

February 7, 2010

Dear Parents,

Brrrrrr! I hope you and your families are staying healthy and warm as we persevere through another cold Wisconsin winter together. Today your children heard the parable of “**The Wise and Foolish Man**” (from Matthew 7: 24-27). This is a story Jesus told as a way to illustrate to us the importance of keeping God at the foundation of our lives. Jesus taught us the way to live, the way God wants us to live, and we would be wise to follow His teachings!

To help your children remember and reflect on the story and their response to it, I would encourage you to ask them some of the following questions; then be prepared for potentially lively discussions of faith! What was important to you in God's story for today? Show me or tell me how you responded to God's word today. I wonder what makes a person wise? I wonder what Jesus meant when he said...”Whoever hears what I say and does it, is like a man who built his house on a rock”?

This Month's Stories: “**Parable of the Great Banquet**” (from Luke 14:15-24), “**The Lenten Puzzle**”, and “**Jesus and the Children**” (from Matthew 19:13-15, Mark 10:13-16, and Luke 18:15-17).

As always, if you would like to learn more about this fantastic Sunday school program, or you have any questions about something in this letter, I would be pleased to hear from you!

Wishing you blessings,

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Important Reminders:

- © **Wanted: VBS directors!** If you're excited about Vacation Bible School and would like to help with making initial plans and with running general operations during the week of VBS, please sign up on the You Can Count on Me in today's church bulletin. Or, contact Jill ASAP to get involved.
- © **February 21st** will mark the first Sunday of our Holy season of Lent, as well as our annual Biblical Marketplace. There will be **NO CHILDREN'S TIME** during worship that morning – all students will need to report directly to their classrooms. Sunday school children in grades K-5 will visit the marketplace during the 9am service, and everyone else is invited during coffee hour immediately following the worship service. Fundraising items will be available, as well as hands-on learning and fun for all ages. 100% of proceeds benefit Heifer International. Hope to see you all there!
- © Again this year, our Sunday school classes will be participating in Heifer International's “Fill the Ark” campaign. Supplies will be sent home with students the day of the Marketplace. Watch those materials for collection information. I hope your family will consider participating!

This Month's Nurturing the Family Tip: “Observing Lent Together” Lent is a season of renewal. It's a special opportunity when we do a “spring cleaning” of our hearts and souls. Remember, many of the themes and stories of Lent can be confusing to young children. Keep stories simple – young kids don't need many details. Also, when discussing Jesus' suffering and death, be sure to emphasize the “happy ending” of the Resurrection!

Some Lenten activity suggestions: **Self-Control** – Instead of going out to eat, share a simple meal together, such as soup, at least once a week. Put the money saved into your Ark box. **Forgiveness** – Make “I'm sorry” cards for anyone you've hurt recently, including God. **Prayer** – Write a special prayer for you family. Decorate and post it, and be sure to pray it together at dinner or bedtime each night.

(Adapted from "Ovserving Lent at Home", 2009, Channing Bete Company, Inc.)