



# Implementing Girls' Ministries in the Local Church

Annual Planning Guide Using a Monthly Focus  
(alternative to the weekly Mpack & Teen Girl Ministries girls clubs)

MONTH	EMPHASIS	ALTERNATIVE EMPHASIS
JANUARY	Baby Hope Club (lesson & outreach) Sanctity of Human Life Week	A New Beginning
FEBRUARY	Purity Vows/True Love Waits Souper Bowl of Caring* (outreach)	God's Love in Action
MARCH**	The Great Commission Girls' Ministries missions projects	St. Patrick—Captured & Released (missions oriented)
APRIL**	Easter (March or April) Community Egg Hunt (outreach)	Spring to Life National Child Abuse Prevention Month
MAY	Mother's Day Tea (focus & outreach) (National Etiquette Week 11-15)	The Untold Stories Get Caught Reading Month
JUNE	My Hero—My Father Father/Daughter Focus (& outreach)	The Search for Prince Charming National Rose Month
JULY	Let Freedom Ring Picnic/Fireworks (outreach)	Can You Hear Me Now? National Cell Phone Courtesy Week
AUGUST	Summer Wrap Back to School Prayer Service	Clowning Around National Clown Week (2-8)
SEPTEMBER	Girls' Ministries Week Use theme for 2009-2010 GM Week	Girls' Ministries Week Use GM Week theme
OCTOBER	Harvest Spectacular Trunk-or-Treat (outreach)	My Claim to Fame Family History Month
NOVEMBER	An Attitude of Gratitude (Christmas stockings for NYC)	Inspired & Energized National Bible Week (22-29)
DECEMBER	The Gift That Keeps On Giving Happy Birthday Jesus Party	Cookie Cutter Classic Cookie Cutter Week (1-7)

This annual planning guide will be developed over a one-year period of time. The first and second quarter suggestions are completed and the remaining two quarters will be added a few weeks before that quarter begins. The subject matter listed above for the remainder of the year is subject to change in the event of a "light bulb moment" on the part of your IPHC general GM director. Feel free to make suggestions.

\*The annual Super Bowl fluctuates from late January to early February. Check ahead.

\*\*March and April may need to be interchanged depending on when Easter falls for the year.

# January

**Theme:** *Baby Hope Club*; Jeremiah 29:11  
(in conjunction with Sanctity of Human Life Week)

**Plan of Action:** Review the information on the girls website (<http://girls.iphc.org/babyhope.html>) about Baby Hope Club; you can also link to info about Sanctity of Human Life (SOHL) from that page. For more info on The Royal Home, visit them at [www.theroyalhome.org](http://www.theroyalhome.org).

**Age Specific Planning:** If you are working with younger girls, you'll simply want to focus on the **needs** of the babies who are born at The Royal Home. Let them look through baby magazines and cut out pictures of items mothers need to help take care of their babies. Paste them onto a poster board (print the Baby Hope Club logo and put it in the middle of the poster). Hang this poster in your meeting room as a reminder for the girls to keep saving their change (and dollar bills)! Talk about how the money they collect can help meet these needs for young mothers and their new babies.



If you are working with older girls, the previous ideas will work as well, but take it a step further for them. Consider using one of the units out of the Friends or Girls Only curriculum that would reinforce the theme of sexual purity or making right choices. (This can tie into February's theme as well.) Call LifeSprings for a Girls' Ministries catalog for all the club curriculum. Most titles give you a quick idea of the unit content and whether it would enhance your theme.

**Craft Time:** Allow each girl to make her own Baby Hope Club bottle for collecting money. (The master page for the labels can be downloaded at <http://girls.iphc.org/babyhopechanges.html>.) Try to collect some money to give in your local church's SOHL offering if they participate in this. From that point on, have the girls save their money in the bottles and turn it in once a quarter to a designated person. Mail the Baby Hope Club funds to your conference Girls' Ministries treasury and earmark it Baby Hope Club offering. (If you don't have a conference GM treasury, offerings can be sent directly to The Royal Home with the Baby Hope designation.) The Royal Home will use these funds to purchase baby items such as diapers, wipes, cribs, and a host of other items. The young mothers-to-be earn points while living at the home and learning how to care for their new arrival. They trade these points in for baby items once they leave the home.

**Follow Through:** Once you have presented Baby Hope Club needs in January, don't let it slide under the rug. Continue to encourage the girls to save money on a regular basis. The needs at The Royal Home continue month to month and year to year.

**BONUS IDEA:** I discovered a product at a craft show that would be great for presenting Baby Hope Club to younger girls. It is a felt-lined travel bag and the Baby Bella felt kit. It's reminiscent of paper dolls; you cut out the clothes and baby items that are printed on colorful felt. Visit [www.feltfantasies.com/Baby\\_Bella.html](http://www.feltfantasies.com/Baby_Bella.html) to see photos of this (and other) products or call 1-877-953-6557. The Tiny Tots set would also work; it is a little more costly, but has more pieces. Look for photos and a link on our Baby Hope web page.

# January Alternative

**Theme: A New Beginning.** “Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (2 Corinthians 5:17). With the start of a brand new year, focus on a fresh new start in Christ. Older girls can discuss making resolutions or making choices that are consistent with living like the new creation God intended us to be. The key, however, is that any fresh start must be based on key Christian values and principles. For this lesson, we are using our girls clubs code as our guideline.

**Plan of Action:** Review the Code for Girls’ Ministries (<http://girls.iphc.org/code.html>). It is based on Philippians 4:8. This is a great scripture for your girls to memorize (offer it in King James or NIV). A poster is available from LifeSprings Resources (GM Catalog) and a master for making bookmarks is available on our website). Review the definitions of the key words in this scripture; they are from a variety of dictionaries.

**Age Specific Planning:** The focus is on making a fresh start using Philippians 4:8 as your guideline. Take it line by line and tailor your comments and scenarios to the girls according to their ages. Talk about weighing all decisions, conversations, actions against the criteria listed in this scripture. Let these values dominate your thoughts.

**Breaking Down the Scripture:** Philippians 4:8

“Whatsoever things are **true**,  
Whatsoever things are **honest**,  
Whatsoever things are **just**,  
Whatsoever things are **pure**,  
Whatsoever things are **lovely**,  
Whatsoever things are of **good report**:  
If there be any **virtue**,  
And if there be any **praise**,  
**Think on these things.**”

**True:** in accordance with reality or facts; real, genuine, authentic

**Honest:** honorable in principles, intentions, and actions; not disposed to lie, cheat, or steal

**Just:** based on right; in keeping with truth or fact; true, correct

**Pure:** clean from contamination [sin], pollution, or dirt; clean

**Lovely:** of a great moral or spiritual beauty

**Good Report:** {admirable} inspiring, approval or respect; excellent

**Virtue:** conformity of one’s life and conduct to moral and ethical principles

**Praise:** the offering of grateful homage in words or song as an act of worship

**Wrap Up:** Print a bookmark for each girl (and maybe one for her to give away). The master page for the bookmark can be downloaded at <http://girls.iphc.org/code.html>. You could also enlarge the bookmark and print it on card stock to keep in your meeting room as a reminder to think...think...think about these key values!

**Craft Time:** Allow each girl to make her own Baby Hope Club bottle as outlined on the previous January page even if you choose this lesson. It’s an excellent project for involving girls in ministry. Take advantage of the Baby Hope Bonus Idea as well.

**Follow Through:** Evaluate once a month or at least quarterly the progress of the girls on keeping their commitments to God for the year. Ask them to evaluate their thoughts AND actions against the criteria in our Girls’ Ministries Code (Phil 4:8).

# February



**Theme: *Purity/True Love Waits***; “Don’t let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity” (1 Timothy 4:12).

(to enhance Valentine’s Day; work with youth leaders)

**Plan of Action:** Review information below for some of the programs and books available:

- <http://www.lifeway.com/tlw/>
- *And the Bride Wore White: Seven Secrets to Sexual Purity* by Dannah Gresh
- *Why True Love Waits* by Josh McDowell & Bob Hostetler
- *Kissed the Girls and Made Them Cry* by Lisa Bevere

**Age Specific Planning: If you are working with younger girls**, you’ll simply want to focus on relationships. For younger girls, Valentine’s Day is all about sharing cute little messages with everybody in their classroom, not just the boys! Talk about those relationships and how making good choices for friends now can translate into good decisions later on in life. Discuss family relationships and the teacher/student relationship.

**If you are working with older girls**, consider joining forces with youth leaders and Royal Rangers/Men’s Ministries leaders. Check out some of the information in the *Plan of Action* section above or consider using one of the units out of the Friends or Girls Only curriculum that would reinforce the theme of sexual purity, making right choices, etc. Call LifeSprings for a Girls’ Ministries catalog for all the club curriculum. The titles of most units give a clear picture of their content.

**Craft Time:** Simply google the words “heart crafts” if you want to do a craft with the girls. There are tons of options online or you can choose one from a craft store.

**Follow Through:** Purity pledges or true love waits vows should be discussed along the way and even renewed annually. Statistics reveal that six in ten teens who have had sex say they wish they would have waited! Hitting the subject once is simply not enough in today’s sex-charged climate! Provide plenty of activities to keep your teen focused on God.

**Community Activity:** Get involved with Souper Bowl of Caring. For details about the program, visit their website: <http://www.souperbowl.org/resources.php>. My local church has been involved in this for six years. We copy their sticker logo and place it on several large stock pots. We present the need during service and then stand at the doors on Super Bowl Sunday to collect money for a local soup kitchen/ministry. We actually partner with another IPHC to provide ongoing meals at their church. Our funds support that ministry. You simply report to the Souper Bowl of Caring how much you collected and the name of the food bank/ministry to which the funds were given. It is a great community outreach. The annual Super Bowl fluctuates from late January to early February; the 2009 date, for instance, is February 1, so you would need to do some early planning to be prepared for the promotion. You can always “google” ([www.google.com](http://www.google.com)) the Super Bowl to get the upcoming game day information.



# February Alternative

**Theme:** *God's Love in Action; Romans 12:9-13*

“Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. Share with God’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality.”

**Plan of Action:** Enlarge and print the theme scripture above on colored paper to hang on the wall for your meeting. Hearts are fitting for decorating your room as well. Review the love chapter—I Corinthians 13 as well in preparation for this lesson.

**Age Specific Planning:** Romans 12:9-13 has some key elements to follow when you want to put love in action. The ideas and concepts can be adjusted to meet the cognitive skills of each age group. Choose examples and explanations accordingly. Find other scriptures to support each part of the call to action in this scripture.

## **Scriptural Breakdown:**

*Love must be sincere*—that means it comes from the heart, not out of guilt or duty

*Hate what is evil; cling to what is good*—“Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth” (I Cor. 13:6). Love is always looking for the good in people.

*Be devoted to one another in brotherly love*—be kind, courteous, committed, faithful; not wishy-washy, fickle, or jumping from one friend to another

*Honor one another above yourselves*—don’t be selfish or self-centered; think about the needs of others **first**

*Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor*—in other words, hold back nothing for the Lord. Give everything you have to and for the Lord. Be excited about Him!

*Be joyful in hope*—nobody likes to be around someone who is sad and focuses on the worst case scenario. God is our hope! Because of His love in action, we can be full of joy.

*Patient in affliction*—complaining never helps; God says be patient, even give thanks

*Faithful in prayer*—prayer should never be our last resort, but a daily part of our relationship with God.

*Share with God’s people who are in need*—The Bible is filled with stories of people helping other people in times of need; God expects the same thing of us today. His Word says that giving help to others is the same as giving help to God Himself.

*Practice hospitality*—Over and over in the Word we are encouraged to be good neighbors, fellow-Christians, good brothers, etc. Who knew planning a party was such a good way to serve God?

**Craft Time:** Simply google the words “heart crafts” if you want to do a craft with the girls. There are tons of options online or you can choose one from a craft store.

**Follow Through:** While February is the month to celebrate Valentine’s Day and talk about love, God’s love in action should be a year-round focus for Christians. Look for ways to share God’s love with your local church, community, or around the world through one of our Girls’ Ministries missions projects.

**Community Activity:** Get involved with Souper Bowl of Caring for February’s *God’s Love in Action*. See the previous February page for details on this feed the hungry focus.

# March



**Theme:** *The Great Commission:* “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:19-20, NIV).

**Plan of Action:** Read these scriptures and resources:

- Isaiah 52:7 “How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news...” (NIV).
- Acts 1:8 “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (NIV).
- *The Link* (order from IPHC World Missions)

**Age Specific Planning:** You can tailor the information below and from the various scripture references to the age range of your girls.

**Lesson Time: Focus on these four areas of involvement in missions with the girls.**

1. **READ.** Read the scriptures where God instructs us to be involved. Search for more than I have listed above. Remember that the first step is reading and learning about the world and its need for a Savior. While there are many great sources available, if you can purchase only one book, I recommend *Window on the World* by Daphne Spraggett with Jill Johnstone. It is designed to inform and inspire all ages (it is also the ideal accompaniment to *Operation World*). Stunning photographic visuals complement this A-Z of 100 countries and people groups. Use it in conjunction with *The Link* to focus on IPHC missions and missionaries.
2. **PRAY.** As the girls learn about specific countries and projects, they will be better equipped to pray for those areas. Any missionary will tell you that prayer for their ministry is a must. Teach your girls early about the importance of praying for our missionaries and their specific areas. Help them get a picture of what girls their ages might face in other countries and begin to pray for them to give their lives to Christ and to become strong Christians.
3. **GIVE.** Giving to missions should be taught from an early age. IPHC Girls’ Ministries has chosen several missions projects to help you make a wise decision. Check out our website for a complete listing; a few are listed below in the outreach section. March is also the month for IPHC Faith Commitment which helps provide the monthly salary for missionaries.
4. **GO!!** You never know but what you have a future missionary sitting among the girls in your group. Some will be called to leave family and friends and go abroad. However, help them understand that missions can also mean telling your neighbor friends about Jesus. Help them see that Acts 1:8 promises that He will equip them for wherever He calls them to go.

**Craft Time:** Books are available to help you select a craft for the girls to highlight the missions theme. Or choose a missions game/activity (i.e. finding countries on a globe).

**Outreach Activity:** Choose one of the missions projects suggested by IPHC Girls’ Ministries such as taking Mpact clubs to Spanish-speaking countries, Project I DO in India, People to People Child Sponsorship, and sending literature overseas through Operation Teaching Tools. Some of these can be one-time projects and others can be ongoing. Visit our website for complete details on these projects: <http://girls.iphc.org/outreach.html>.

# March Alternative

**Theme: *St. Patrick–Captured & Released:*** “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:19-20, NIV).

**Plan of Action:** Read these scriptures and resources:

- Isaiah 52:7 “How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news...” (NIV).
- Acts 1:8 “But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth” (NIV).
- *The Link* (order from IPHC World Missions)

**Age Specific Planning:** You can tailor the information below and from the various scripture references to the age range of your girls.

**Lesson Time: St. Patrick’s Day is far more than just a day to wear green.**

**CAPTURED.** St. Patrick had quite an adventuresome life. He was born about 389 A.D. in Dumbarton, Scotland. At the age of 16, he was climbing a cliff to warn his fellow villagers about approaching pirates. He fell 200 feet and was captured by the sea king Niall; he was taken to Ireland where he worked as a slave tending the flocks of a chieftain in Ulster. More than six years of slavery made him a devoted Christian. He eventually escaped to France and became a monk. However, he had not only been captured by the pirates and sold into slavery, the Irish people had captured his heart.

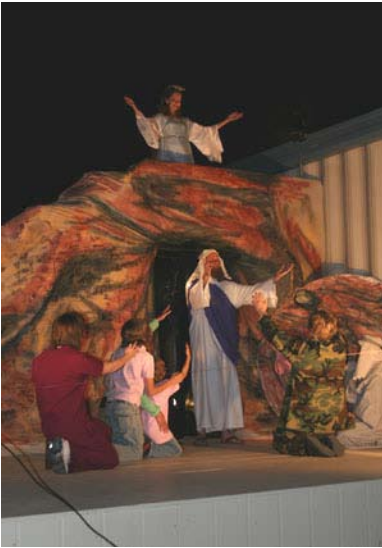
**RELEASED.** A vision in 432 A.D. caused him to surrender completely to God’s will; he was then released by God to serve as a missionary to Ireland. He is credited with taking Christianity to Ireland and is known as the patron saint of Ireland and the Irish people. He worked as a missionary to the Irish for 29 years. It is told that he used the shamrock, a 3-leaf clover which happens to be Ireland’s national flower, to explain the Trinity—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He founded 365 churches and baptized more than 120,000 people. St. Patrick died on March 17, 461 A.D.; the anniversary of his death is celebrated as St. Patrick’s Day. It is also interesting to note that the shamrock flowers around that time of the year. People wear green on this day to represent the lushness of Ireland—the Emerald Isle.

**Craft Time:** There’s a great craft kit available from Oriental Trading for making a 3-leaf clover highlighting the Trinity. Go to [www.orientaltrading.com](http://www.orientaltrading.com); then, in the search window type in IN-48/4308 to find this craft (as long as it’s available). The kit has everything you need to complete 12 shamrocks. Other ideas are available as well for St. Patrick’s Day crafts, but this one has the religious theme to it.



**Outreach Activity:** Choose one of the missions projects suggested by IPHC Girls’ Ministries such as taking Mpack clubs to Spanish-speaking countries, Project I DO in India, People to People Child Sponsorship, and sending literature overseas through Operation Teaching Tools. Some of these can be one-time projects and others can be ongoing. Visit our website for complete details on these projects: <http://girls.iphc.org/outreach.html>.

# April



**Theme: *Easter: A Journey of Love*** “...why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here; he has risen!” (Luke 24:5b-6a, NIV).

**Plan of Action:** Read these scriptures:

- John 14:19 “Before long, the world will not see me any more, but you will see me. Because I live, you will live also” (NIV).
- Luke 24:46-47 “He told them, “This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem” (NIV).

**Age Specific Planning:** You can tailor the information below and the scripture references above to the age range of your girls.

**Lesson Time:** Set up stations in your room representing the following “stops” during Christ’s Journey of Love to the Cross during His last week. Use the suggested visual and write the scripture on a piece of paper in a “dressed up” way. Starting at #1, move from station to station talking about what happened at each one. Role play parts of it.

1. **TRIUMPHAL ENTRY.** *Palm branches; John 12:12-13.* People had been talking about all of the miracles Christ had done. They lined the streets to honor Him by waving palm branches.
2. **THE LAST SUPPER.** *Elements for Communion (for display only); Luke 22:7, 19-20.* Many things happened during this time together with His disciples. Christ revealed truths about different disciples, promised the coming of the Holy Spirit, and gave instructions for observing communion to remember the sacrifice for our sins.
3. **GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.** *Rocks to outline a prayer area; Matthew 26:36.* While Christ was praying, His disciples fell asleep instead of praying that they would not fall into temptation as He had instructed them to do (Luke 22:40). Judas betrayed Christ in the garden.
4. **PILOT’S COURT.** *A gavel or instrument to indicate power; Luke 23:13; 23.* Pilot tried his best to free Jesus, but the crowd insisted that He be crucified. Pilot even washed his hands in a basin of water to symbolize his own innocence in having to turn Jesus over to them.
5. **THE BEATING.** *Crown of thorns, purple fabric, & whip; Matthew 27:27-31.* The soldiers did all of these horrible things as a way to mock Jesus.
6. **THE CRUCIFIXION.** *Nails, a cross, the words “King of the Jews,” written out on a piece of wood (or on the cross); Mark 24-30.* While the death of Jesus seems to be a sad and horrible story, He went willingly to the cross to become our Redeemer.
7. **THE RESURRECTION.** *Small angel, rock; Luke 24:1-8.* When the women came to the tomb to place perfumes and spices on His body, they found an empty tomb and angels! Jesus is alive and now lives in Heaven. He will live in your heart if you confess your sins and invite Him in.

**Craft Time:** Order the craft kit shown here from [www.orientaltrading.com](http://www.orientaltrading.com) (IN-48/4885 ) or come up with your own Easter craft.



**Outreach Activity:** Work with other departments in your church to host a community Easter Egg hunt. It can be as simple or extravagant as you want to make it.

# April Alternative

**Theme: *Spring to Life:*** “Behold, I will do a new thing, Now it shall **spring forth...**” (Isaiah 43:19 NKJV).

**Plan of Action:** Read these scriptures and consider the resource ideas:

- Prov. 8:35 “For whoever finds me finds life and receives favor from the Lord.” (NIV)
- Prov. 11:30 “The fruit of the righteous is a tree of life, and he who wins souls is wise.” (NIV)
- I Peter 1:13 “Therefore, prepare your minds for action; be self-controlled; set your hope fully on the grace to be given you when Jesus Christ is revealed.” (NIV)
- Decorate your room with colorful springs (Slinky type toys). Hang them from the ceiling or windows. You can order these from [www.orientaltrading.com](http://www.orientaltrading.com) (IN-9/33 Bright Magic Springs \$9.99/dozen; IN-36/1168 Mini “He Lives!” Magic Springs \$4.99/dozen).

**Age Specific Planning:** You can tailor the information below and the scripture references above to the age range of your girls


**Lesson Time: Spring brings new life; we must “spring” into action for Christ**

**SPRING** As a **noun**, this word refers to the season of the year that officially begins on March 20. It is a time when new life is everywhere. The hillsides look as though an artist came through with his colorful palette and dabbed bright colors on everything. That is exactly what happened; and God is that artist. Many of the animals also give birth to their offspring during Spring as well. Bears come out of hibernation. Nature becomes a vibrant, colorful expression of God-given life. Easter is the time we celebrate the new life we have in Christ because of His willingness to die for our sins. His resurrection conquered death and brings life to all who will accept it.

As a **verb**, the word spring designates action. As Christians, we are called to be witnesses. Read Prov. 11:30 (see above) and talk about it with your girls. Talk about ways they can win their friends to Christ. Use the “craft time” to finish the lesson. I Peter 1:13 (above) instructs us to prepare our minds for action and that’s what the craft time lesson will help you do with your girls.

**Craft Time: Crayon Witnessing Box.** Purchase a box of 8 crayons for each girl. On WHITE paper, print a copy of the color guide (right) for each girl. Cut them apart beforehand since the cut will be close. Let each girl tape a copy of this guide onto her own box of crayons. Use wide packaging tape for a laminated effect and to increase the life of the witnessing tool. Talk about each crayon color in the printed order; the paper represents white. (For a more detailed description, go to <http://girls.iphc.org/ideapacket.html> and look under “Extras” for “God’s Colorful Story of Love.” It includes a master page to print 6 copies of this witnessing tool on one page.) Encourage the girls to use the crayon tool to share God’s love. Print the guide on card stock and laminate them for the girls to use as a Bible bookmark. With these tools, they’ll be ready to “spring into action” and share God’s plan of salvation.

**Outreach Activity:** Make extra crayon witnessing boxes to give to a local shelter or feeding kitchen for the children.



**BLUE–Heaven;** “I go to prepare a place for you...” (Jn. 14:2-3).  
**YELLOW–Light;** “The Lord is my light and my salvation...” (Ps. 27:1a).  
**BLACK–Sin;** “All have sinned and come short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23).  
**RED–Blood of Christ;** “...While we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Rom. 5:8).  
**BROWN–Crown of Thorns & Cross;** “...He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross” (Phil. 2:8).  
**WHITE–Clean, pure heart;** “Create in me a clean heart, O God...” (Ps. 51:10).  
**ORANGE–Sunset/Sunrise;** “From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets, the name of the Lord is to be praised” (Ps. 113:3 NIV).  
**GREEN–Growth in Christ;** “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (2 Pet. 3:18 NIV).  
**PURPLE–Royalty;** “...We are children of God...joint heirs with Christ...” (Rom. 8:16-17).

# May



**Theme: *Mother's Day Tea*** “Give her the reward she has earned; she should be praised in public for what she has done” (Prov. 31:31 NCV).

**Plan of Action:** Read these scripture references at your event:

- Prov. 6:20-21 “That precious memory triggers another: your honest faith—and what a rich faith it is, handed down from your grandmother Lois to your mother Eunice, and now to you!” (NIV)
- Prov. 31:10 “A capable, intelligent, and virtuous woman—who is he who can find her? She is far more precious than jewels and her value is far above rubies or pearls” (NIV).
- Copy the table tents onto colored card stock & fold (download @ <http://girls.iphc.org/ideapacket.html> and look under “Extras”)

**Age Specific Planning:** The Mother's Day Tea will be easy to customize for all ages.

**Lesson Time:** Set up a Mother's Day Tea\* for the girls in your group and their mothers or include everyone if you have enough willing helpers (preferably those without daughters who would be attending). Do research with your girls on setting up a tea as a way to honor them publicly (see Prov. 31:31 above). Study etiquette with the girls and prepare them for the occasion. (National Etiquette Week is celebrated in May; check the web for info on dates, etc.) Work on table settings, manners, etc., but make it fun!

**Here are some questions to research (or ask yourself) when planning your Tea Party:**

(Hint: [www.teapartygirl.com](http://www.teapartygirl.com) has good answers; use [www.google.com](http://www.google.com); get books from the library.)

1. What's the difference between high tea and low tea? Which should we do?
2. What should we serve at our tea?
3. Should we make personalized invitations to the tea?
4. What about table settings? What's a proper setting? What about decorations? *Hint:* Use the table tents (mentioned above & shown in the photo at top) at each table.
5. Does etiquette really matter? (Check out this scripture showing that even Jesus promoted proper etiquette: Luke 14:7-9; place cards to the rescue!)

**What about the program?**

1. Let the girls act out parts of Proverbs 31 (*The Message* translation is great for this purpose.) Set the stage first: *Can this woman really exist, especially today?* Make it a comical rendition, then challenge the mothers that when they rely on God's strength, all things are possible.
2. Ask some of the girls to use their various talents (singing, drama, etc.) for the program.

**Craft Idea:** Order the craft kit shown here from [www.orientaltrading.com](http://www.orientaltrading.com) (IN-48/5127 Mother's Day Pull-Out Card Craft Kit; \$6.29/makes 12) or create your own craft. (Door prize idea: *Just Mom and Me Having Tea* by Mary Murray.)

**Outreach Activity:** Expand the walls of your group by inviting single moms in the community or workplace; just remember to make extra cards to give them.

**\*NOTE:** This is almost a three-part event: 1) a planning, research, & craft time with the girls; 2) involving girls in the actual set-up; and 3) the event itself.



# May Alternative

**Theme: *The Untold Stories*:** “For I know the plans I have for you,” declares the LORD, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future” Jer. 29:11 (NIV).

**Plan of Action:** Read these scriptures and look for these resources:

- Numbers 26:59 “the name of Amram’s wife was **Jochebed**...to Amram she bore Aaron, Moses and their sister Miriam” (NIV).
- I Kings 17:12 “Go at once to Zarephath of Sidon and stay there. I have commanded a **widow** in that place to supply you with food.”
- Luke 1:13 “...your prayer has been heard. Your wife **Elizabeth** will bear you a son, and you are to give him the name John.” (NIV)
- “Everyone who quotes proverbs will quote this proverb about you: *Like mother, like daughter*” Ezekiel 16:44 (NIV).
- Decorate your room with lots of story books, especially biographies of mothers.

**Lesson Time:** We’ll take a closer look at three mothers out of the Bible. In each case, we get a glimpse into their lives from what’s written, but we can learn so much more when we read between the lines or consider the lives of their children. The information below will get you started; you and your girls can add your own ideas and thoughts on these mothers.

**JOCHEBED**—the mother of Aaron, Moses, and Miriam: Jochebed is revealed in brief passages, yet we see a remarkable woman used by God. She gave birth to Moses at an old age (130) and then defied the law of the land to keep him alive for God’s purpose. She was creative in the plan she devised to save Moses from certain death. Her dedication to teaching her children about God resulted in three children who were tremendous leaders of the Children of Israel at a pivotal time in history. While God’s hand was at work, He used their mother to instill boldness, tenacity, commitment, the fear of God, compassion, and so much more. While her story is limited to a few verses, the exploits of her children span four books and tell a multitude about her.

**THE WIDOW AT ZAREPHATH:** Read I Kings 17:1-24 for what’s written about this mother. We don’t even know her name; we only know that she was a widow with a son and his age is also unknown. When we read between the lines of this story, we find a woman who is obviously devoted to God and knows how to hear His voice. We learn that God has already instructed her to take care of Elijah by providing him food and shelter (v. 9). We sense a brave woman who has accepted the fact that death is imminent (v.12). We see her dedication to God as she uses the last of her supplies to prepare food for God’s servant first (v 15). Her faith is highly visible, although we see her human weakness in verse 18. Her strength, bravery, faith, and deep commitment to God are just a few traits that could help us write the rest of her story.

**ELIZABETH**—Mother of John the Baptist: Only Luke records her story of being blessed with child in her old age. She becomes a mentor and encourager to Mary during the three months they spend together. Both women were favored of God and were filled with the Holy Spirit. Elizabeth and Zacharias prepared their son for the task to which God had called him. His strength came from their strength and his commitment to God stemmed from their commitment and devotion.

**Craft Time: *My Mother’s Untold Story*.** Prepare a 10-page blank book for each girl. Fold five pages in half and tie a ribbon around them to hold the pages together (or punch holes on the left side and tie ribbons through the holes). Provide stickers, markers, and any other craft supplies you have on hand. (Ask the girls to bring photos of their mothers for this project.) Help them tell their mothers’ stories on the blank pages of the book. Remember, it’s *Get Caught Reading Month*.

**Outreach Activity:** Find a single mother in the local church or community with some specific needs and do what you can to help her as she feeds into the lives of her children.

# June



**Theme: *My Hero—My Father*** “The LORD your God, who is going before you, will fight for you, as he did for you in Egypt.... There you saw how the LORD your God carried you, as a father carries his son, all the way you went until you reached this place” Deut. 1:30-31 (NIV).

**Plan of Action:** Read these scripture references & ideas:

- Joshua 1:9 “...Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go.” (NIV)
- Proverbs 23:22 “Listen to your father, who gave you life, and do not despise your mother when she is old.” (NIV)
- Decorate your room with books and/or posters about heroes.

**Age Specific Planning:** You can tailor the information to the age range of your girls.

**Lesson Time:** Set up your room with lots of posters, pictures, or books about fairy tale heroes that the girls will recognize. Make a Super Daddy Cape to reveal when you get to the 2nd section below. Talk about the parallels between the earthly father and our Heavenly Father. (However, use wisdom if you have girls with a strained father/daughter relationship. Let them know that God can still be those things to them.)

## What does a Super Hero do?

1. He rides in on a white horse with the glass slipper (Cinderella).
2. He gives a kiss that awakens from a deep sleep (Sleeping Beauty & Snow White).
3. He flies in from above, swoops up the victim, and carries her to safety (Superman).

## What does a Super Daddy do?

1. He protects.
  - ...from the elements of nature with a home
  - ...from making bad decisions through insight and discipline
  - ...from Satan’s attacks through a covering of prayer
2. He provides. Fathers work hard to meet our basic survival needs and so much more.
3. He prepares. Fathers teach us how to survive in the real world.

## What does God, Our Father, do?

1. He protects. *Jehovah-Rohi—The Lord our Shepherd* (Psalm 23:1; John 10:11)
2. He provides. *Jehovah-Jireh—The Lord our Provider* (Genesis 22:14; Phil. 4:19)
3. He prepares. *I Am the True Vine* (John 15:1; 5; Fruit of the Spirit—Galatians 5:22-23)

**Craft Idea:** Order the craft kit (right) from [www.orientaltrading.com](http://www.orientaltrading.com) (IN-48/5125 Father’s Day Toolbox Card Craft Kit \$6.29/makes 12) or create your own craft. Change out the verse inside to read: “I’m glad God gave you the tools to help me become His workmanship” (Eph. 2:10).

**Outreach Activity:** Host a fishing tournament (boats or shoreline) where fathers and children form a team to compete in different categories: most number of fish, most pounds of fish; coolest fishing gear; etc.



# June Alternative

**Theme: *Search for Prince Charming:*** 1 Tim. 4:7-8 “Have nothing to do with godless myths and old wives’ tales; rather, train yourself to be godly. For physical training is of some value, but godliness has value for all things, holding promise for the present life and the life to come” (NIV)

**Plan of Action:** Read these scriptures and look for the resources:

- Jer. 29:11 “For I know the plans I have for you,’ declares the LORD, ‘plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.’” (NIV)
- 1 Sam 16:7 “...Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart” (NIV). (See also Gal. 2:6)
- Rom. 12:2 “Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.” (NIV)
- Rom. 8:17 “Now if we are children, then we are heirs—heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory.” (NIV)
- Decorate your room with fairy tales and myths, especially those involving a prince charming type figure. Be sure to have *Beauty and the Beast*.
- Bake enough cupcakes for each girl to have one during the lesson time. However, when you bake them, place a small unexpected food item such as a broccoli stem or chunk of dill pickle in the middle. You’ll use this in your lesson time.

**Lesson Time:** *Read & then relate it to the girls in a personal manner.* Every little girl goes through stages in her life. In the very earliest years, she will see her daddy as her Prince Charming and will be awed by his attention and love. Before long come the fairy tales and fables about young girls being rescued by the Prince and they live happily ever after. Little girls dream of it happening to them. Then come the years when boys and girls act as though they don’t even notice each other. “Charming” is nowhere to be found! Eventually, friendships between both sexes begin to blossom. And suddenly, “charming” is again a reality. But sometimes, it’s only a surface reality. (Give each girl one of the “special” cupcakes you made. Talk about how it looks on the outside; inviting, scrumptious, beautiful, etc.) Instruct the girls to break the cupcake open. Talk about what they find and relate it to the scriptures above which caution us not to judge on the outside appearance. This can be true of friendships among girls or the boy-girl relationships that will eventually come. (Discuss how in *Beauty and the Beast*, the ugly creature turns out to be a tender, loving, and caring being. His appearance gave no indication of his true nature which she brought out in him.)

God calls us to a higher standard. Romans 12:2 warns us against conforming to the world’s standards. Instead, we are to be transformed through God’s Word and His plan of redemption. When we live as daughters of the One True King, meaning by a higher standard, our lifelong dreams are suddenly revealed in a new light (Rom. 8:17) and we can live happily IN the ever after (Titus 3:7).

**Activity Time:** Bring everything needed to make cupcakes that will be edible—good inside and outside. Bring toppings to make them look festive and pretty as though for a bridal shower (reminding the girls that we are the bride of Christ).

**Outreach Activity:** Join with other church departments to host a father/daughter/son Pancake Breakfast for your church and community. Provide lots of fun toppings for the pancakes.

# July



**Theme: *Let Freedom Ring*** “If the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed” John 8:36 (NIV).

**Plan of Action:** Read these scripture references & ideas:

- Psalm 119:45 “I have gained perfect freedom by following your teachings....” (CEV)
- Revelation 1:5, 6 “To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood, and has made us to be a kingdom and priests to serve his God and Father—to him be glory and power for ever and ever! Amen.” (NIV)
- **Decorate** with a red, white, and blue patriotic flair. Use crosses to represent the freedom we have through Jesus Christ.

**Age Specific Planning:** Tailor the information to the age range of your girls.

**Lesson Time:** Use the information in the following sections to draw parallels between our patriotic and spiritual freedoms. Discuss the scripture references listed above. Memorize John 8:36.

**Symbols of Freedom:** The American flag is one of the greatest visual symbols of our freedom as Americans. The flag can be displayed anywhere at anytime. For Christians, the cross is the most powerful visual reminder of the price that was paid for our spiritual freedom.

**Colors of Freedom:** While historians tell us that the colors chosen for the US flag did not carry a specific meaning when it was adopted in 1777, the Seal which was adopted in 1782 carries the same colors and are recognized as having the following meanings: **White** signifies purity and innocence; **Red**, hardiness & valour; and **Blue**, signifies vigilance, perseverance & justice. The same three colors also carry a spiritual significance for Christians. **Red** reminds us of the blood of Jesus which He “shed for the remission of our sins.” **White** also signifies our clean heart when He “washes us white as snow.” And **blue** signifies heaven and God’s “gift of eternal life.”

**Icons of Freedom:** The American flag’s design is simple yet profound with two main icons—stars and stripes. It’s 13 stripes represent the 13 colonies which were the foundation of our country. They endured great hardships to birth a nation of religious freedom. The 50 stars represent the states which now make up our great nation. They remind us of the unity of these 50 states which came at a great cost during both the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. The parallel for these same icons is life changing for the Christian. The stripes that Christ took on our behalf are a painful reminder that he took them for our sins. He endured unbelievable pain and suffering so that we could walk in spiritual freedom. The stars on the flag are limited to one for each state. However, the stars in our night sky are too numerous to count and illuminate the great universe which God created. His love for us is as endless as the sky itself and the light shining from the stars represents the light He brings into our lives and expects us to share with others.

**Craft Idea:** Order the craft kit shown here from [www.orientaltrading.com](http://www.orientaltrading.com) (IN-48/1524 “God Bless America” Sign Craft Kit \$6.99 Makes 12) or create your own craft.

**Outreach Activity:** Host a Fourth of July picnic, a watermelon feast, fireworks show, etc. and open your event to the community if possible.



# July Alternative

**Theme:** *Can You Hear Me Now?* “The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’ And let him who hears say, ‘Come’ Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life” (Revelation 22:17 NIV).

**Plan of Action:** Read these scriptures and look for these resources:

- Psalm 27:7 “Hear my voice when I call, O Lord; be merciful to me and answer me.” (NIV)
- Isaiah 28:23 “Listen and hear my voice; pay attention and hear what I say.” (NIV)
- 2 Chron. 7:14 “If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin and will heal their land” (NIV)
- Decorate your room with both patriotic items and cell phones. Display the phrase “Can you hear me now?” all over the room.

**Lesson Time:** “Can you hear me now?” was an advertising gimmick used by a popular cell phone company. Using the wrong cell phone service, they implied, hampered your connection. Our lesson, based on that question, has a two-part focus. First, we must learn to pray to God allowing Him to hear **our** voice. Then we must walk in a relationship with Him that allows us to hear **His** voice.

**A two-way connection.** The reference in Revelation 22:17 is a perfect example of the two-way connection which must take place. Christ is calling us to hear His voice and come to Him in repentance; when we respond by inviting Him to “come” into our hearts, we are given the free gift of the water of life! Our spiritual freedom comes through confessing our sins and allowing Christ to dwell in our hearts. We have now established a two-way connection between God and us.

**The right service.** In Ephesians 3:12, we are told that “In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.” Because Christ now dwells in our hearts, we have a direct line to God. Our faith allows us to walk in freedom and pray to God in confidence.

**Unlimited Calling Plan**—Before you can talk to someone on your cell phone, you must have paid for a service plan. Only then can you dial the number and push the talk button. Your friends want to hear from you. The same is true of God. He wants to hear **YOUR** voice. In Psalm 27:7, David was praying to God and declaring His need for answers to his prayers. You need to establish a prayer relationship with God. Tell him how much you love Him; ask specifically for needs you may have. And remember, with God your minutes are always unlimited and free!

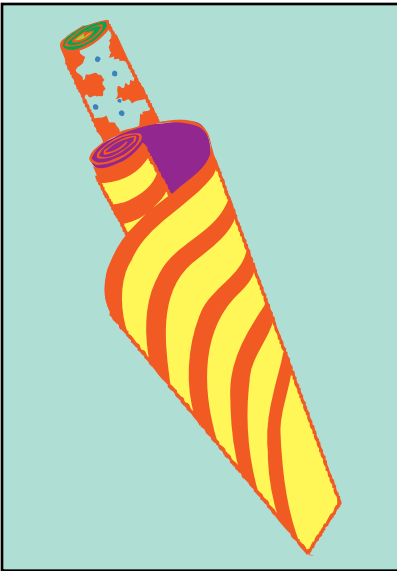
**God’s Ringtone**—God wants us to be so in tune with Him that when He “calls” us we know His ringtone without question. We need to learn how to listen to His voice. Isaiah 28:23 says, “Listen and hear my voice; pay attention and hear what I say.” This is God’s desire for us.

**Conference Call**—God wants to hear from us individually, but He also wants to hear from us as a group. Whether it’s a group of friends praying together for a specific need or the whole church praying during a church service, praying together is important. In 2 Chronicles 7:14, God is telling His people they need to come together as a nation and seek His face and ask for forgiveness.

**Activity Time:** *July is cell phone etiquette month.* Download our guide (look under “Extras” @ <http://girls.iphc.org/ideapacket.html>) and use it to discuss proper cell phone etiquette.

**Outreach Activity:** Do some research and find a group that accepts old cell phones to be refurbished for a specific need. Launch a church-wide drive to collect old cell phones and give them a new and more useful home than the catch-all drawer!

# August



**Theme: *Summer Wrap*** “To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:...” (Ecc. 3:1).

**Plan of Action:** Read these scripture references & ideas:

- Proverbs 27:17 “You use steel to sharpen steel, and one friend sharpens another.” (The Message)
- I Samuel 16:7 “But the Lord said to Samuel, ‘Do not consider his appearance or his height, for I have rejected him. The Lord does not look at the things man looks at. Man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.’” (NIV)
- **Decorate** with tubes of fun wrapping paper.

**Age Specific Planning:** Tailor the information to the age range of your girls.

**Recapping the Year:** Our lives are filled with seasons just as the Ecclesiastes scripture outlines so beautifully. As summer winds down (or wraps up), girls will have lots of stories about their great adventures or weeks of relaxation. Take a little time to “hang out” with your girls; focus on the preceding year’s activities as a group and as a church. Talk about plans for the upcoming year. Let your girls be part of the planning process. Refer to Proverbs 27:17 about how girls can sharpen each other and talk about ways that happens. Reiterate the importance of choosing good friends who will help to sharpen you.

**Front & Center:** Have two packages all wrapped up and sitting on the table; one should be wrapped beautifully while the other one is wrapped haphazardly. Put an ugly rock in the nicely wrapped package and a nice gift in the ugly package. You’ll refer to these in the Lesson Time.

**Lesson Time:** We all love to unwrap gifts on those special days such as birthdays and Christmas. However, before a gift can be unwrapped, it has to be wrapped by someone. When you see a beautifully wrapped package, it means that someone has taken the time to make it special. When you see a package wrapped like this one, however, (refer to ugly package), what do you think? If we were given the chance to take either package, most of us would choose based on the outside of the package. (Open the beautifully wrapped package to reveal the rock. Let the girls react.) Sometimes the package can trick us into thinking the inside is going to be great just because the outside is so nice. It can be the same way with people. Just because another girl is so pretty and popular doesn’t necessarily mean she’s the wisest choice for a friend. In fact, the Bible warns us about that in I Samuel 16:7 (read the scripture or let one of the girls read it). So don’t be fooled by the outer wrapping of people you meet. Take time to get to know what’s in their hearts first.

**Craft Idea:** Order the craft kit shown here from [www.orientaltrading.com](http://www.orientaltrading.com) (IN-48/3791 Monkey Magnet Craft Kit \$4.99 Makes 12) or create your own craft. I like to call this one, “Just Hanging Out” to go along with the theme of what your girls have been doing over the summer months. OR, invite someone in to teach girls how to wrap beautiful packages. While not as important as the gift itself, wrapping a gift should be a fun part of giving a gift!



**Outreach Activity:** For a final summer activity, go swimming, host a watermelon feast (complete with a seed spitting contest) or another fun summer activity of your choosing.

# August Alternative

**Theme: *Clowning Around*:** “A cheerful heart is good medicine, but a crushed spirit dries up the bones” (Proverbs 17:22).

**Plan of Action:** Read these scriptures (all NIV) and look for these resources:

- Proverbs 15:13: “A happy heart makes the face cheerful, but heartache crushes the spirit.”
- Ecc. 11:9 “Be happy, young man [girl], while you are young, and let your heart give you joy in the days of your youth. Follow the ways of your heart and whatever your eyes see, but know that for all these things God will bring you to judgment.”
- James 5:13b: “...is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise.”
- Ecc. 5:19: “Moreover, when God gives any man wealth and possessions, and enables him to enjoy them, to accept his lot and be happy in his work—this is a gift of God.”
- Ecc. 3:12: “I know that there is nothing better for men than to be happy and do good while they live.”
- Psalm 126:2: “Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it was said among the nations, “The Lord has done great things for them.””
- Psalm 68:3: But may the righteous be glad and rejoice before God; may they be happy and joyful.”
- Decorate your room with bright colors and any clown paraphernalia that you might be able to get your hands on.

**Lesson Time:** Clowning is a unique way to minister to both the physical and spiritual needs of people. August 2-8 is National Clown Week so it's a great time to pay tribute to the art of clowning as a ministry and to have some fun with it as well. I have given you lots of scriptures above to read and share together. It's obvious that God wants us to be happy and that includes laughing! This month's lesson should be about doing things together to make you laugh, so create your own lesson/activity from some of the suggestions on this page.

## **Tidbits on Laughter:**

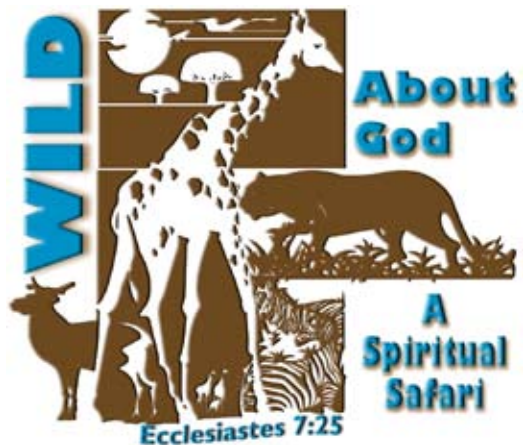
- A good, hearty laugh relieves physical tension and stress, leaving your muscles relaxed for up to 45 minutes afterwards.
- Laughter, along with an active sense of humor, may help protect you against a heart attack, according to a recent study by cardiologists at the University of Maryland Medical Center in Baltimore.
- We're 30 times more likely to laugh when we're with other people than when we're alone (duh).

**Laugh Out Loud**—Here's a list of ideas to get your girls laughing together: watch a funny movie or video; bring in a clown to entertain the girls and teach them some things; collect some really good, clean jokes, jot them down, and let each girl draw one from a container and tell the joke; play a game where you write down silly things to do for a certain time period; take funny pictures on a digital camera and look at them on a laptop or computer.

**Activity Time:** Bring in someone who knows how to do makeup for clowns. Bring in a box of fun clothes and let the girls create clown costumes.

**Outreach Activity:** Sponsor a clown ministry event in the form of a Back to School rally for your neighborhood complete with collecting school supplies to be given away at the event. This is a great way to spread some happiness!

# September



**Theme: *Wild About God—A Spiritual Safari*** “So I turned my mind to understand, to investigate and to search out wisdom and the scheme of things...” (Ecc. 7:25 NIV).

**Plan of Action:** Read this scripture and download packet:  
 • Psalm 25:4-5 “Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long.” (NIV)

**Decorating Ideas:** Check out the picture on the next page for ideas on how to decorate with the safari theme in mind.

**Packet to Download:** An entire packet has been created for the 2009 Girls’ Ministries theme Wild About God. It can be downloaded from the website (<http://girls.iphc.org/ideapacket.html>). The 18-page packet is available for download in the “Extras” Section on that web page. That’s where you will find the information to help you plan this month’s focus. You’ll find craft and activity ideas in that packet along with lesson plans for GM Day, a club meeting, and a sleepover.

**Overview:** The simple definition of a safari is a journey or expedition. You expect a safari to take you to exotic places where wild animals roam freely. Our safari will take us through the Sahara Desert, the tropical rainforest, the rolling hillside, and even the neighborhood park. We’ll explore the attributes of both wild and tame animals that God created and talk about which ones we should imitate and why. The goal for our spiritual safari is defined in Ecclesiastes 7:25.

**Lesson Time:** Use the materials from the “Lesson From the Wild” section of the GM Week Planning packet. That is the section which highlights the various animals mentioned in the overview above. The “Safari Animals Attribute Chart” shown below is one of many helps you’ll find in the downloadable packet.

Animal	Attribute/Quality	Scripture	Biblical Example & Scripture
Sloth	lazy	Proverbs 26:13	5 unprepared virgins—Matt. 25:1-13 man who buried his coins—Matt 25:24-30
Ant	productive team work	Proverbs 6:6-11	Tabitha (always doing good)—Acts 9:36-42 Paul, Aquila & Priscilla—Acts 18:1-3
Leopard	Ferocious, dangerous similar to anger	Matthew 5:21-26	Moses (killed man)—Exodus 2:11-14 Peter (cut off ear)—Luke 22:49-51
Turtle	slow, deliberate, patient	Proverbs 16:32	Moses (40 days/nights with God) Ex. 34 Simeon & Anna—(waiting for Christ) Luke 2:25-38
Jaquar	bold powerful	Hebrews 13:6	Daniel—Dan. 6:3-23 (bows to God; lion’s den) Esther—Esther 4:1-17 (saves her people)
Lamb	gentle, meek, mild sacrificial	2 Corinthians 3:12	Ruth—Ruth 1:14-18; 2:6-7 (helps mother-in-law) Jesus (sacrificed His life for our sins) Rom. 5:8
Chameleon	blend in; copycat yield to peer pressure	Rom. 12:2 Matt. 10:32	Peter (denied Christ)—John 18:17-27 Ananias & Sapphira—Acts 5:1-11
Lion	strong; courageous bold	Ps. 31:24/Phil. 4:13 Proverbs 28:1	Peter (sermon in Acts 2) 3,000 added to church Deborah (leads in battle) Judges 4:1 to 5:31

# September Alternative

**Theme: *Wild About God—A Spiritual Safari—Sleepover Style***

**Safari Wrap-up:** End the week with a sleepover. Read the GM Week theme scripture from Ecclesiastes 7:25: “So I turned my mind to understand, to investigate and to search out wisdom and the scheme of things...” This verse was the goal of the safari that we’ve been on over this past week. I challenge you to make this verse a lifelong goal for your spiritual safari. As Christians, we must always seek to understand God’s will for our lives. To investigate means to observe or study by close examination and systematic inquiry. Our challenge here is to take things further. Don’t simply read a scripture out of the Bible. Look closer at it, study it, break it apart. Systematic simply means to have a plan and to follow it on a regular basis. Find wisdom through prayer and studying God’s Word. If you remember to make God your safari guide and use the Bible as your safari map, your spiritual safari is certain to produce a creature that is both pleasing and useful to God. Invite your friends to join you on this safari.



Your WM & GM Staff shows off some of the products available to enhance your *Wild About God* Week.

**[www.orientaltrading.com](http://www.orientaltrading.com):**

Animal Print Sunglasses IN-83/129 (\$5.99/dozen)

Animal Print Boxes (not shown) IN-3/1339 (\$2.99/dozen)

Inflatable Animals IN-49/46 (\$19.99/dozen)

Animal Print Bandanas IN-15/15 (\$9.99/dozen)

Child’s Safari Hat IN-15/101 (\$17.99/dozen)

Animal Masks IN-25/1340 (\$5.99/dozen)

**[www.amazon.com](http://www.amazon.com):** Type *Sing & Play Roar Music* into Search (from Group Publishing/Serengeti Trek/2005)

**[www.shopscholastic.com](http://www.shopscholastic.com)** Safari Animals! Bulletin Board Set \$9.99: (type in item # 973169); Safari Animals! Note Pad (50-sheet pad/\$2.99 item # 973273)

Check your **local bookstore or teacher supply** for other safari items. Visit your fabric store for fun fabrics.



# October

**Theme:** *Harvest Spectacular* “The LORD will indeed give what is good, and our land will yield its harvest” (Psalm 85:12).

**Plan of Action:** Read these scripture references (NIV) & ideas:

- Galatians 6:9 “Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.”
- 2 Peter 1:2 “Grace and peace be yours in abundance through the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.
- Luke 10:2 “...The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.

**Age Specific Planning:** Tailor the information to the age range of your girls.

**Front & Center:** Make a harvest display of as many kinds of crops as possible, including any still available from the summertime harvest. Use a larger pumpkin as your center point.

**Introductory Time:** The word harvest describes the reward that comes with the labors of planting, watering, and cultivating. It denotes the season when ripened crops are gathered. Whether it's a garden of summer vegetables, fields of autumn pumpkins and gourds, or orchards of apples, the yield is a spectacular testimony of God's goodness and provision.

**Lesson Time:** In Genesis 22, we are introduced to the name Jehovah-Jireh, which literally means God is our Provider. No matter what the need, He will provide (read Matt. 6:25-34 and Phil 4:19 for confirmation). A bountiful food harvest is just one of the many ways God provides for our physical needs. His provisions include jobs for parents so that children can be clothed and have shelter. Galatians 6:9 reminds us, however, that God doesn't just unload a wheelbarrow full of crops at our doorsteps. We must do our part by working the fields. The harvest depends on the farmer's TLC. God is concerned not only about what you will eat and wear or where you will live; He is even more concerned about what kind of harvest your spiritual lives will produce. 2 Peter 1:2 speaks of grace and peace while Jude 1:2 proclaims mercy, peace, and love in abundance. Through a relationship with Jesus Christ, all of these (and more) can be a spectacular display of His harvest in us. We are called to be part of the team that will harvest the souls of this world and Luke 10:2 reminds us to pray for more workers because the harvest is ripe.

**Craft Idea:** Order a wreath kit from [www.orientaltrading.com](http://www.orientaltrading.com) (IN-48/4024 3-D Pumpkin Wreath Craft Kit \$12.99 Makes 12) or create your own craft. Their foam craft kit includes cutout pumpkins and autumn leaves, gingham fabric bows, and jute hangers so girls can easily create colorful layered foam wreaths for fall. (6 1/4")



**Outreach Activity:** Host a Trunk or Treat night in your church's parking lot. Car trunks or luggage areas of SUVs provide a great space for decorating with a great theme and each one has candy to give out. I turned the back of my SUV into Noah's ark complete with animal cookies instead of candy (see picture at left). Children could sit on the tailgate & get their pictures taken in the "ark."

# October Alternative

**Theme:** My Claim to Fame: “So the people of Israel did everything as the Lord had commanded Moses. Each clan and family set up camp and marched under their banners exactly as the Lord had instructed them” (Numbers 2:34 NLT).

**Plan of Action:** Read these scriptures (all NIV) and think about what they mean to us today:

- Deuteronomy 4:9. “Only be careful, and watch yourselves closely so that you do not forget the things your eyes have seen or let them slip from your heart as long as you live. Teach them to your children and to their children after them.”
- Deuteronomy 11:19. “Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.”
- Esther 9:28. “These days should be remembered and observed in every generation by every family, and in every province and in every city.”
- Job 8:8. “Ask the former generations and find out what their fathers learned....”
- Psalm 78:4. “...We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the LORD, his power, and the wonders he has done.”
- Galatians 6:10. “Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers.”
- Hebrews 2:11. “Both the one who makes men holy and those who are made holy are of the same family. So Jesus is not ashamed to call them brothers.”
- October is Family History Month. Decorate your room with family photos of each girl (get them early). Bring in scrapbooks, old family heirlooms, etc.

**Lesson Time:** The month of October is designated as Family History Month. The scripture references above make it very clear to us that family is vitally important to God. Adam and Eve were created as the first family. It was a family that God placed on the ark. Moses was assisted by family members on the great exodus from Egypt. During their journey, they traveled by clans and families. Esther was chosen by God to save her people from death. Jesus Himself came to earth as part of a family with a unique (and prophesied) heritage. All of these stories were important enough for God to orchestrate their inclusion in the Bible. We are reminded repeatedly that the stories of God’s love, goodness, and provision should be passed from generation to generation. Your “claim to fame” is your family. The family of God is equally important and is part of who we are in Christ. His works must be told from generation to generation. We must never forget who we are.

## Fun Ideas:

- Make a Family Recipe Book. Collect recipes from the girls’ families (preferably ones handed down through two or three generations). Option 1: Make a joint class recipe book. Option 2: Let each girl make her own family recipe book (add pictures, stickers, etc.)
- Invite relatives to come in and share interesting & unusual family stories.
- Talk about questions to ask grandparents. Encourage them to follow through & make notes.

**Activity Time:** Scrapbooking (hands-on or online) is a great way to preserve memories. Chances are you could find a scrapbooker in your church who would be willing to come in and do a one-page project with your girls. Or, they could help you upload pictures and do a book online.

**Outreach Activity:** If your church has a fall festival of some sort, let the girls sponsor a booth which highlights a “story time” where a grandma-type person sits in a rocker with the children gathered round telling an unusual (and short) story of something from the past. For instance, my great, great, grandpa came to the States as a stowaway on a ship and was discovered at sea. He was forced to work for the shipping company for a year to pay his fare. We only know the bare facts, but it’s a story with potential for embellishment in a story-telling setting.



# November

**Theme: *An Attitude of Gratitude*** “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God” (Colossians 3:16 NIV).

**Plan of Action:** Read these scripture references:

- Psalm 100:4. “Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name” (NIV).
- Hebrews 12:28. “Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe... (NIV).
- Colossians 4:2. “Devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful” (NIV).

**Age Specific Planning:** Tailor the information to the age range of your girls.

**Opening Activity:** Have a Thanksgiving display filled with items such as knives, forks, spoons, paper napkins, cloth napkins, etc. Have pictures of a turkey, deer, and various other common foods at our present day celebration. Ask each girl to write down the items on the table that might have been part of the First Thanksgiving of 1621 at Plymouth Rock. (I have underlined some of the correct answers. For more details, visit <http://www.history.com/content/thanksgiving>).

**Lesson Time:** The Miriam Webster online dictionary describes attitude as a mental position with regard to a fact or state as well as a feeling or emotion toward a fact or state. That goes along perfectly with the theme, “An Attitude of Gratitude.” Being thankful goes far beyond celebrating the Thanksgiving holiday once a year on the fourth Thursday of November. It is about living in an attitude of gratitude ALL the time, year-round, regardless of the situation! That is exactly what the Apostle Paul tells us in 1 Thessalonians 5:18 when he says, “give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus (NIV). It is easy to be thankful when things are going great, but life is not always easy. That’s when we must remind ourselves of the scores of verses out of God’s Word that remind us to be thankful. Don’t allow the bad things to pull you down; instead remember to thank God for everything, even when there’s no turkey on the table! Yes, Thanksgiving is a great time to honor God for everything He has done for you, but living in gratitude all the time is a great way for YOU to honor God.

**Craft Idea:** Order the craft kit shown here from [www.orientaltrading.com](http://www.orientaltrading.com) (IN-48/3163 Standing Tree Of Thanks Craft Kit \$9.99 Makes 12) or create your own craft. It’s a great craft to do as you talk about all the different things we can give thanks to God for, even the things we don’t always think about thanking Him for, such as homework!



**Outreach Activity:** Try to find a feeding program that you can involve your girls in sometime during this month. If you can’t find one where they can actually go and help, at least participate in one where you bring in canned goods, etc., for a local program or for an anonymous family in your church.

**Thanksgiving Tidbits:** There are some great tidbit facts about the Thanksgiving holiday at [www.history.com/content/thanksgiving/fun-facts](http://www.history.com/content/thanksgiving/fun-facts). For instance, Minnesota is the top turkey producing state in the US and cranberries are entirely native to North American soil.

# November Alternative

**Theme:** Inspired & Energized: “We proclaim him, admonishing and teaching everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone perfect in Christ. To this end I labor, struggling with all his energy, which so powerfully works in me” Colossians 1:28-29 (NIV).

**Plan of Action:** Read these scriptures (all NIV) and look for these resources:

- Jeremiah 32:40. “I will make an everlasting covenant with them: I will never stop doing good to them, and I will inspire them to fear me, so that they will never turn away from me.”
- 1 Thessalonians 1:3. “We continually remember before our God and Father your work produced by faith, your labor prompted by love, and your endurance inspired by hope in our Lord Jesus Christ.”
- Article Five of the IPHC Articles of Faith: We believe in the verbal and plenary inspiration of the Holy Scriptures, known as the Bible, composed of sixty-six books, and divided into two departments, Old and New Testaments. We believe the Bible is the Word of God, the full and complete revelation of the plan and history of redemption.
- Decorate your room with Bibles (old and new), batteries & bunnies (remember the Energizer Bunny that keeps going, and going, and going).

**Special Emphasis:** National Bible Week, started in 1941 as the signature event of the National Bible Association, is celebrated the week of Thanksgiving every year since 1941. (To learn more, visit <http://www.nationalbible.org/national-bible-week/>.) It is a great time to teach your girls a little history about the Bible, focus on our fifth article of faith, and understand the Bible’s importance to us as Christians.

**Lesson Time:** As stated in our 5th Article of Faith, we believe that the Bible is God’s inspired Word to us. It reveals the history of mankind, God’s plan of salvation for us, and the revelation of our victorious future through Jesus Christ. The Bible is our road map. When you read the scriptures above, you’ll find references to working, laboring, and enduring. If you only look at those words, it might sound too hard, but when you read on, you discover the secret. When we partner with God in our labors, we are **inspired** by our hope in Christ (1 Thess. 1:3) and **energized** by God’s power (Col. 1:29). God doesn’t expect us to make it by ourselves. By the same token, He doesn’t want us to stand by and do nothing. His word should inspire us to inspire others! We are to use the energy and power He gives us to share the salvation message with others.

## Tidbits on The Bible:

- Visit [www.christian-parenting.suite101.com/article.cfm/christian\\_parenting\\_bible\\_facts](http://www.christian-parenting.suite101.com/article.cfm/christian_parenting_bible_facts) for some “Fun Things You Never Knew About the Bible.”
- Johannes Gutenberg is credited with printing the world’s first book using movable type, the 42-line (the number of lines per page) Gutenberg Bible!
- A Bible Reading Marathon—a cover to cover, non-stop out-loud reading of the entire Bible can take anywhere from 70 to 90 hours.

**Activity Time:** Try to find a Bible with a unique history of ownership. For instance, my husband has his grandmother’s Bible which stayed in a night stand by her bed. It survived a house fire when everything around it was destroyed.

**Outreach Activity:** Collect money to purchase a Bible for a family in your community or church who might not be able to afford one. Ask the pastor to help you select the beneficiary of this gift.



# December

**Theme:** *The Gift That Keeps On Giving* “For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord...” (Rom. 6:23).

**Plan of Action:** Read these scripture references & ideas:

- Eph. 2:8 “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God...”
- Revelation 22:17 “The Spirit and the bride say, ‘Come!’ And let him who hears say, ‘Come!’ Whoever is thirsty, let him come; and whoever wishes, let him take the free gift of the water of life.”
- **Decorate** your room with wrapped gifts of all sizes.

**Age Specific Planning:** Tailor the information to the age range of your girls.

**Opening Activity:** Set aside an area where you place a variety of unwrapped gift ideas. Choose items that will last just a few minutes (candy), items that might last a few weeks (lotion, soap, perfume, etc.), and items that would last a few years (CDs, DVDs, clothing). Also, include some books which will, of course, include the Bible. Another idea is to include a progression of related items such as old records, 8-track tapes, cassettes tapes, CDs, and an iPod (this will illustrate a point in the lesson). Instruct the girls to look at these and write down which gifts have the longest life. This display will be part of the lesson later on.

**Lesson Time:** During this time of the year, we all think a lot about gifts. We like to give and receive gifts at Christmas. When you have worked hard and saved money for gifts, you want to make sure you are giving a gift that is very special or will last a long time. On our display table, you saw all kinds of gift ideas. Some of them, such as the candy, will be gone in less than a minute while other gifts will last a little longer. A pretty shirt might last a year or two until you outgrow it or get an ugly stain on it that just won’t come out. The special soap that you use to clean your body or the perfume that makes you smell good will only last a while. And what about the music you like to listen to on your iPod or CD player. The way we listen to music has changed so many times over the years (refer to display and discuss the different types you found). However, one thing never changes. God’s Word, the Bible (get it off the display table) tells us in Hebrews 13:8 that “Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.” He never changes! His Word never changes. His love for us is always the same. When we accept His gift of salvation (Rom. 6:23), we receive eternal life. He truly is the gift that keeps on giving...forever and ever!

**Craft Idea:** Order the craft kit shown here from [www.orientaltrading.com](http://www.orientaltrading.com) (IN-48/4147 Button Wreath Ornament Craft Kit \$5.99 Makes 12) or create your own craft. This wreath has several features which can enhance the lesson. The circle is a symbol of never-ending love (think wedding band) while the colors used in this project have significance when related to the gift of Christ as well. Red is for the blood of Jesus which redeems us; white for washing us clean, and green for our growth as Christians.



**Outreach Activity:** Find a family in your community to help. Give them gifts that meet their immediate needs, but also include a Bible with a special note guiding them through the Scriptures that can lead them to eternal life through Jesus Christ.

# December Alternative

**Theme: *Cookie Cutter Classic*** “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart...” (Jer. 1:5).

**Plan of Action:** Read these scriptures (all NIV):

- Leviticus 20:26. “You are to be holy to me because I, the LORD, am holy, and I have set you apart from the nations to be my own.”
- Luke 11:13. “If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!”
- 1 Cor. 7:7. “...But each man has his own gift from God; one has this gift, another has that.”
- 1 Peter 4:10. “Each one should use whatever gift he has received to serve others, faithfully administering God’s grace in its various forms.”
- 2 Timothy 1:6. “For this reason I remind you to fan into flame the gift of God, which is in you through the laying on of my hands.”

**Cookies & Milk (a classic snack):**

- Purchase or make sugar cookies that are all the same shape, but with a unique look or different colors on each one. If you can, personalize them with the girls names’. (Take extra cookies and be prepared to write any visitor’s name as well.) These cookies can be your snack at the end of the evening. Serve with milk. (Cookie Cutter Week is December 1-7!)
- Display the cookies on a tray or dish that has special meaning for your family. Surround the cookies with classic Christmas movies, a book of classic fairy tales, etc. Tie it in to the lesson.

**Lesson Time:** Christmas is a wonderful time of the year with a lot of traditions. Every family creates it own traditions such as what kinds of food they eat, when they open their Christmas presents, and where they spend the holiday. There are many other traditions as well such as favorite Christmas carols, favorite movies, and favorite cookies to eat. There are also certain kinds of Christmas ornaments that seem to shout Christmas more than others. Some of the more traditional ornament shapes are trees, balls, bells, and candy canes and many of them have their own unique meanings. When you choose one from the store, there may be twenty more just like it on the shelf. However, when you buy it and place it on your tree, it becomes part of your decorations. It becomes special to you. It may have special meaning to you for years to come. We refer to something as being classic when it becomes a tradition or something that you do or use year after year. They are things that are “set apart” and have very special meaning. God created each of us to look a lot alike (similar to how cookies look when we use a cookie cutter). We all have a face, a neck, two arms, two legs, five fingers, five toes. You get the point. However, God never intended for us to all look or act alike. Other characteristics make us unique. In fact, He tells us in Jeremiah 1:5 that each of us has been set apart for a specific purpose. You can become a classic when you give your life to Christ. Leviticus 20:26 tells us to be holy because we are set apart. Luke 11:13 points out that we can have the gift of the Holy Spirit living in us. And still other scriptures remind us that God gives each of us unique gifts that we are to use for Him. As we yield our lives to Him, He turns cookie cutter girls into classic unique individuals.

**Activity Time:** Make and decorate sugar cookies as part of your time together. Use some of the classic (traditional) cookie cutters for Christmas such as the tree, ball, or bell. Let each girl decorate her own to enhance the idea that each one will be unique and a one-of-a-kind classic.

**Outreach Activity:** Bake cookies for your local fire department and deliver them as a group to say thanks for their work in your community.