

parent youth CONNECTION

pyc is a monthly electronic newsletter that spotlights various teenage issues, gives focus to spiritual formation, and also briefly highlights the upcoming activities in the life of the youth group at bloomingdale church

www.bloomingdalechurch.org/pyc.asp

FEBRUARY 2008 STORIES

compiled by::

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[In the February and March editions of *PYC*, we will be considering stories and how God has created us to be a part of His Story. Be sure to read next month's *PYC* to read Sam O'Neal article on stories called "God's Rescue Plan."]

Storying

"Storying" sounds like a new trendy youth ministry movement. I see it as a refreshing means to help students connect with God's story. Have you noticed that we love stories? We will spend an hourly wage to go to the movies. We schedule our lives around our favorite sitcom. Storytelling websites such as MySpace and YouTube are now household names. (In truth, storytelling is not a new phenomenon. It's been the method of communication since the beginning of human history.)

I am excited that our culture is story-craved. I am enthusiastic because God's Story is the best told story of them all. God's Story has drama, fight scenes, romance, mystery, and science-fiction (that will some day come true). His Story has famous people, underdogs, and even talking donkeys.

Can we help students fall in love with God's Story? Yes. Is it possible for teenagers to connect God's Story with their own story? Definitely. How can we do that? Keep reading.



THE NEW YOUTH WEBSITE DEDICATED
TO TELLING OUR STORY...

LAUNCHES FEBRUARY 15, 2008

[IT WILL ALSO HAVE A SECTION FOR PARENTS
WITH CLICKABLE RESOURCES]

[bloomingdale church](http://bloomingdalechurch.org) :: [high school+jr high youth](http://highschool+jrhighyouth.org)

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Our youth ministry recently became aware of an approach to discovering the Bible called "storying." We saw it demonstrated at a Son-Life "Merge" youth conference and also by a ministry friend named Michael Novelli. We were intrigued. So we decided to try it out in our youth ministry.

After playing games and singing at our youth group gathering, we enter into the "story room." The story room has some colored lights and "mood music." We know that when we enter into the story room we need to be quiet and ready to hear from God. Before we listen to the story we light the Christ candle to remind us that the light of Christ is with us and that we are the light that will carry on the Story. Then we listen to the story. The stories are taken directly from the Bible in chronological order. They are retold in a contemporary language. Some students like to close their eyes to visualize the story as it is read. Others prefer to read along. Story discussions are next. We gather with our small group leader who facilitates a discussion about the story. The goal is not to determine the "right answers," but to discover how and why God played out this story to connect with His Story of grace, forgiveness, and redemption on the Cross. Each time we discuss a story we try to determine how this story connects with the other stories of the Bible. We consider what we have learned about God from this story and how we are challenged. It is always incredible how God uses these simple stories to teach us new things about Himself and our need for Him. When we come with an expectancy of wonder and curiosity God helps us discover new ways to be in awe of Him.

Storying may not be a new concept, but it has been a great means to help us discover God's Story. Our youth and adult leaders are excited to continue rediscovering God's Story in the months ahead.

The story continues...

How we are using "Story" in Junior High and High School Youth Group

+Sunday School. Daniel and Burt are co-leading a series called: "Text Messages from God: How to study and apply the Bible" We will be learning different studying techniques from guest speakers such as Joe Zanayed and Dona Eggar and then trying out these methods in small groups.

+Youth Group. Last fall we "storied" through the Old Testament. We are picking it back up in the New Testament. The "story room" is back!

+Disciple Now. On April 11-13, our theme is His(Story): Discovering My Story in God's Story.



Story Perspective.

Why is story so important? Do our teenagers see themselves as part of a story?

Last fall, I came across a “story” written by a teenager from Carol Steam (not affiliated with our church). The writer clearly articulates a teenager perspective of story. I hope it challenges you to consider the impact of “living out a story.”

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Everything I am today, I owe to the people I grew up with. I am everyone around me. Every tear, every smile, every word is nothing but influence. People live life striving to be an individual but in all truth, we are nothing but pieces of the nothings that we grow among. Every moment in our lives will change who we are going to be tomorrow. At no moment will you end up the same person you would have been yesterday. People forget and take advantage of today, but think about it, today is the only today you will get because tomorrow it will just be yesterday and you will never get yesterday back. With that in mind, treat today as forever and tomorrow as if it will never come because we can not continue living to fix what happened yesterday.

Life is like a book. The beginning is somewhat slow, the middle gets intense and by the very last pages, when things finally seem to settle, you just don’t want it to end. Think of your life as if it was written in chapters. Every chapter is full of memorable events, heart-warming measures and pages you wish to never read again. In life, as in every good or bad book, there are heroes, villains, angels and the devil. Every character must struggle to overcome obstacles in their way of bliss, but the moral of every story always comes down to what does not kill you will make you stronger. We, as people, are nothing but characters in life trying to write, revise and publish our own stories for the rest of the world to read. It’s just a matter of whose sturdy enough to take the criticism and not re-write, but justify the bad chapters that are already in print.

Throughout life, we go through different stages, chapters, involving different people, characters. We meet people, grow out of them and then meet more to continue the same process of growing apart. Keep in mind though, you never leave any relationship empty-handed, you will always walk away with a new lesson learned. May it be heartache or true love or doubt or trust; you will most every time depart with more than you entered. Occasionally, we head off into another chapter unsatisfied with what we have left behind but the finest part about creating our own story is that at any time we can glance back to the previous pages and insure we don’t make the same mistakes twice. Live and learn

Seldom do we hold on to the same characters throughout life. It’s almost as if we are all passers-by in each other’s journeys, leaving some significance behind for another author to pick up and print in their legend. Those who manage to somehow grasp onto our life story and stick with it until the very last page not only mold the majority of what we become but also plagiarize some key points and most times conclude with a parallel cease. It’s amusing to examine really, because everyone is focused on perfecting their tale and in all actuality, we have a very minute amount of control.

I don’t want my story to be pieced together in chapters by age; I do not see the importance in numbers. I would like my life story to be chunked by lessons learned. Starting with the significance of forgiveness....

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jr high youth group winter/spring 08

youth group: thursdays @ 7-8:30p

sunday school: sundays @ 9:45a

(meet in coffeehouse)

02.15: rave night/coffeehouse, 7:30-9:30p

02.23: vertical endeavors rock climbing, 4:15-7:30p

03.21: experiencing the passion

04.11-13: disciple now

high school youth group winter/spring 08

sunday school > 9:45-10:45a. youth group > 6:30-8:15p

solid grounds coffeehouse > 7:30-11:30p

02.09: vday practice, 9:30-12

02.13: vday setup, 5:45 or 8:35

2.14: vday practice/setup

02.15: valentines banquet

02.28-29: trinity christian college visit with sandy manden

03.07: basketball tourney

03.21: experiencing the passion

04.11-13: disciple now

05.10: chicago one day serve experience



OUR MISSION IS TO HELP STUDENTS WALK IN THE CHARACTER AND MISSION OF JESUS CHRIST BY BEING A LEARNING, CARING, PRAYING, WORSHIPING, AND OUTREACHING COMMUNITY