

# EIGHTH BIRTHDAY

## WORSHIP

### EASTVIEW FAMILY RESOURCES

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[www.eastview.church](http://www.eastview.church) | 1500 N. Airport Rd. | Normal, IL 61761 | 309.451.5000

## THIS YEAR AT A GLANCE...

**W**hile we might typically think of worship as being a time when we sing songs to God, this year we are going to broaden that view a little. We certainly want to emphasize the importance of coming together as a church to worship Jesus together, but we will also see how worship goes beyond the church service and into our everyday personal and family lives. This year our parenting plan will give you some ideas on how to teach your child to have a heart of worship.

### HERE'S WHAT YOU'LL FIND INSIDE:

- **Letter from Jason Smith**, Next Gen Pastor of Eastview.
- **A Letter To Your Child** A guide to writing a letter to your child with memories and affirmations
- **"WORSHIP" Overview** Practical ways to foster an environment of worship in your home.
- **Worship at Home ideas** Ideas for helping your family worship God throughout the year at home.
- **Internet Safety Suggestions** Recommendations for keeping your kids safe online.
- **This Year's Parenting Plan Checklist** A summary of this year's focus with an easy checklist.
- **Marriage Plan** Follow this simple plan to keep your family healthy beginning with your marriage.
- **Digital Resources** The Parent Cue App and RightNowMedia are two digital resources we highly recommend.



**A**ccording to our records, you are celebrating a birthday in your family this month! As you celebrate your child's birth, we want to provide this booklet to help you as you guide your child on a spiritual journey to know, love and follow Jesus. This year's focus is: **WORSHIP**

At Eastview, we believe that God designed the home to be the primary place for discipleship in a child's life. It is our privilege to come alongside you as you raise your child in the ways of the Lord. We offer this Family Ministry Map as a guide to help you raise your child one step at a time — with one annual focus each year. This certainly isn't the only parenting plan you could follow, but over the 18 years of your child's life, you will have followed a fairly comprehensive plan to raise your child in the faith.

These booklets are not intended to cover all there is to know about each topic. Sometimes parents feel overwhelmed with the responsibility of raising their child to know the Lord, and aren't sure where to start. So we have created simple steps to

get you started. We also include recommended resources to help you in your parenting journey. Visit our Family Resource Center and Eastview Bookstore where our staff and volunteers can help you with other topics and resources.

During the time that your child is in our elementary age programs here at church, we will be focusing on:

SEEING ME IN GOD'S STORY  
KNOWING GOD'S GRACE  
CHOOSING TO FOLLOW JESUS

We are committed to being a faithful partner to you and your family. Our staff is praying for your child by name this month. If you have anything that we can pray for specifically, or if you have any questions, send me an email or call 309-451-5000.

Jason Smith,  
**Next Gen Pastor**  
[jsmith@eastview.church](mailto:jsmith@eastview.church)



# MY LETTER TO YOU FOR YOUR 8TH BIRTHDAY

**E**ach year throughout the parenting plan, take time to write your child a letter. Below are some ideas of things to include that will speak life and love into your child, as well as give them an invaluable collection of insights into their upbringing and a storyline of memories to be cherished for the rest of their lives. You can write them all in a journal or write each letter as a separate piece of paper.

1. Things I've loved about you this year...
2. Important memories from this past year...
3. Some of my favorite time with you is when we...
4. Your favorite books to read are...
5. Your favorite hobbies are...
6. Things that make you smile and laugh...
7. Your favorite things to do with your friends...
8. Your favorite food this year...
9. I've been praying about this for you this year...
10. I've been praying about this for me as a parent this year...
11. What I want for you in life...
12. A scripture verse I have picked out for you this year...

**Include a photo of your family with the letter to give a year by year collection of memories all in one place.  
Each year after giving your child the letter, get it back and keep them all somewhere safe.  
You will give them all to your child in the 18th year for LAUNCH.**

## EIGHTH BIRTHDAY: WORSHIP

**W**hile we might typically think of worship as being a time when we sing songs to God, this year we are going to broaden that view a little. We certainly want to emphasize the importance of coming together as a church to worship Jesus together, but we will also see how worship goes beyond the church service and into our everyday personal and family lives. This year our parenting plan will give you some ideas on how to teach your child to have a heart of worship.

**WHAT IS WORSHIP?** Worship is both an action and an attitude. Scripture says that true worship begins in the heart of the believer (John 4:23). Worship involves taking the focus off of ourselves and directing our attention toward God... who He is and what He has done. Worship is our response to the greatness of God.

We need to help our children see the wonder of our awesome God in everyday life. The best way to teach your child how to worship God on a personal level is by doing it yourself, modeling a life of worship with your words and actions. Whether it's a beautiful sunset or an answered prayer, intentionally point out the amazing things that God has done and is doing. When you worship God throughout the normal rhythms of the day, they will see that and learn from that. So, let yourself get caught up in a worship song. Or when you see something beautiful or praiseworthy, say something right then and there.

**PERSONAL WORSHIP** Actually, children don't need to be taught how to worship, but whom to worship. Most kids idolize heroes from the world of sports, music and television. They memorize statistics and details about this or that celebrity, from pets' names to ERAs. In other words, they "worship" in the purest form by focusing their complete attention on someone they admire rather than on themselves. It is our job to help them see the wonder of our awesome God and foster a worshipful culture in our homes. While we have some creative ways to foster that connection with God later in this booklet, try to be intentional about the very informal ways to worship God. As they study for their science test, talk about the amazing characteristics of the things that God has made. As they clean up the kitchen after dinner, talk about how Jesus cleans the messes we make in our lives. Kids and parents alike, we all have the opportunity to focus on the wonder of God every day. Although we focus on personal quiet times in their 14th birthday booklet, this year encourage them to have occasional quiet times to worship God privately. You might even try one of the ideas we included for family worship times, this year.

**CORPORATE WORSHIP** This is the term used to describe times when we worship God together. This year, have conversations with your child about how important it is to come together with the church. It gives us time to learn and sing praises to God. We get to serve and give and encourage each other. We come to church and are inspired and renewed and refreshed. Hold out Acts 2:42-47 to your child as a model for what it is like to be a part of the family of believers.

**MAKE THE PLEDGE** This is also a great year to emphasize the high priority of coming to church over other activities. Teach your child the value of setting aside time each weekend to come to church. And model it. When parents demonstrate that church is not a priority by choosing to do other activities, it communicates to the child that church is an option among many other good choices. Statistics indicate that the average church goer attends an average of just under 2 times a month. It is an important responsibility of each Christian parent to instill in the lives of our kids, the value of coming to church. Gather your family together and talk about the importance of being committed to being in church.

Read the verse below together. If you have not been committed in the past, own it. Explain that you want to make it a priority this year and that your family is going to come to Eastview each week. Now, there *will* be sick kids and family vacations. But make a promise today with your family that you will go and worship God each week with the church family. Close your time by praying together. After the year is over, have another discussion and reflect on the year your family said “WE’RE THERE THIS YEAR.”

*“And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the day approaching.”*

**Hebrews 10:24-25**





# WORSHIP AT HOME

**FAMILY NIGHT:** If you have continued to do the Family Night from the Four Year Old Parenting Plan, make the major theme for this year worship. This does not need to mean musical worship, although that is certainly a beautiful thing to do as a family. You can praise using the ideas on this page.

**POPCORN PRAISE:** Make a prayer circle with your family, but instead of saying long prayers, have everyone limit themselves to a word or a short phrase. Don't worry about going in order, but just have everyone speak up as things come to mind (like popcorn popping). Start the prayer time by saying "God, we worship you because you are..." and then go until it slows down.

**GOD YOU ARE...**Using the bathroom mirror, write God You Are... with a white erase marker. Each night write a new word together as a family. You can also frame a small card that says the same thing. Then write your word on the glass each night.

**ISPY...**Go to the park, take a drive, or sit on the patio and play I Spy. Instead of choosing any items that people will try to guess, only spy things that God has made. For example, clouds, sun, animals, trees, etc. Wrap up your time by reading Psalm 104.

**PRAISE LIST:** Make a poster (or use a journal) to build a list over this year of things to praise God for. Add answers to prayers, miracles, cool God stories, beautiful moments in nature (rainbow, meteor shower), scriptures that move you, etc. Hang the poster up or read the journal together occasionally.

**FAMILY WORSHIP NIGHT:** Plan a night where you will sing songs to God together as a family. You can sing with a piano or guitar if someone in your family plays, or just use music on your phone, or sing acapella. Have your kids help pick out the songs. Informal/unplanned times can also be an amazing experience.



# SAFEGUARDING YOUR HOME

## PROTECTING YOUR CHILD FROM ONLINE THREATS

**D**id you realize that your child is in the average age window that children are first exposed to pornographic content on the internet? If you haven't already, you need to make sure that every device in your family is protected. Having unprotected devices in your home would be as if our parents had left explicit magazines lying around the house, expecting us to make good choices.

### 3 STEPS TO PROTECTING YOUR CHILD ONLINE

- 1. Talk to your child about using their devices.** Discuss how they should never give out personal information or chat with strangers. Have an age-appropriate conversation about pornography. Stress how important it is to let you know if they come across inappropriate content. Make sure they know you are a safe person to talk to about what they've seen. For help in talking with kids about pornography, check out Good Pictures/Bad Pictures and Good Pictures/Bad Pictures Jr. by Kristen Jenson, M.A. and Gail Poyner, PhD. There are also great resources at [family.org](http://family.org) and [covenanteyes.com](http://covenanteyes.com).
- 2. Set boundaries for internet usage.** Require that all internet usage be done in a central area of the house where parents and other family members will be. Do not allow surfing while you are not home, including homework which typically requires a lot of need for google images. Do not allow devices in a child's room - they should not need privacy to be on the internet.
- 3. Protect your devices with a content blocker and report generator.** There are several companies that provide these services/software. Focus on the Family partners with Net Nanny and Forcefield. Covenant Eyes is used by many families at Eastview. These programs will not only block content, but will also send accountability reports on everyone's usage in the family. You should also go into the settings of each device and determine the restrictions for that device, which is then protected by a 4 digit PIN.  
  
Commit yourself to being intentional about being a gatekeeper for your child's heart and mind - no apologies. It will be impossible to protect them entirely, but these simple steps are a good start toward giving them a good shot at never knowing the dark world of a porn addiction.



# THIS YEAR'S PARENTING PLAN SUMMARY/CHECKLIST

**WEEKS TO GRADUATION: 520 and counting**  
**PHASE PARENTING PHRASE: ENGAGE their interests**

*“Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. Worship the LORD with gladness;  
come before him with joyful songs.” Psalm 100:1,2*

- Read the contents of this booklet and the Phase Summary (tri-fold) that comes with this booklet.
- Write a letter to my child.
- Plan a daily time for your family to Worship God together, including prayer, reading scripture and praise. As much as possible, stick to it.
- Make a family commitment to giving a high priority to attending church this year.
- Follow This Year's Marriage Plan below. *(We know not every parent is married. We don't mean to offend by including this segment.)*

# THIS YEAR'S MARRIAGE PLAN

**E**ach year we want to encourage you to make a plan to keep your marriage healthy. One of the most important gifts you'll give to your child is the love you give to your spouse. When mom and dad love each other and demonstrate the traits of a healthy (NOT PERFECT!) marriage, it not only sets a good example of a godly marriage, but gives them a greater sense of security and well-being. Andy Stanley in The Principle of the Path writes "We don't drift to good places." (Thomas Nelson, 2008). Good marriages require intentionality. Use the plan below to make an intentional effort in your marriage this year. Read The Best Us by Ted Lowe (©MarriedPeople 2016) for a full explanation of Have Serious Fun! Love God First; Respect and Love; Practice Your Promise.

**Have Serious Fun! Date Night Scheduling:** Grab your calendars and mark at least TWO date nights for each month and PROTECT those dates. Remember that you were boyfriend and girlfriend before you were dad and mom, and have fun together! No family administration discussions! For extra fun, watch for sponsored "Date Nights" by Eastview's Marriage Ministry. Each date night, you swing by the church to receive your plans for the evening.

**Love God First - Faith Practices 101:** Research finds that couples who pray together at least twice a week have a divorce rate of less than 1% (HomePointe). Commit to praying as a couple at least twice a week. Plan which worship service the two of you will attend together each week – don't "divide and conquer" in order to volunteer.

**Love and Respect - Write an Annual Letter:** Write a letter to your spouse for your anniversary this year, much like the one in this packet that you will write to your child. Write a letter of memories from this past year, affirmations, prayers and promises to each other.

**Practice Your Promise - Personal Growth:** Set a "secret goal" to grow as a spouse, such as "listening better," "praising her in public," or "initiating romance." Write it down and seal it in an envelope or save it on your phone. When you receive next year's booklet, open the envelope or file and assess your progress.

**Invest In Your Marriage:** Join an email blog like lesandleslie.com, choose one book to read this year, or choose a small group study on marriage. The Eastview Family Resource Center, Eastview Marriage Ministry and RightNow Media have many helpful events and resources.




# EASTVIEW RESOURCES

WE BELIEVE THAT EVERY PARENT  
WANTS TO BE A GOOD PARENT.  
WE CAN HELP YOU TAKE THE NEXT STEP.

**STEP-BY-STEP PLAN:** As a part of our Eastview Church Family, we never want you to feel like you have to parent alone. We want to come alongside you in your parenting journey and provide resources and relationships that can help you along the way. While this is certainly not the ONLY Christian parenting plan out there, and probably not even the best one, it is a way to raise your children in the faith over the years, with one specific focus a year.

**FAMILY RESOURCE CENTER & EASTVIEW BOOKSTORE:** However, you will have specific needs along the way that we do not cover in these booklets. You might have a child with special needs, or your child might be dealing with a specific issue, or you might need more creative ideas for family times together... whatever it is, we will do our best to offer helpful resources. Stop by our Family Resource Center on the lower level of the atrium. We can point you to great organizations like Focus on the Family ([focusonthefamily.com](http://focusonthefamily.com)) and others that give expert advice on all things family. We have topical cards that give you some quick advice on a variety of topics with recommended resources and next steps to take at Eastview. We highlight various books and resources to help with different aspects and seasons of parenting and marriage. Our Bookstore is also a wonderful resource for us at Eastview. Sure, you can buy books on Amazon, but at our bookstore, all of the books have been recommended by Eastview Staff and leaders and our helpful staff and volunteers are able to help you find the just right resource.



**MEMBER CARE:** At Eastview, we believe that the care of our members is very important. Because of this, we have different areas where we can assist our members needs, whether that be counseling referrals, help needs and family journeys.

- **CARE APPOINTMENTS:** We know that connecting to others for prayer and encouragement is a necessary part of our spiritual formation, especially in times of need. Care Appointments are scheduled times we have set aside to meet with you for pastoral care. We would like to hear your story, pray with you, and offer guidance on your next steps. To sign up for a care appointment visit [eastview.church/membercare](http://eastview.church/membercare).
- **COUNSELING REFERRALS:** We want to help people connect to Christian Counselors when professional services are needed for healing and growth. For information on counselors in our area contact: Sara Thompson [sthompson@eastview.church](mailto:sthompson@eastview.church) or 309.451.5057.
- **HELPS MINISTRY:** We depend on our small groups to help support one another and take care of one another's needs. For our church members that are not already in a small group, we can utilize our helps ministry team. This team can assist with meals, and limited transportation to our Sunday services during times of illness, hospitalization, new baby, or other life interruptions. For more information, please contact Nicki Green at [ngreen@eastview.church](mailto:ngreen@eastview.church) or 309.451.5033.
- **CARE GROUP:** Eastview Care Groups range from support groups for parents with kids with autism to men's sexual integrity groups to divorce care to single moms groups and more. We keep a list of them at the Family Resource Center, or you can learn more about them at [www.eastview.church/caregroups](http://www.eastview.church/caregroups). For specific information, contact Jason Sniff at [jsniff@eastview.church](mailto:jsniff@eastview.church).
- **THE FAMILY ROOM:** Open on Sundays before, after and during services, our family room is a place to connect with caring staff and volunteers for prayer and encouragement.

# DOWNLOAD THE PARENT CUE APP

As a parent, some of the most important things you do for your child don't happen in a single day. You make small deposits in their life week after week - over time. That's why the Parent Cue App gives weekly cues to help you make the most of the time you spend with your kid or teenager. This app is brought to us by The ReThink Group, producers of the Phase Summaries that come with these booklets, as well as the curriculum we use for our 4th & 5th Grade Ministry at ECC.



Easy encouragements to help your child start their day.



Ideas for meaningful talks on the way to soccer practice.



Conversation starters while grabbing drive thru tacos or sitting around the table.



Great reminders for ways to end the day on a great note.



Timely help for those moments that take you by surprise.

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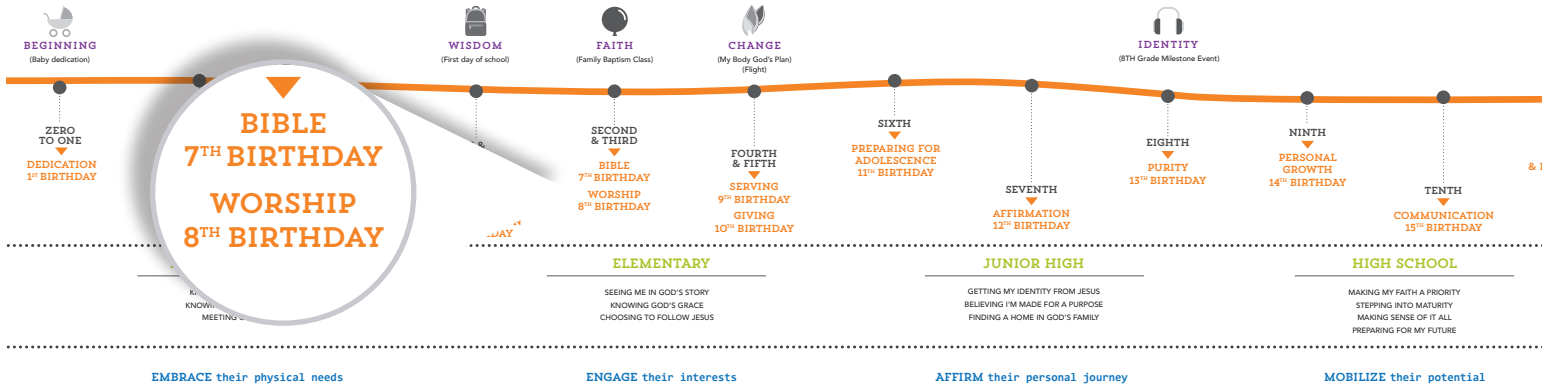
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# EASTVIEW FAMILY RESOURCES

## FAMILY MINISTRY MAP

### RAISING CHILDREN



### AN INTENTIONAL PLAN FOR YOUR FAMILY. STEP BY STEP PARENTING FROM BIRTH THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL.

The Eastview Family Ministry Map is a bird's eye view of our strategy for helping families thrive. From the formation of families as young couples date, through the child rearing years, to the empty nest, we have a plan that families can follow to build strong marriages and pass on a legacy of faith to the next generation—one step at a time. For the full map, visit our Family Resource Center in the lower level atrium next to the bookstore.

**SIGN UP FOR OUR PARENTING PLAN: TEXT "#PARENTPLAN" TO 309.808.6002**

Each year on your child's birthday we will provide you with a new booklet to help you focus on one aspect of your child's life and spiritual formation. Each booklet contains helpful information on developmental milestones, simple ideas for passing on your faith in everyday rhythms, as well as practical ways to speak into their lives. Every parent wants to be a good parent. We can help you with the next step.