yahoo.com with the web address and brief description.

House of Laughs



Correction: In last month's newsletter, I asked you to "bare with us" as Tates Creek undergoes con-

struction. Please don't do that! Maybe just *bear* with us instead....



Admissions

Registration forms and fees are due today, September 9.

A deposit of \$49 is required to hold a spot for you and your children in MOPS.

This includes your first semester fee of \$25 and the \$24 Mops-to-Mom fee paid to MOPS International.



If you do not have your registration money today, but plan on joining MOPS, please go ahead and fill out a registration form and turn it in today so we can have an accurate count for MOPS and MOPPETS. You may then mail your registration fee to

Elizabeth Skinner
192 Blackwater Lane
Lexington, KY 40511

Please make checks payable to TCCC MOPS.

If the registration fee presents a financial hardship, please contact Elizabeth Skinner for scholarship information. *Please do not let costs in any way influence your decision to join MOPS!*

You may see Elizabeth Skinner today or email her later at nicandliz@windstream.net for confidential scholarship information.

Concession Stand

MOPS meetings would not be complete without a wonderful brunch that we can eat in peace with the company of other adults! Starting in October, we will rotate responsibility for food and beverages among the different discussion groups, called D-groups.

Please email your recipe to celenakeeney@yahoo.com so we can publish it!

Easy Vanilla Pudding Fruit Salad

- 20 oz can pineapple chunks in unsweetened pineapple juice.
- 3 1/2 oz box vanilla instant pudding mix
- 2 (11oz) cans mandarin oranges, drained
- 6 maraschino cherries, halved
- 1 cup dark seedless grapes
- 1 can peach slices, drained

Combine the dry pudding mix with the canned pineapple chunks and juice. Mix well, then stir in re-

maining drained fruit. Chill for several hours. There are multiple variations to this- After you mix the pineapple and pudding, then feel free to omit or substitute different fruits (melon balls, blueberries, and fresh sliced bananas work well—just whatever you have on hand!) For a more dessert taste, add 1 cup of miniature marshmallows.

Thanks to the Steering Team for providing brunch this morning!



Kiddieland

Children are cared for during MOPS meetings in a parallel program called MOPPETS where they experience love in a preschool-like setting. They are cared for by wonderful volunteers from Tates Creek Christian Church.

The children who are 2 and older in MOPPETS will have songs, stories, crafts, snacks, and playground fun (when possible). A curriculum of lessons and activities is provided for the volunteers to share with the children.

The new curriculum for this year is titled *Lively Bible Lessons for MOPPETS* and consists of engaging and active Bible lessons designed to build self-esteem, build friendships, and most importantly build faith through a variety of topics. The children will be using all their senses while participating in Bible stories, memory verses, action songs, craft projects, games, and snacks. Each month's lessons will be highlighted here in our newsletter so you can be aware of what your child is learning while in the MOPPETS class. Topics include friendship, God's love, Jesus, kindness, sharing, talking to God and relevant holiday themes.

Any questions or suggestions can be directed to Cheri Eastwood – cherjess@insightbb.com

This month the children are learning that everyone can be a friend. Through fun activities and songs, the children are learning that it makes God happy when we are good friends and that friends love each other.

The key verse we shared is adapted from Proverbs 17:17 - A friend loves you all the time. The children heard the story from 1 Samuel 19:1-6 of the friendship of Jonathan and David.

We also helped the children learn the sign for *happy* in which the right hand pats the chest a few times with an upward stroking movement, representing happy feelings bubbling up. The oldest children also learned the sign for *friend* in which the index fingers lock together, then change positions and lock the opposite way.

One song you might catch your little one humming is the friendship song we sang to the tune of "Skip to my Lou".

**I'm a friend and that is true
I'm a friend and that is true
I'm a friend and that is true
I'm a friend forever.**

**You're a friend and that is true
You're a friend and that is true
You're a friend and that is true
You're a friend forever.**

**I'm a friend and so are you
I'm a friend and so are you
I'm a friend and so are you
Let's be friends together.**



Let's take that last verse to heart as we meet new friends here at MOPS and continue relationships with "old" friends...Let's be friends together!!

MOPPET'S Reading Corner

Each month I'd like to share some book suggestions that relate to the lesson the children are hearing as well as 'literary' websites to help you in your search for quality children's literature.

On the topic of Friends, here are some titles you and your child(ren) might enjoy:

Friends by Helme Heine Synopsis: Charlie Rooster, Johnny Mouse, and Percy the pig are the best of friends. They do *everything* together. They ride their bike together, play games together, and even do their chores together. Because that's what good friends do. When night falls, though, and it's time to go to bed, they learn that sometimes friends have to be apart. But that's okay, because true friends always find each other, even if it's just in their dreams.

Fox Makes Friends by Adam Relf Synopsis: A young fox sets out to "make friends" and while his construction fails, he realizes what making friends really means.



How Do Dinosaurs Play with Their Friends? by Jane Yolen, Mark Teague (Illustrator) Synopsis: Time and time again, children are told to "play nice." This brilliantly illustrated board book is packed with rhymes that will teach children how. Mark Teague's laugh-aloud illustrations, along with Jane Yolen's playful text, will show children that "playing nice" can be easy and fun.

Since We're Friends: An Autism Picture Book by Celeste Shally, David Harrington (Illustrator) Synopsis: Children with autism struggle to make friends and navigate social situations. However, one child can make a significant difference in the life of a child with autism by offering compassion, understanding and friendship. *Since We're Friends* is about two boys. One has autism, the other does not. The story of their relationship provides practical examples of how to make such a friendship work. It will help children see that their peers with autism can make a fun, genuine contribution to friendship.

Friends Forever by Sally Grindley; illustrated by Penny Dann Synopsis: Figgy Twosocks, the fox, is curious. Just what is a friend for? Jefferson Bear helps her find the answer. Together they discover all of the special qualities that make up true friendship--playing, sharing, helping--and forgiving. (Beaumont Library)

Reading Corner, cont...

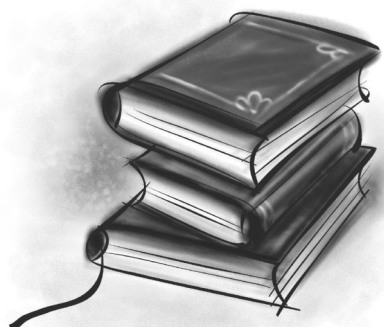
In my search for Christian book ideas for my preschooler, I came across this website that included a list of books that have won the Christopher Award. It is explained that each year, the Christophers give awards for children's books (and other media) that "affirm the highest values of the human spirit." In other words, they give awards to the best Christian children's books, even if they don't say "Christian children's books" on the cover! You can browse the site at this address: <http://www.best-childrens-books.com/christian-childrens-books.html>

The books on the Preschool list of award-winners include:

- 2007 - Hero Cat by Eileen Spinelli (B, EC, TC, NS branches)
- 2006 - Am I a Color Too? by Heidi Cole & Nancy Vogl
- 2005 - Never, Ever Shout in a Zoo by Karma Wilson
- 2004 - Little Bear's Little Boat by Eve Bunting (B, C, EC, NS, TC, V)
- 2003 - Mole And The Baby Bird by Marjorie Newman (B, C, EC, NS, TC)
- 2002 - Kiss Good Night by Amy Hest
- 2001 - How Do Dinosaurs Say Good Night? by Jane Yolen
- 2000 - I Love You, Blue Kangaroo! by Emma Chichester Clark (B, EC, TC, C)
- 1998 - Milo And The Magical Stones by Marcus Pfister
- 1997 - The Log Cabin Quilt by Ellen Howard (C, EC, NS, TC)
- 1995 - I'll See You When the Moon is Full by Susi Gregg Fowler ©
- 1992 - Somebody Loves You, Mr. Hatch by Eileen Spinelli (C, EC, NS, TC)
- 1990- Keeping a Christmas Secret by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor (B, C, EC, NS)

Key: B=Beaumont library, C=Central, EC=Eagle Creek, NS=Northside, TC=Tates Creek, V=Village

Happy Reading!



From Our Ringleader, cont.

Then, in the spring, that toddler caught Rotovirus and had to be hospitalized for four days. Each day, the dr. told me that she would be amazingly better by the following day, but each day, she was worse, without anybody knowing why – until she really did finally get better. During that frightening time, a MOPS mom, Michele Leibee, astonished me by putting her own family at risk to baby sit my older child so I could stay with the younger one around the clock in the hospital. My older child never caught the Rotovirus and never passed it on to anyone else, but of course we didn't know that at the time.

Already MOPS played a very significant role in my life, but with my next crisis, that role grew. That summer, our unborn baby died at four and a half months. She was fully formed, fully loved, fully a person, and we, fully devastated, held a funeral in her honor. Many MOPS moms provided meals, prayers, and loving concern. They also took the time to listen to my meandering thoughts and bring them back to the land of the living with their own friendships and their own babies. That took more than one friend. That took a community of friends, and the Living God.

I've told this much of my MOPS story before in a thank-you brunch for the MOP-PET workers some time ago, so it might be familiar to you. The verse I gave then that reminded me of MOPS was, "*Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the saints.*" Philemon 7 NIV

Now my MOPS story goes on and my gratitude goes on, too. A little more than half a year after the death, I realized that while I'd been distracted with grief, my children had grown wild, to the point that they were a danger to each other and our belongings. Whether it was a reaction to our family situation or whether it was already in their personalities, I don't know, and it really doesn't matter. I consistently tried several forms of discipline and training for many long months and even years, without any real improvement, and I'd grown frustrated almost to the point of being resentful

At this time, one of the mentor moms, Zella Simpson, gave a talk on "gentleness," that really resonated with me. In my attempts to control my children, I'd grown less gentle and I found that was not really the person I wanted to be. When I really concentrated on being gentle, I found that my most willful child listened to me more and obeyed better. She just seemed to need to know that I was still on her side, and gentleness worked far better than all the rules and consequences I'd tried before – although, of course, I still try to teach rules and have firm consequences.

She is still not perfect, and still a high-energy child, at times, and I am still not always gentle. I still haven't completely figured out parenting her. But, we are both making progress, and that talk started me on my gentleness journey, that God has brought out to me, again and again, with different scriptures and different situations. *Cont on next page*



*"Your love has given me
great joy and
encouragement, because
you, brother, have
refreshed the hearts of the
saints." Philemon 7 NIV*

From Our Ringleader, cont.

It is good to remember gentleness and focus on it again now, too. And I must say that my own mother is a very gentle woman. So, take whatever break you need, but then go back and try again to teach and to train your kids. Don't give up on them.

I have heard that a "subsequent pregnancy" after a miscarriage is often the loneliest time in a woman's life, because other pregnant women don't fully understand her fears, and those other bereaved women she bonded with in grief often turn against her in her joys and relief. I did NOT find this true at MOPS. Instead I found so many women who had lost babies and had living babies in any order. The women were very supportive and very understanding. Babies are welcome and blessed here. I have the joy of having my fourth daughter, my third living child, here with me at MOPS.

The next stage of my life at MOPS, I spent three years working with the children's curriculum in MOPPETS. I'm not really sure I can describe what that meant to me, either. I liked to pass by the rooms and see them proudly holding out their crafts and see that they were happy. I liked when I found they'd really enjoyed something or remembered something. All of you have sweet kids. Yes, even the high-energy ones. I know first-hand they can be mighty sweet. I say that here, typing as I sit on the bed of my little sleeping high-energy child, but maybe I shouldn't get too mushy.

I think MOPS also did her some good, directly. That series that the kids did on Moses and the 10 Commandments kept talking about why God gave us rules – to keep us safe, and so that things will go well. We talked a lot about that at home, too, and she really seemed to take it to heart and to understand it for the first time. But not just the content!! The MOPPET volunteers here themselves are so sweet and good-hearted. They are truly good people for your child to know.

And now, what stage am I in? Well, I still need MOPS. This year offers us some exciting possibilities, and as coordinator, I'm seat-belted in for the roller-coaster ride. As a mom, I'm finding that sometimes, after all these years, I still get ... tired. Still in need of a break. Hey, that sounds like I'm back where I started, joining MOPS because I needed a break.

Wishing the best to all of you,
Cathy Cramer



*"Babies are welcome and
blessed here."*

September 2008



- MOPS regular meetings are 9am-11:15am on the second Tuesday of each month, September through May.
- Saturday Sept 13th Family Potluck Lunch 12-2pm. Bring your husband along and let's have a potluck to get to know everyone. Bring a dish and come and enjoy a nice lunch in Friendship Hall. See sign-up sheet.
- Wednesday Sept 17 Firehouse tour 10:00am. We will tour Maple Leaf Firehouse then meet at the park to enjoy a picnic lunch.
- Tuesday Sept 23 Woodland Park 10:30am. Let's meet at Woodland park for some fun at the playground.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Labor Day!	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9 MOPS Meeting	10	11	12	13 Family Potluck
14	15	16	17 Firehouse Tour	18	19	20
21	22	23 Woodland Park	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

October 2008

- Thursday October 2 Mom's Night out. Let Dad put the kids to bed and meet at **PANERA on Nicholasville Road** for dinner 7 pm.
- Thursday October 9. Bring the kids and play at **Masterson Station Park**. They have a small playground but it's big on running space! Bring balls, Frisbees, and your imagination to get some energy spent!
- Thanks to Megan Hayden for coordinating our special events for this year! Please watch the newsletter and check your email for announcements about upcoming events throughout the year.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1	2 Moms Night Out	3	4
5	6	7	8	9 Masterson Station	10	11
12	13	14 MOPS meeting	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	



Better Moms Make A Better World