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First Free **MOPS** Newsletter

Mothers of Preschoolers

First Evangelical Free Church, 3300 S. 84th Street, Lincoln, NE 68506

**"God doesn't want us to be shy with His gifts, but bold and loving and sensible."
 2 Timothy 1:7**



Today at Mops

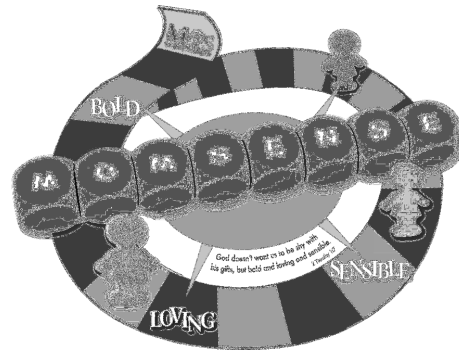
"Musical Chairs: Testimony in Story & Song" by Gina Boe



Today at Moppets



"Madame Blueberry: Lessons on Thankfulness" (1 Thessalonians 5:18)



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Welcome To MOPS!

Share: *a part or portion of something owned, allotted to, or contributed by a person or group. To share is to give or receive a part of something, or to enjoy or assume something in common.*

When thinking about a theme for November, thankfulness was the obvious one. To be honest, I do not usually struggle with being thankful, at least for my blessings. I am beyond grateful to God for all the He has done for me, for my family, for my home. But, if God puts it on my heart to pass my blessings on by donating something that I still wanted to use or to give up an evening to spend time serving others, that is a different story (especially if it is on the night when one of my favorite television shows is on!) Okay, and I am still not the best at sharing homemade ice cream with my husband or my Dr. Pepper stash with my kids or the last brownie in the pan. Ugh. Selfishness comes very natural to me, to all of us. Sharing catapults thankfulness to the next level. A place where my hands are held open rather than clenched.

In the fifth chapter of Acts, another couple is rather famous for their sharing (or lack thereof). Eleven whole verses are our only clue to Ananias and Sapphira, and their story does not have a happy ending. Wanting to sell land and give the profit to the disciples – a popular trend back then. Acting as if they gave away the whole profit when they really held back some of the money, a rather pricey plan (in more ways than one). While they did manage to hold open one hand, their other hand was clinched tight and cost them everything. They didn't trust God to provide for them, and they chose dishonesty over transparency.

Hoard: *to accumulate for preservation or future use in a hidden or carefully guarded place.*
 I have not watched a full episode of the show, "Hoarders" but watching a few clips was enough to turn my stomach. How can they manage to hang on to all of that stuff? What a nightmare! Yet am I that far off? Holding on can be a struggle for me. Being prepared is one thing, but stockpiling is another. Where is the balance? How can I teach my kids to share when I have not learned myself sometimes? What do I need to let go of? As I look around my cluttery house, probably a lot. How do I know what I really need and what I should let go to a better home? How can I be less selfish?

The passage that is encouraging (and challenging) me the most at the moment - Philippians 2:3-11. Verse 3a "Do nothing out of selfish ambition." A HUGE hopeless undertaking. Until I read on and am reminded that on my own, that task is impossible. BUT, I can look to the example of Jesus the One who "made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant." Jesus is the ultimate "sharer." The NAS version says that "He emptied Himself." What a tough act to follow! If I think less of myself and more others, I will be less selfish. Since I finished off the last brownie yesterday, I obviously still have a long way to go. Maybe it's a good thing that I have a lifetime to learn to be more like Christ!

Hebrews 13:16 "And do not forget to do good and to share with others, for with such sacrifices God is pleased."

Monopoly: Sharing What God Has Given Us



Join Rich Uncle Pennybags for a day at the Boardwalk amusements. Set up ticket booths, then add, subtract and even multiply as you collect fees when other players land on your booths. Chance cards send you around the colorful carnival board: maybe you'll go to the fireworks - or pay \$3 to take the tramway to the restroom! Sooner or later, somebody will run out of money and the game ends. Count up your cash: if you've got the most, you win this junior game that's big fun!



The only song that I could think of that has to do with sharing (other than possibly Barney songs) is "My Own Little World" by Matthew West - if you have not heard it, I would highly recommend finding a copy - very convicting!

I do have a playlist on my i-pod that has to do with "Thanksgiving." While the String Beans song "Gobble Time" did make the end of the list, most of the songs have to do with thankfulness to God. Here are some of the songs ...

- 1) "Thankful" by Caedmon's Call
- 2) "How Could I Ask for More?" by Cindy Morgan
- 3) "Thank You for Saving Me" by Delirious?
- 4) "26 Letters" by Ben Glover
- 5) "Thankful" by Jill Phillips
- 6) "Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing" by Jars of Clay
- 7) "How Can I Say Thanks?" by Evie (an oldie but goodie!)
- 8) "Thank You" by the Katinas
- 9) "Forever" by Michael W. Smith
- 10) "When I Think About the Lord" by Shane & Shane
- 11) "Thank You for Life" by Jeff Deyo
- 12) "All Creatures" by the David Crowder Band
- 13) "Joy is in our Hearts" by Sara Grove
- 14) "Today is the Day" by Lincoln Brewster

Ideas from Mentor Lisa Peebles on "How to Help Your Child Learn to Share"

Sharing is something you have to teach. It is not naturally present. Children have to learn to think outside of themselves. (Something we as adults still continue to learn!) One thing that I found when teaching preschool and with my own kids when they struggled with sharing is to find opportunities for them to share items that aren't so personal too them. Have a play date with a friend and buy or find a specific toy that they can use for that play date with that friend. Something they can do together. Let it be something that they are not firmly attached to as that will be harder to share. This helps them practice and makes the sharing fun and something to look forward to. Make sure you talk about how fun it will be to share this toy with his/her friend and how happy the friend will be. This can help them see how someone else's feelings are affected by how we choose to share.

Remember that children learn by example. Find ways to share with your child or let them see you sharing with others. If you are having a snack, break it in half and say something like, "let me share my cookie with you." If you are taking a meal to a friend, explain to your child why you are sharing your food with others. Look for ways to catch others sharing and point it out to your child when you see it.

One thing I've also done with my children is letting them take some of their most precious things (for some you may have to put a number limit!) and putting them away before other children came over. I think it's ok to have some things that you just don't want others to break or mess up. We as adults even have some things that are very special to us or hold certain memories. For a child who owns very few things that are "just theirs" or have memories attached, a certain toy or set of toys becomes their valuable possession. Tell them that now that they have chosen which precious toys to keep safe, they are also now choosing to let the other toys be fun for everyone.



Proverbs 25:12 "Like apples of gold in settings of silver is a word spoken in right circumstances."

In the Old Testament, the word "share" is used often in two different contexts: the share that was part of the required offerings and the shares of an inheritance. Both had specific guidelines, and it is interesting to read that when the guidelines were not followed, problems resulted (as in the case of Jacob and Esau and the birthright). In I Samuel 30, David had to deal with his men not wanting to share the plunder with those who were too tired to fight the battle. Proverbs 21:9 and 25:24 reminds us that "Better to live on the corner of the roof than **share** a house with a quarrelsome wife." (Ouch!) As far as verses that we can use to teach our children about sharing, many feature others' examples.

Mark 12: 41-44 Luke 3:11 Acts 4:32 Romans 12:13, 15:27 II Corinthians 9:12-14 Galatians 6:6 Ephesians 4:28 Philippians 4:14-15 Hebrews 13:16

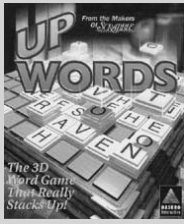
Another word in the Bible that relates to sharing is "generous." (I also included a few "bonus" verses on giving)

Deuteronomy 15:10 I Chronicles 29:14 II Chronicles 31:5 Psalm 37:21, 26
Psalm 112:5 Proverbs 3:9-10; 11:25; 22:9 Matthew 6:3-4
Matthew 20:1-16 (parable of the vineyard) Luke 11:41 Acts 10:1-2; 28:7
Romans 12:8 II Corinthians 8:7-8 II Corinthians 9:6-11
I Timothy 6:17-19 James 2:14-18 (sharing with those in need)

Determining an object lesson for sharing was a challenge since sharing really involves doing. One thing that I was reminded of is that sharing can involve the giving of time and talents, not just the giving of possessions. When we go over this character quality at our house, I plan on going over a lot of Scripture first. Then I plan on challenging my kids to try to determine one way that they can share and have them put their plan into practice. With younger ones, the best object lesson may involve playdates. When you have a friend over to play, that really puts sharing into practice!



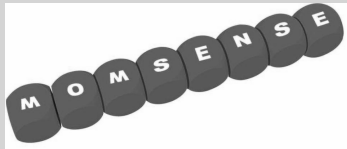
Monopoly: Sharing What God Has Given Us



Jodi's Positive Parenting

(Thoughts from my good friend, Jodi!)

This one's tough, especially as the kids get older because they start collecting personal items that shouldn't have to be shared. For littler kids that both want the same toy, it's best to either set a timer or help them negotiate. I'm always shocked at how much babies/toddlers understand even though they can't speak. My friend has been really awesome at modeling this style of parenting to me. She'd tell her just over 1-year-old stuff that I was certain he didn't understand, and then he'd follow her instructions. "Griffin – do you want a turn? Then you need to ask for a turn. Say Please," and he'd do it. Then, "Now it's Alli's turn. Give her a turn and then she'll give it back. That's called sharing." He's strong-willed, but he followed those instructions.



Steering Team Members

Co-coordinators:

Sarah Opp and Jori Newell

Creative Activities:

Anita Hains and Angela Kleager

Finance Coordinator:

Kendra Jantzen

Friendship Group Leaders
Coordinator: Kelly Watson

Fundraising: Tiffany Maly

Hospitality: Kathy Van Cott

Mentors: Barb Barber, Lorri Goode, Danelle Mills, Lisa Peeples and Sandy Schindler

Moppets: Rhonda Otto

Publicity: Gretchen Garrison



Bookworm!

Cole, Joanna Sharing is Fun

Greenstein, Elaine Mrs. Rose's Garden



Hazen, Barbara Shook That Toad is Mine!

Hoberman, Mary Ann One of Each (two is better than one)

Orloff, Karen Kaufman I Wanna New Room

Pacilio, V.J. and Scott Cook Ling Chou and His Three Friends

Reiss, Mike The Boy Who Wouldn't Share

Russo, Marisabina The Big Brown Box

*Savadier, Elivia Will Sheila Share?

Senning, Cindy Post Emily's Sharing and Caring Book

Wood, Douglas The Secret of Saying Thanks



*Since this is my sister's name, this one makes me laugh – could have easily been Will Gretchen Share? ©

(Some suggestions for when you are feeling bogged & need a break from mothering!)

" This summer I read the "Million Dollar" mysteries by Mindy Starns Clark and great enjoyed them. A millionaire sets up a foundation to give away his money to qualifying non-profit organizations and has an investigator make certain that each organization is doing legitimate and profitable work. The stories were well written and intriguing. While I do not have that much money to give away, it definitely challenged me to think about stewardship. Unfortunately only the first 2 of the series are available at the library (A Penny For Your Thoughts and Don't Take Any Wooden Nickels), but you can get the other books from interlibrary loan. Several others of Mindy's books are available through the library and are also recommended.

" On my to-read list: In a Heartbeat: Sharing the Power of Cheerful Giving by Sean and Leigh Anne Tuohy. This book is written by the couple that is featured in "The Blind Side" and is available from the library. The focus seems to be how to share your lives and your hearts with those around you who are in need. The book has a Christian focus.



Here are some video suggestions about sharing:

Available at the library:

Veggie Tales: "Lyle the Kindly Viking: A Lesson in Sharing"

"Blind Side": a movie for almost the whole family – based on a true story of a family who invites a homeless young man to be a part of their

Note: There are a few scenes that could be objectionable – please preview first – not for young ones.

Available from Christian retailers:

"Hermie & Wormie's Nutty Adventures" (Previously titled "To Share or Nut to Share")



~Mark Your Calendar~

Birthday Cards



November
12 Jodi Hosier
14 Katie Robb
20 Barb Barber
24 Tiffany Maly
26 Cynthia Beukelman
28 Elisabeth Woods
December
1 Steph Berger
4 Cristy Anderson



To Come ...

December 8th

Barb Barber: "Celebrating
Christmas with Preschoolers"



Community Events

November 10-13
"Take 2 Children's Consignment"
Lancaster County Event Center

December 3-4
KFOR "Season of Crafts"
Lancaster County Event Center

For more ideas of what is
happening around Lincoln, you
can visit:

www.todointhistown.com

They also have many ideas on
their site on how to teach gratitude
to children, as well as different
ideas on how to celebrate a
meaningful Thanksgiving.

Today you are getting a copy of the MOPs directory. If you notice any mistakes, please e-mail firstfreemops@gmail.com. Please let us know ASAP, as we will send out an e-mail next week with any corrections/ admissions. This will include adding additional names to our business section. The directory takes quite a bit to put together. While I played a small part in this, a big thank you goes especially to Kendra Jantzen, as well as Lisa Peeples and Elisabeth Woods, for all that they did to make the directory happen. When you see one of these ladies, please tell them a special thank you! *Please note: the directory is for personal use only – please do not use the list to solicit business.*

How to keep Thanksgiving meaningful!

In our family, 4 out of 6 of us have birthdays in a 3 week time span close before Thanksgiving. By the time that holiday hits, often I am worn out from celebrating. But as Christians, we have the opportunity to really focus on giving thanks where it is due – to God, without the distractions of presents. If you are kids are finally getting old enough to understand Thanksgiving or if you are ready for some new ideas, I would highly suggest that you check out the resources from Family Life Today. Every year they have special radio broadcasts close to Thanksgiving. Also, they also have many articles full of suggestions, as well as resources to purchase. For more information (including broadcast times), please visit their website. <http://www.familylife.com/site/c.dnJHKLNnFoG/b.3204989/k.983F/Thanksgiving.htm>

Notes:

◆ If you have any information to include in our MOPs newsletter, have any suggestions, questions or comments, please contact Gretchen Garrison by sending an email to FirstFreemops@gmail.com. Be sure to put "newsletter" in the subject line. To God be the glory in MOPs and in our lives! ◆