



Family Building Assembly Required



Produced by the Chaplaincy Academy for Religious Education

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Family Building: Assembly Required

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PowerPoint slide sets for each Assembly available separately.

Introduction

Family Building: Assembly Required was originally designed to reintegrate Soldiers into family life after long deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan. The idea was to bring Soldiers and their families together inside the supportive communities of their Army garrison chapels to practice family faith-building and sustaining activities that could be replicated at home. Even for families not challenged by long separations, this program provides multiple opportunities to exercise family faith-building muscles and grow stronger in the process. Therefore, during these Family Building: Assembly Required events it is important that families sit together at a table. Designating separate children's tables or setting up a separate youth program will reduce the effectiveness of this program. In order to keep all ages participating together it is also important that everyone share in the crafts, prayers, songs, movement, and general fun of all the outlined activities. Take on the challenge and enjoy the rewards of building strong families and communities that span the ages!

***Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone.
You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart,
and with all your soul, and with all your might.
Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart,
Recite them to your children and talk about them
when you are at home and when you are away,
when you lie down and when you rise.
Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead,
And write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.***

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Strong Families

Coming to know and love God is something that begins at home. All of the good things we do together as families build us up and bind us closer to God. These verses from Deuteronomy remind us to talk about God in our homes and to do Godly things together. What we say and what we do, how we practice faith together as a family, strengthens our love for one another and for God.

Yes, building a strong family requires that we get together regularly and have fun with each other, work together at family chores, and practice those rituals and traditions that make us the unique family that we are.

However, sometimes it is hard to get and/or keep the family building process going without some outside support. ***Family Building: Assembly Required*** was designed to bring families together in a supportive environment to provide hands-on practice at building families up in faith and love.

Each of these ***Family Building*** Assemblies is constructed around one resource book and a series of children's storybooks. The storybook themes are each connected to a significant annual marker in family life: The First Day of School, Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Valentine's Day. Hopefully, the four Assemblies outlined in this resource will inspire leaders to create their own Assemblies linked to other annual markers or formative themes in family life.

Assembly Required

Every family that participates in the program will need a copy of the resource book. Presentations throughout the program will refer to this book and help families to use it more effectively. Leaders will also need a copy of each of the children's storybooks to read during the Assemblies. If families want copies of the storybooks for their home libraries, either make them available or give them a copy of the bibliography in the Resources & Materials section of this manual.

During each assembly there will be time for some table conversation around an important theme, a brief presentation, a hands-on activity for the whole family to share, a light meal, and a closing devotion.

Whether families want to find the extraordinary in the ordinary, share generously with their family and others, show their love better, or simply eat a delicious meal with a great group of people, one or all of these Assemblies will meet the need. Invite families to come to each Assembly ready to learn. Encourage them to leave with a wealth of ideas for building a stronger, more closely bonded family.

Leadership Roles & Responsibilities

Below are listed some of the volunteer position you will want to fill in order to ensure the success of your ***Family Building: Assembly Required*** program. Though one person may choose to fill multiple positions, make sure that someone is committed to completing each of these tasks. Prayerfully consider who in your Chapel has the gifts and skills necessary to accomplish the mission of each position. Invite each person to serve individually, using the brief job descriptions below. As the old proverb says, “Many hands make light work!”

Chief Chef & Bottle Washer

Name: _____

Please prayerfully consider serving as the Chief Chef & Bottle Washer for ***Family Building: Assembly Required***. Your service is at the heart of what these assemblies are all about.....sharing food and faith practices! We will provide you with a copy of the complete curriculum resource, a menu and a shopping list for each assembly. The menus are designed to reinforce the themes and/or messages of each assembly. If some food items are not available in your area, make substitutions as you see fit. You will want to work with your Chapel NCOs to make sure that the necessary items are purchased and delivered to the Chapel. You will also want to invite one or two others to serve with you in the kitchen. Note in the curriculum that families actively participate in serving and cleaning up for themselves. Therefore, your primary focus is advanced food preparation and final clean up for very simple meals.

Host

Name: _____

Please prayerfully consider serving as the Host for ***Family Building: Assembly Required***. Your welcoming spirit and gift for hospitality are exactly what we need to make our participants feel “at home” in the Chapel. Along with welcoming our participants each assembly and providing overall direction, we will look to you to keep the assembly on schedule throughout the evening. We will provide you with a copy of the complete curriculum resource. The only advance preparation required is that you look through the assembly plan before each evening, so that you feel comfortable with the flow of things.

Paparazzi

Name:_____

Please prayerfully consider serving as the Paparazzi for ***Family Building: Assembly Required***. Your ability to find the fun and snap the shot are what we need. This volunteer position requires no advance preparation. Just come to the assembly with your camera and take pictures: selfies, welfies, and just plain, old-fashioned pics that capture the spirit of the assembly. Remember that close-ups read better than big group shots. Be sure to forward your photos the Chapel staff, so that they can make a storyboard about the event.

Promoter

Name:_____

Please prayerfully consider serving as the Promoter for ***Family Building: Assembly Required***. Your commitment and creativity are what we need to spread the word about this fun, faith-forming program. We will provide you with a copy of the complete curriculum resource, a program logo and some other clip art. Use this information to create announcements, bulletin inserts, and advertisements to place in the paper and on the Command Channel. Don't let these ideas limit your imagination! Does your Chapel have a Facebook page? Is there a bulletin board that needs refreshing? Just remember that it is a good idea to start promotions about one month before each assembly.

Prayer Leader

Name:_____

Please prayerfully consider serving as the Prayer Leader for ***Family Building: Assembly Required***. Your example of faithful living is what we need to show others how simple it is to practice faith on a daily basis. We will provide you with a copy of the complete curriculum resource, Table Blessing and Evening Prayer cards, and sheet music for the simple songs you will lead others in singing. You will want to gather the Evening Prayer supplies in advance, and/or work with your Chapel NCOs to purchase any necessary items.

Presenter

Name: _____

Please prayerfully consider serving as the Family Traditions Presenter for ***Family Building: Assembly Required***. Your reputation as a teacher and leader make you the perfect choice. We will provide you with a copy of the complete curriculum resource, the key resource book, The Book of New Family Traditions, and outlined comments on a set of Powerpoint slides for your presentation.

Reader

Name: _____

Please prayerfully consider serving as the Children's Storybook Reader for ***Family Building: Assembly Required***. Your gifts as an enthusiastic storyteller, with a heart for children, are well-known. We will provide you with each storybook in advance. Practice reading the book a few times before the assembly. Come prepared to read and then accept the thanks of your gathered listeners.

Registrar

Name: _____

Please prayerfully consider serving as the Registrar for ***Family Building: Assembly Required***. Your gift of administration is important to the success of each assembly. The information you gather on registration forms will determine how many tables and chairs are set up, what curriculum resources and other materials are needed, and how much food is ordered and prepared. We will provide you with multiple copies of a registration form that will include your name and contact information as the POC. You may want to coordinate with the Promoter, so that participants will know where and how to register. Designate a central gathering place where all registrations forms can be kept secure. At each assembly, welcome participants and have them sign in on a sign-in sheet.



Family Building: Assembly Required

Once Upon An Ordinary School Day

Theme: family rituals and traditions for ordinary days and ordinary times
– mornings, mealtimes, evenings and bedtime

Assembly-at-a-Glance

Time	Activity	Materials
15 min.	Inviting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome Introductions and sharing in table groups 	Powerpoint slides Crayons Butcher block paper Masking tape
30 min.	Informing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children: Storybook time Adults: Family rituals and traditions for ordinary days 	Storybook Resource Book
30 min.	Engaging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making the ordinary into something extraordinary – placemats 	Directions, construction paper, Pencils, scissors, Paper strips, Glue sticks Contact paper
30 min.	Eating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Table blessing Extraordinary Baked Potato Bar 	Table Blessing Cards Meal trays Paper & Plastic Food
15 min.	Inspiring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evening Prayer 	Evening Prayer Cards candles lighters

Extraordinary Assembly Pre-set:

____ Set up enough tables and chairs to accommodate all registered participants.

____ Preset on each table the following items: Materials for completing Family Share Time activity (see above), Table Blessing Card, Evening Prayer Card (You can laminate these two back-to-back and make one card.).

____ Prepare and have handy materials needed for making placemats, so they can be easily transferred to tables at the right time.

____ Preset food service table with meal trays, service items, and pre-measured/pre-packaged foods for pickup at the right time.

____ **Project Slide 1.**

Inviting – 15 minutes

Host: As families arrive greet them at sign-in and:

1. Point them in the direction of the room where the assembly will take place.
2. Encourage them to sit as a family and make themselves at home.
3. Once everyone has arrived and/or it is time to begin, go to the front of the room and welcome everyone to this ***Family Building: Assembly Required*** program.
4. **Project Slide 2** and review the plan for the evening.
5. **Project Slide 3** and encourage participants to complete the Family Share Time activity.
6. After 15 minutes call everyone to attention and introduce your children's storybook Reader and your Presenter for the evening.

Informing – 30 minutes

Reader: **Project Slide 4.** Invite all of the children to come forward and gather around you for story time. Read the children's storybook chosen for this assembly, Once Upon an Ordinary School Day. Thank the children for their attention and send them back to their families.

Presenter: Hold up your copy of the resource book, The Book of New Family Traditions. Tell the participants that you plan to spend a few minutes highlighting some key points from the book that will help them to learn more about the value of family rituals and traditions. You will also highlight some of the great suggestions the book makes for ways that they can celebrate ordinary times and events in their families' lives.

Project Slide 5. Talk about... Our resource book identifies 10 good things that rituals do for children and families. You see the list here. Some of the items on the list show how rituals and traditions help to keep us moving forward. Look at providing a sense of comfort and security. Other rituals and traditions are corrective and help children and families deal with problems, challenges, and loss. Look at healing from trauma.

Project Slide 6. Talk about.... On page 12 our resource book says "research and experience suggest that families should have one solid ritual of connection daily." See the research on pages 18-19. These are what we are calling rituals and traditions for ordinary days and times. There are four basic times during the day when ordinary rituals can become a part of your life together: mornings, mealtimes, evenings, and bedtime. Let's look at one example of a ritual or tradition for each of these ordinary times. Here are some suggestions from the book.

1. p. 51 Special Handshakes are a way to say a good morning good-bye before heading out the door.
2. p. 37 Simple & Good recited blessings are a great way to start a meal.
3. p. 67 Brain Food can smooth the transition into homework time.
4. p. 101 Bedtime Countdown is a way to bring your day to a peaceful end.

Project Slide 7. Talk about... To get started you will want to think about why your family may need a new ritual. Our resource book suggests 5 signs that your family may need a ritual, in other words, 5 possible purposes for a new ritual. I've listed them here. Big occasions include holidays, birthdays, graduations, etc. Major news can be a sports victory, a big promotion, improved grades on a report card, friends moving away, or the death of a family member. Recurring rough spots are often things like bath time, getting dressed for school, or starting homework. Boredom hits on rainy days and during a long, cold, dark winter. Teachable moments include training in life skills like laundry, times for learning family history and values, and at-home faith formation.

Once you know your purpose make your ritual personal. Be sure to keep it simple and fun. Let family members know in advance what you are planning, so everyone can be prepared to enjoy something new.

Thank the adults for their attention and tell everyone that it is time for another family activity.

Engaging – 30 minutes

Host: Let participants know that it is almost time for a special meal that will turn the ordinary into the extraordinary! So to set their tables in style, they will need to make some extraordinary placemats for the occasion.

1. **Project Slide 8.** Review the directions for making placemats.
2. Invite one representative from each table to go and pick up the materials they will need to make their placemats.
3. While table groups are working, move around the room admiring the work that is being done together as a family.
4. **Project Slide 9.** When the placemats are done call everyone to attention and review the evening meal plan outlined on the slide.
5. Introduce your Prayer Leader for the evening.

Eating – 30 minutes

Prayer Leader: Project Slide 10. Ask participants to find the Mealtime Prayer Card on their table and/or to use the prayer projected on the screen. Lead the entire assembly in saying the prayer together. Read slowly and clearly, so that young readers can follow along and participate.

Host. Project Slide 11. Remind the Family Food Finder(s) identified on Slide 9 of their responsibilities before sending them to the food service table.

Eat and Enjoy! Clean-up!

Inspiring – 15 minutes

Prayer Leader: As the meal is ending place a candle and a small box of matches or a battery operated tealight candle on each table.

1. **Project Slide 12.** When you are ready to begin ask participants to find the Evening Prayer Card on their table and/or to use the prayer projected on the screen.
2. Practice singing the song “All Praise to You, Our God, This Night.” You sing it once. Then have them sing it once with you.
2. Invite one member of each family to light their evening candle.
3. Lead the entire assembly in saying and singing the evening prayer together. Read slowly and clearly, so that young readers can follow along and participate.
4. Invite the whole family to blow out their candle together.
5. Say, “Good night. Go in peace.”



Notes to Chef

Menu: Extraordinary Baked Potato Bar

Shopping List: Food – Potatoes, butter, sour cream, shredded cheese, broccoli florets, onions, bacon, apple juice, water. **Service** – cafeteria trays, aluminum foil, small Dixie-sized cups, regular styrofoam cups, snack baggies, plastic utensils, paper plates, napkins, hand wipes

Food Prep: Wash baking potatoes and puncture a few holes in each with a fork. Individually wrap potatoes in aluminum foil and bake in oven at 350 for an hour.

Buy individual butter patties or cut chunks of butter and put single-sized servings in Dixie cups. Buy individual serving cups of sour cream or put single-sized servings of sour cream in Dixie cups. Buy large bags of shredded cheese and divide into snack baggies. Buy frozen broccoli florets, steam them, and place servings into Styrofoam cups. Buy frozen, chopped onions, sauté them in butter or olive oil, and place servings into Styrofoam cups. Buy and cook bacon, crumble it, and place servings into snack baggies. Buy individual-sized juice boxes and water bottles or serve apple juice and water from pitchers during the meal.

Food Service: Set up your service buffet so that Family Food Finders can gather what they need to take back to their table. Start with a stack of trays, one per family. Next place your plastic and paper products. Follow this with containers of baked potatoes still in their aluminum foil wrappers. Next place your individual cups and baggies filled with condiments veggies, and bacon. At the end of the buffet place water and juice bottles unless you plan to serve these beverages from pitchers during the meal.



Family Building: Assembly Required

Stone Soup

Theme: family rituals and traditions of generosity
– our time, our attention, our stuff

Assembly-at-a-Glance

Time	Activity	Materials
15 min.	Inviting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome Introductions and sharing in table groups 	Powerpoint slides Crayons Butcher block paper Masking tape Big rocks
15 min.	Informing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children: Storybook time 	Storybook
30 min.	Engaging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sharing in the preparation of a meal 	Hand wipes Veggies Pasta Chopping boards Plastic knives Plates
15 min.	Informing – More! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults: Family rituals and traditions of generosity 	Resource Book
30 min.	Eating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Table blessing Stone Soup for Everyone 	Table Blessing Cards Meal trays Paper & Plastic Food
15 min.	Inspiring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evening Prayer 	Evening Prayer Cards Small rocks

Stone Soup Assembly Pre-set:

____ Set up enough tables and chairs to accommodate all registered participants.

____ Preset on each table the following items: Materials for completing Family Share Time activity (see above), Table Blessing Card, Evening Prayer Card (You can laminate these two back-to-back and make one card.).

____ Prepare and have handy materials needed for making stone soup, so they can be easily gathered at the right time.

____ Preset food service table with meal trays, service items, and pre-measured/pre-packaged foods for pickup at the right time.

____ **Project Slide 1.**

Inviting – 15 minutes

Host: As families arrive greet them at sign-in and:

1. Point them in the direction of the room where the assembly will take place.
2. Encourage them to sit as a family and make themselves at home.
3. Once everyone has arrived and/or it is time to begin, go to the front of the room and welcome everyone to this ***Family Building: Assembly Required*** program.
4. **Project Slide 2** and review the plan for the evening.
5. **Project Slide 3** and encourage participants to complete the Family Share Time activity.
6. After 15 minutes call everyone to attention and introduce your children's storybook Reader for the evening.

Informing – 15 minutes

Reader: **Project Slide 4.** Invite all of the children to come forward and gather around you for story time. Read the children's storybook chosen for this assembly, Stone Soup. Thank the children for their attention and send them back to their families.

Engaging – 30 minutes

Host: Let participants know that tonight you will be eating your own version of stone soup. That means that everyone will get to be a part of the making.

1. **Project Slide 5.** Review the directions for making stone soup.
2. Invite one representative from each table to go and pick up the materials they will need.
3. While table groups are working, move around the room admiring the work that is being done together as a family.
5. Once every table group has added their contribution to the stone soup pot, introduce your Presenter for the evening.

Informing – More! – 15 minutes

Presenter: Hold up your copy of the resource book, The Book of New Family Traditions. Tell the participants that you plan to spend a few minutes highlighting some key points from the book that will help them to learn more about the relationship between rituals, traditions and family values. You will also highlight some of the great suggestions the book makes for using rituals and traditions to teach the values of generosity and kindness.

Project Slide 6. Talk about... Our resource book talks about what makes a ritual, a ritual, and not just a habit or a routine. Like habits and routines, rituals are things that you do over and over again on purpose. The difference is that through your rituals and traditions you also build a deep sense of belonging to one another. – on purpose.

Rituals and traditions include particular words and actions, special foods, maybe music, but always a heightened attention to what you are doing. These rituals and traditions can be either small gestures like always saying, “Bless you” after a sneeze or big events like how you celebrate birthdays.

Why have rituals and traditions? Here are some listed reasons. Note the role they play in shaping family values and passing on faith.

Project Slide 7. Talk about.... Our story today, Stone Soup, was about showing kindness and generosity to others. Let’s look at some examples from our book of rituals and traditions that promote these values.

1. p. 248, 254, 256 Thanksgiving rituals and traditions are good ways to remind family members of the abundance you share. This feeling of abundance and well-being will slowly but surely begin to translate into generosity towards self and others.
2. p. 131, 235, 237, 164 Celebrating Birthdays, Mother's Day, Father's Day, and even Kid's Day are ways of showing that we care. This feeling of being cared for will slowly but surely translate into showing care and kindness towards self and others.
3. p. 40, 79, 164 Some simple ways to practice generosity and kindness on a daily basis include taking turns, helping each other out and cheering each other up when needed. This feeling of being in it together will slowly but surely make you into a family who lives the values of generosity and kindness.

Project Slide 8. Talk about... Generosity and kindness are family values, but they are also faith values. This quotation from the book, Family Faith & Fun, highlights the key role parents' play in helping children to recognize the importance of faith. You will note that it takes more than words. Parent example is the best way to express your family's values and priorities. That example starts with all of the ways big and small that you show generosity, love and kindness at home.

Thank the adults for their attention and tell everyone that it is time for another family activity.....STONE SOUP!

Eating – 30 minutes

Host: Project Slide 9. Review the evening meal plan outlined on the slide. Then introduce your Prayer Leader for the evening.

Prayer Leader: Project Slide 10. Ask participants to find the Mealtime Prayer Card on their table and/or to use the prayer projected on the screen. Lead the entire assembly in saying the prayer together. Read slowly and clearly, so that young readers can follow along and participate.

Host. Project Slide 11. Remind the Family Food Finder(s) identified on Slide 10 of their responsibilities before sending them to the food service table.

Eat and Enjoy! Clean-up!

Inspiring – 15 minutes

Prayer Leader: As the meal is ending distribute rocks to each table.

1. **Project Slide 12.** When you are ready to begin ask participants to find the Evening Prayer Card on their table and/or to use the prayer projected on the screen.
2. Practice singing the song “Day is Done.” You sing it once. Then have them sing it once with you.
2. Invite one member of each family to hand out a small rock to everyone at their table and place the big rock in the center of their table.
3. Lead the entire assembly in saying and singing the evening prayer together. Read slowly and clearly, so that young readers can follow along and participate.
4. Say, “Good night. Go in peace.”



Notes to Chef

Menu: Stone Soup with Cheese & Crackers and Fruity Chocolate Fondue

Shopping List: **Food** – beef stock, tomato sauce, dry spaghetti, carrots, celery, zucchini, tomatoes, potatoes, onions, fresh parsley, salt & pepper, herbs de Provence, assorted crackers, cubed cheese, string cheese, apples, bananas, chocolate sauce, milk, water. **Service** – cafeteria trays, paper bowls, paper plates, Dixie cups, beverage cups, sandwich baggies, snack baggies, plastic utensils, napkins, hand wipes.

Food Prep: Make a batch of stone soup well in advance. Use your pre-made batch to start your food service. This will give your family-made batch some extra time to cook during the assembly.

Pour beef stock and tomato sauce into a large pot. Sauté onion and add to pot in advance. Heat. Season stock with salt, pepper and herb de Provence. The rest of your soup will be the veggies and fresh herb chopped by your families. To prepare for their additions wash veggies and parsley and place on serving trays,

Buy assorted crackers and divide into snack baggies. Buy cheese chunks and divide into snack baggies. Buy string cheese and separate sticks, but leave them in their wrappers. Buy apples, slice them and place slices into sandwich baggies (may want to put a squeeze of lemon into each bag to keep apples from browning). Buy bananas, cut them into chunks and place chunks into sandwich baggies. Buy large bottles of chocolate sauce and squeeze single-sized servings in Dixie cups. Buy individual-sized milk cartons and water bottles or serve milk and water from pitchers during the meal.

Food Service: Set up your service buffet so that Family Food Finders can gather what they need to take back to their table. Start with a stack of trays, one per family. Next place your plastic and paper products. Follow this with serving bowls of freshly washed veggies and parsley. Next place baskets of dry spaghetti noodles. After this, place serving platters with baggies of crackers and cheese on them. Next place serving platters with baggies of fruit and cups of chocolate sauce on them. At the end of the buffet place milk cartons and water bottles unless you plan to serve these beverages from pitchers during the meal.



Family Building: Assembly Required

The Legend of the Poinsettia

Theme: family rituals and traditions of simplicity during the holidays
 – making holidays more Holy Days, giving/receiving the gifts of the day

Assembly-at-a-Glance

Time	Activity	Materials
15 min.	Inviting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome Introductions and sharing in table groups 	Powerpoint slides Construction paper Paper strips Markers
30 min.	Informing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children: Storybook time Adults: family rituals and traditions of simplicity during the holidays 	Storybook Resource Book
30 min.	Engaging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Making simple cookies 	Hand wipes Cookie Mix Waxed Paper Cookie cutters Rolling pins Colored sprinkles Baking trays
30 min.	Eating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Table blessing A simply delicious meal 	Table Blessing Cards Meal trays Paper & Plastic Food
15 min.	Inspiring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evening Prayer 	Evening Prayer Cards

Assembly Pre-set:

____ Set up enough tables and chairs to accommodate all registered participants.

____ Preset on each table the following items: Materials for completing Family Share Time activity (see above), Table Blessing Card, Evening Prayer Card (You can laminate these two back-to-back and make one card.).

____ Prepare and have handy materials needed for making gift paper and cookies, so they can be easily transferred to tables at the right time.

____ Preset food service table with meal trays, service items, and pre-measured/pre-packaged foods for pickup at the right time.

____ **Project Slide 1.**

Inviting – 15 minutes

Host: As families arrive greet them at sign-in and:

1. Point them in the direction of the room where the assembly will take place.
2. Encourage them to sit as a family and make themselves at home.
3. Once everyone has arrived and/or it is time to begin, go to the front of the room and welcome everyone to this ***Family Building: Assembly Required*** program.
4. **Project Slide 2** and review the plan for the evening.
5. **Project Slide 3** and encourage participants to complete the Family Share Time activity.
6. After 15 minutes call everyone to attention and introduce your children's storybook Reader and your Presenter for the evening.

Informing – 30 minutes

Reader: **Project Slide 4.** Invite all of the children to come forward and gather around you for story time. Read the children's storybook chosen for this assembly, The Legend of the Poinsettia. Thank the children for their attention and send them back to their families.

Presenter: Hold up your copy of the resource book, The Book of New Family Traditions. Tell the participants that you plan to spend a few minutes highlighting some key points from the book that will help them to learn more about the simplifying the holidays by focusing on a few faith-based rituals and traditions. You will also highlight some of the great suggestions the book makes for ways to prepare for and celebrate the holidays as a family.

Project Slide 5. Talk about... The author of our resource book puts it this way, “You have my permission to change how you celebrate!” There are any number of good reasons why you might be wishing that you could simplify the holidays. Know that you are not alone. Look at these reasons for why simplifying the holidays may be the right choice for you and your family this year and into the future. Thinking about emphasizing more of the holy in your holidays. Holidays are perfect time to build faith-based rituals and traditions into your family life together.

In keeping with our theme for this evening, you might want to take a particular look at some of the Christmas holiday rituals and traditions from our resource book. Now is the time to begin making any changes that you want to make.

Project Slide 6. Talk about.... Here are some tips to get you started with the transition into more holy holidays.

1. Decide now what you **will** and **will not** do.
2. Let your family and friends know that you are planning for simpler holidays.....as an act of family building.
3. Invite family and friends to join you in a commitment to simpler, more meaning-full holidays.
4. Include “gifts” of generosity and kindness in your holiday plans.

A great example of this kind of “gift” from our resource book is The Gift of Ourselves found on p. 272 and the Christmas Charity Traditions found on p. 277-278.

Thank the adults for their attention and tell everyone that it is time for another family activity.

Engaging – 30 minutes

Host: Let participants know that it is almost time to eat Christmas Quesadillas using tortillas like Lucida helped her mother make in the storybook. But first, everyone is going to get to help make a sweet treat for dessert.....Christmas cookies!

1. **Project Slide 7.** Review the directions for making Christmas cookies.
2. Invite one representative from each table to go and pick up the materials they will need to make their cookies.
3. While table groups are working, move around the room admiring the work that is being done together as a family.
4. **Project Slide 8.** When all the cookies have been sent to the kitchen for baking call everyone to attention and review the evening meal plan outlined on the slide.
5. Introduce your Prayer Leader for the evening.

Eating – 30 minutes

Prayer Leader: **Project Slide 9.** Ask participants to find the Mealtime Prayer Card on their table and/or to use the prayer projected on the screen. Lead the entire assembly in saying the prayer together. Read slowly and clearly, so that young readers can follow along and participate. This prayer can also be sung to the tune of “Johnny Appleseed.”

Host. **Project Slide 10.** Remind the Family Food Finder(s) identified on Slide 8 of their responsibilities before sending them to the food service table.

Eat and Enjoy!

Inspiring – 15 minutes

Prayer Leader: As the meal is ending make sure there is room to gather all of your participants into a big circle for evening prayer. If there are more people than there is space, plan to gather your participants into two or more concentric circles.

1. **Project Slide 11.** When you are ready to begin ask participants to find the Evening Prayer Card on their table and/or to use the prayer projected on the screen.
2. Practice singing the song the Shaker hymn, “Tis a Gift to be Simple.” You sing it once. Then have them sing it once with you.
3. Then teach the steps to the song. Start by standing in a circle.



Walk to the Right while Singing

Tis a gift to be simple, 'tis a gift to be free. Tis a gift to come down where we ought to be.

Turn and walk to the Left while Singing.

And when we find ourselves in a place just right we'll be in the valley of love and delight.

4 Steps into the Center while Singing

When true simplicity is gained,

4 Steps Back Out while Singing

To have and to hold we shan't be ashamed.

Each Person Makes a Self Turn to the Right while Singing

To turn, turn, will be our delight.

Facing the Center Each Person Makes a Bow while Singing

Til by turning, turning we come round right.

4. Lead the entire assembly in saying, singing and moving the evening prayer together. Read slowly and clearly, so that young readers can follow along and participate.
5. Say, "Good night. Go in peace."



Notes to Chef

Menu: Christmas Quesadillas, Black Bean Salad with Avocado & Tomato, Pineapple Chunks, Chocolate Pudding

Shopping List: Food – Flour tortillas, olive oil, grated cheese, canned black beans, canned whole kernel corn, green onions, jalapeno peppers, green bell pepper, red bell pepper, avocados, tomatoes, jar pimientos, fresh cilantro, lime, Italian salad dressing, garlic salt, pineapple cups, chocolate pudding cups, lemonade, water. **Christmas Cookies** – cookie mix, eggs, sprinkles, disposable baking sheets, cookie cutters, mixing bowls, gallon baggies. **Service** – cafeteria trays, paper bowls, regular beverage cups, plastic utensils, paper plates, napkins, hand wipes

Food Prep: You have two food preps for this assembly. First, you will help to prepare and serve the evening meal. Also, you will help participants bake Christmas cookies.

Evening Meal - Make Black Bean Salad in advance and divide into individual servings in paper bowls.

Black Bean Salad Recipe (12 servings)

1 (15 ounce) can black beans, rinsed and drained
2 (15 ounce) cans whole kernel corn, drained
8 green onions
2 jalapeno peppers, seeded and minced
1 green bell pepper, chopped
1 red bell pepper, chopped
1 avocado – peeled, pitted, and diced

1 jar (4 ounce) pimientos
3 tomatoes, seeded & chopped
1 cup fresh chopped cilantro
1 lime, juiced
½ cup Italian salad dressing
½ teaspoon garlic salt

Begin making cheese quesadillas early. Wipe griddle or skillet with a small amount of olive oil. Place tortilla on hot, oiled surface. Add grated cheese to one side of tortilla. Fold tortilla in half with cheese inside. Heat on both sides until tortilla is lightly browned and cheese is melted. You may need to re-oil surface in between quesadillas to keep tortillas from sticking. Keep quesadillas warm in oven until time to serve.

Food Service: Evening Meal - Set up your service buffet so that Family Food Finders can gather what they need to take back to their table. Start with a stack of trays, one per family. Next place your plastic and paper products. Follow this with platters of quesadillas. Next place bowls of black bean salad. After this, arrange stacks of pineapple cups and chocolate pudding cups. At the end of the buffet place lemonade cartons and water bottles unless you plan to serve these beverages from pitchers during the meal. **Christmas Cookies** – For each family set out a disposable baking sheet with their name written on the base of it with a permanent marker, place on top of it a mixing bowl, put in the bowl a spoon, a few cookie cutters, a bag of cookie mix, containers with other cookie mix ingredients and decorations,



Family Building: Assembly Required

Somebody Loves You

Theme: family rituals and traditions of sending and receiving love
 – words of love form us and can transform us

Assembly-at-a-Glance

Time	Activity	Materials
15 min.	Inviting <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome • Introductions and sharing in table groups 	Powerpoint slides Love Letter Form Envelope Markers and pens
30 min.	Informing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children: Storybook time • Adults: family rituals of sending and receiving love 	Storybook Resource Book
30 min.	Engaging <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making tissue paper roses 	Colored tissue paper Chenille stems Scissors Rulers
30 min.	Eating <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Table blessing • A family love feast 	Table Blessing Cards Meal trays Paper & Plastic Food
15 min.	Inspiring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evening Prayer 	Evening Prayer Cards

Assembly Pre-set:

____ Set up enough tables and chairs to accommodate all registered participants.

____ Preset on each table the following items: Materials for completing Family Share Time activity (see above), Table Blessing Card, Evening Prayer Card (You can laminate these two back-to-back and make one card.).

____ Prepare and have handy materials needed for making placemats, so they can be easily transferred to tables at the right time.

____ Preset food service table with meal trays, service items, and pre-measured/pre-packaged foods for pickup at the right time.

____ **Project Slide 1.**

Inviting – 15 minutes

Host: As families arrive greet them at sign-in and:

1. Point them in the direction of the room where the assembly will take place.
2. Encourage them to sit as a family and make themselves at home.
3. Once everyone has arrived and/or it is time to begin, go to the front of the room and welcome everyone to this ***Family Building: Assembly Required*** program.
4. **Project Slide 2** and review the plan for the evening.
5. **Project Slide 3** and encourage participants to complete the Family Share Time activity.
6. After 15 minutes call everyone to attention and introduce your children's storybook Reader and your Presenter for the evening.

Informing – 30 minutes

Reader: **Project Slide 4.** Invite all of the children to come forward and gather around you for story time. Read the children's storybook chosen for this assembly, Somebody Loves You, Mr. Hatch. Thank the children for their attention and send them back to their families.

Presenter: Hold up your copy of the resource book, The Book of New Family Traditions. Tell the participants that you plan to spend a few minutes highlighting some key points from the book that will help them to learn more about the importance of sending and receiving each other with love and attention. This idea is especially important for highly mobile military families who often have family members going to and coming from deployments. You will also highlight some of the great suggestions the book makes for ways that they can send and receive each other in love.

Project Slide 5. Talk about... Family life can be very hectic these days. Schedules are tight. Often the first thing to go is taking time to say good-bye and hello again. These times are very important and worth thinking about, though. Here are some of the reasons why. Rituals of sending and receiving...

1. Bring order and joy to the day
2. Help to ease transitions
3. Teach the value of each individual family member as a beloved child of God
4. Can be matched to the temperament of each family member or become a shared experience, a whole family ritual.

Project Slide 6. Talk about... Taking the time to send each other off and greet each other again is an important way we can show love to one another. Our words and our actions matter, just like those words, "Somebody loves you." mattered to Mr. Hatch.

Valentine's Day is a good day to focus on sending and receiving love to everyone around you. Our resource book has some excellent ideas for making Valentine's Day about something more than romantic love. Look at some of the ideas and let them inspire you to make Valentine's Day a celebration of God's love in your family.

You may also want to look at some of the simple ways that you can make loving words of sending and receiving a regular part of your life together.

Thank the adults for their attention and tell everyone that it is time for another family activity.

Engaging – 30 minutes

Host: Let participants know that it is almost time for you to all share a Family Love Feast, but first you want to make a lovely table decoration that you will also be able to take home with you.

1. **Project Slide 7.** Review the directions for making tissue paper roses.
2. Invite one representative from each table to go and pick up the materials they will need to make their roses.
3. While table groups are working, move around the room admiring the work that is being done together as a family.
4. **Project Slide 8.** When the roses are done call everyone to attention and review the evening meal plan outlined on the slide.
5. Introduce your Prayer Leader for the evening.

Eating – 30 minutes

Prayer Leader: **Project Slide 9.** Ask participants to find the Mealtime Prayer Card on their table and/or to use the prayer projected on the screen. Lead the entire assembly in saying the prayer together. Read slowly and clearly, so that young readers can follow along and participate.

Host. **Project Slide 10.** Remind the Family Food Finder(s) identified on Slide 9 of their responsibilities before sending them to the food service table.

Eat and Enjoy!

Inspiring – 15 minutes

Prayer Leader: As the meal is ending get out your Bible and review your reading of 1 Corinthians 13:3-7.

1. **Project Slide 11.** When you are ready to begin ask participants to find the Evening Prayer Card on their table and/or to use the prayer projected on the screen.
2. Lead the entire assembly in saying the evening prayer together. Read slowly and clearly, so that young readers can follow along and participate.
5. Say, “Good night. Go in peace.”



Notes to Chef

Menu: Family Love Feast with “Love Apple” Macaroni & Cheese, Love Knot Dinner Rolls, Family of Ants on a Log, Peachy Hugs, Chocolate Kisses

Shopping List: Food – macaroni, cheese, butter, milk, salt & pepper, tomatoes, crescent rolls, butter patties, celery, flavored cream cheese, mini-boxes of raisins, diced peach cups, chocolate kisses, milk, water. **Service** – cafeteria trays, disposable loaf pans, paper plates, Dixie cups, beverage cups, sandwich baggies, gallon baggies, snack baggies, plastic utensils, napkins, handwipes.

Food Prep: In advance, make baked macaroni and cheese in loaf pans, one pan per registered family, plus a few extra.

Per directions on box, boil macaroni in salted water. Drain water. Mix in butter, milk and cheese, plus salt and pepper to taste. Divide macaroni and cheese between loaf pans. Slice tomatoes (love apples) and top each pan of macaroni and cheese with 3 slices of tomato. Bake for 30 minutes or until top is slightly browned.

Buy canisters of crescent rolls, cook according to directions, and put 4-6 rolls apiece into gallon baggies. Buy individual butter patties or cut chunks of butter and put single-sized servings in Dixie cups. Buy celery, chop stalks into quarters and place in sandwich baggies. Buy assorted cream cheese flavors, and put singled-sized servings in Dixie cups. Buy mini-boxes of raisins, peach cups, and bags of chocolate kisses. Buy individual-sized milk cartons and water bottles or serve milk and water from pitchers during the meal.

Food Service: Set up your service buffet so that Family Food Finders can gather what they need to take back to their table. Start with a stack of trays, one per family. Next place your plastic and paper products. Follow this with rows of macaroni and cheese loaf pans. Next, place baggies of crescent rolls and butter patties together. Then, set out ingredients for Family of Ants on a Log (celery sticks, cream cheese cups and raisin boxes). After this, arrange stacks of diced peach cups and a big bowl of chocolate kisses. At the end of the buffet place milk cartons and water bottles unless you plan to serve these beverages from pitchers during the meal.



Family Building: Assembly Required

Registration Form

* * * * *

Family Name: _____

CMR/PSC Box #: _____

Home Phone: _____

Cellphone: _____

Email: _____

Please reserve our place at the table for the following assemblies: (choose 1, 2, 3 or all 4)

Date: _____ Time: _____

Once Upon an Ordinary School Day

____ # of adults

____ # of children

Date: _____ Time: _____

Stone Soup

____ # of adults

____ # of children

Date: _____ Time: _____

The Legend of the Poinsettia

____ # of adults

____ # of children

Date: _____ Time: _____

Somebody Loves You

____ # of adults

____ # of children

These are the food allergies we have in our family:

I give permission to the Garrison Chaplain's office to use photographs or videos that are taken of me / my child(ren) / family while participating in this program for use in chapel publicity material.

Signature / Date _____



Family Building: Assembly Required

Sign-In Sheet

* * * * *

Assembly:_____ **Date:**_____

<i>Our Family Name</i> *****	<i># Adults</i>	<i># Children</i>
<i>TOTAL#</i>		



Family Building: Assembly Required


Table Blessing Cards



Share in Prayer

- Thank you for the world so sweet,
Thank you for the food we eat.
Thank you for the birds that sing,
Thank you God for everything.
Amen.

Share in Prayer



- God is great and God is Good,
And we thank God for our food;
By God's hand we all are fed,
Give us Lord, our daily bread.
Amen.

Share in Prayer

- *O, the Lord's been good to me,
and so I thank the Lord,
for giving me the things I need
the sun and the rain and the apple seed.
The Lord's been good to me. Amen.*

Share in Prayer


- *For each new morning with its light,
For rest and shelter of the night,
For health and food,
For love and friends,
For everything Thy goodness sends.
We give you thanks. Amen.*



Family Building: Assembly Required

Evening Prayer Cards

	<h3>Evening Prayer</h3> <p>One member of the family lights the evening candle.</p> <p>Opening Sentences Leader: God is light. Family: <i>In God there is no darkness.</i> Leader: If we live in the light, as God is in the light, All: <i>We are a family together.</i></p> <p>Song: All Praise to You, Our God, This Night <i>All praise to you, our God, this night, For all the blessings of the light! Keep us, O keep us safe from harm, Within the shelter of your arms!</i></p> <p>Closing Sentences Leader: The God of grace is with us all, now, and forever. Family: <i>Amen.</i> Leader: Praise the Lord. Family: <i>Alleluia.</i> The whole family puts out the candle together.</p>
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<h3>Evening Prayer</h3> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• One member of the family hands out a small rock to each family member and then places a big rock in the center of the table.• Opening Sentences<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leader: God is our rock and our redeemer.• Family: <i>An ever present help in times of trouble.</i>• Song: Day is Done<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Day is done, but love unfailing dwells ever here;</i>• <i>Shadows fall, but hope prevailing, calms every fear.</i>• <i>God, our Maker, none forsaking, take our hearts of Love's own making.</i>• <i>Watch our sleeping, guard our waking, be ever near.</i>• Closing Sentences<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leader: God is a rock, always supporting our family.• Family: (One by one, each person places their small rock on top of the big rock and says...) <i>God rocks!</i>• Leader: Amen.	
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Evening Prayer

- Opening Sentences

- Leader: Each of us is a gift to our family.
- Family: a gift of love and hope.

- Song: Tis a Gift to Be Simple

*Tis a gift to be simple, 'tis a gift to be free
Tis a gift to come down where we ought to be.
And when we find ourselves in a place just right
We'll be in the valley of love and delight.
When true simplicity is gained,
To have and to hold we shan't be ashamed.
To turn, turn, will be our delight.
Till by turning, turning we come round right.*

- Closing Sentences

- Leader: God, you first loved us.
- Family: Let us love one another.
- All: Amen.



Evening Prayer

Opening Sentences

- Parents: *Children, let's not just talk about love. Let's practice real love.*
- Children: *What does that mean?*

Reading of 1 Corinthians 13:3-7

Closing Sentences

- Parents: *We can love because God first loved us.*
- Children: *Thank you God!*
- All: *Amen.*





Family Building: Assembly Required

Bibliography

Resource Book

The Book of New Family Traditions: How to Create Great Rituals for Holidays and Every Day by Meg Cox (NOT Expanded/Updated Edition)

Children's Storybooks

Once Upon An Ordinary School Day by Colin McNaughton & Satoshi Kitamura

Stone Soup by Marcia Brown

The Legend of the Poinsettia by Tomie dePaola

Somebody Loves You, Mr. Hatch by Eileen Spinelli & Paul Yalowitz