

From the Director for Youth and Children's Ministries

One day, I am going to get to write a newsletter recounting all of the fun, new, *in-person* activities we have been up to. Alas, today is not that day. Today is a day that I am still hopeful that folks will make safe decisions, get vaccinated as it becomes available, and stay invested in our church community even while we are apart. This distant time has forced all of us to think creatively and try new ways of being together.

For our youth, we have developed a fun routine of hanging out a couple of times a week. We usually spend this time playing online games together. The one featured in the picture here is called "Joke Boat" and involves players coming up with mad-lib type answers and then creating jokes with each other's answers. Our middle and high schoolers are pretty excellent joke writers.

For our younger ones, we have been experimenting and mixing up our ways of having Sunday School. Starting January 31, we are switching to Sunday School at 10:00 a.m. every other week. This is a time where we sing together, show off our pets and things around our house, and talk about the Bible stories from the church worship video. Be on the lookout for the occasional text message to remind you, or suggest a conversation topic for family dinner, or just a hello from your church family!

Emily Bednar, our brilliant youth room redecorator, is still accepting donations for items. If you would like to contribute to this project, we have an Amazon Wish List that makes it easy to donate specific items!

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/1BEDCN804OCEF?ref_=wl_share

For the last eleven months, we have learned that much of what we do as a church community does not have a simple 1:1 translation from in-person to virtual. This has caused us to change or cancel many of our favorite events. Some events just wouldn't be the same, and it would be disappointing to try to replicate them right now. We look forward to the day we can gather together again, but in the meantime, we know that God calls us to care for ourselves, our neighbors, and the world by staying at home and keeping our physical distance.

Liza Hawkins
DYCM

