

# Celebrate Family

Traditions for Every Month

## JANUARY

**1** On January 1, call a family meeting. Ask everyone from the littlest to the biggest what their number one goal is for the year. Write down each goal in a brand new family notebook and save it for New Year's Eve.

**2** Also, at this family meeting, be prepared to give each person in your immediate family a Scripture verse for the year. Have everyone memorize their personal Scripture during the month of January and then say it at the dinner table every month on the first of the month. As the mom, pray this Scripture verse over each one every day of the year.

**3** Gather the Christmas cards that you received in the month of December. Choose 2 -3 Christmas cards every evening during the month of January and pray for those who sent them to you.

**4** If it snows where you live, be sure to celebrate a fresh, new snow with the making of snow cream! If it doesn't snow where you live, make snowmen out of different sizes of marshmallows.

**5** Make s'mores either over the fireplace or over a burner!  
It is fun either way!

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## FEBRUARY

**1** February 1 is a great day to choose secret Valentines for the month. Give your family ideas of how they can serve their secret Valentine by making their bed, leaving them sweet notes in the bathroom, leaving a treat by their plate, or buying a dollar store prize. Encourage secret Valentines to pray for one another as well.

**2** Make Valentines' cards for the elderly people that you know and hand deliver them close to Valentine's day with either a craft, a small plant or a homemade baked item.

**3** If you are married, make sure that mom and dad have a date night this month! Make sure your children know how excited you are to be together.

**4** Plan a candlelight dinner for the entire family or an indoor picnic.

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## MARCH

1

On March 17, in honor of St. Patrick's Day, serve green mashed potatoes for dinner! At the dinner table this evening, read the story of St. Patrick. It's a good one!

2

When the weather permits, take a Saturday or Sunday afternoon to go fly a kite! Watch Mary Poppins together.

3

Have a book party that lasts the entire month of March. Let everyone choose their favorite books (more than one!) and put them in a laundry basket. It will be your goal to read every book out loud to the family before March 31. Celebrate with a Sundae bar!

4

Go to a local pond and feed the ducks

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## APRIL

1 Have a spring scavenger hunt. Make a list of the signs of spring and check them off as you see them appear. We would even list things like, "The Custard Stand is open!" or "The awning is up on the back deck!" as some of our personal signs of spring. When all of the signs of spring are checked off your family list, celebrate by having a picnic on the living room floor or by going to the park.

2 Talk about the events leading up to the Resurrection story in the Bible. Make sure your family devotions are focused on Matthew 26 – 28, Mark 14 – 16, Luke 22 – 24 and John 18-21.

3 Have the neighborhood children over for an Easter Egg hunt in your yard. At the end of the hunt, tell the Easter story by using Resurrection Eggs.

4 On April 1, serve hamburgers and French fries for breakfast. Then serve pancakes and bacon for supper. April Fools! Have a contest to see who can come up with the best joke.

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MAY

1 On May 1, make nosegays of flowers from construction paper and hang them on the doors in your neighborhood. Giving flowers to shut-ins, the elderly and neighbors on May 1 is a lovely tradition whether the flowers are ordered from the florist, picked from the backyard or made around the kitchen table.

2 Go to the local nursery and let everyone choose a flower to plant in the family garden. Watch your personal flowers grow all summer long.

3 On Mother's Day, make sure that mom has her picture taken individually with each one of her children. These pictures will become treasures as the years quickly pass.

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## JUNE

1 Celebrate the first day of summer with an old-fashioned family picnic. Serve summer foods including hot dogs, watermelon, strawberry shortcake and potato salad.

2 On Father's Day, make sure that you take a picture of Dad with each of his children individually. These pictures will become a treasure as the years pass quickly by.

3 Buy sidewalk chalk and have a family tournament of hopscotch! Then decorate the family driveway or sidewalk with everyone's names!

4 On the last day of school, celebrate accomplishments and successes with a popsicle party.

5 Go strawberry or blueberry picking and then make a pie or homemade ice cream with your fruity harvest!

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JULY

1

Buy an American flag and display it proudly all month long.

2

Sing Patriotic songs together like "You're a Grand Old Flag", "I'm a Yankee Doodle Dandy!" and "God Bless America!"

3

Visit historic parks and sites in your state during the month of July.

4

Take a clear plastic cup and put about an inch of red Jello in the bottom, let it harden over night and then add a layer of blue Jello. Allow the blue Jello to firm up all day in the refrigerator and at dinner time add a layer of white cool whip. There is nothing like red, white and blue Jello in the summer time!

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## AUGUST

1 Invite cousins or neighborhood friends over one evening for a Firefly party. Provide jars for everyone and capture the sweet innocence of childhood by capturing fireflies in jars.

2 Rent or borrow a projector and show a kid-friendly movie on the side of your house, garage or church building. Invite friends and neighbors over for a night of watermelon and "It's a Bug's Life!" or "Cars".

3 Christen the second week in August as "The Wonderful World of Water Week" and everyday do something that is wet and wonderful. Have a water balloon fight one day, go to the beach or to the town pool another day, have a squirt gun battle one day and run through the sprinklers another day. The possibilities are endless! Give the dog a bath ... wash the family car ... water all the flowers in the yard ... ride your bikes through sprinklers ...



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SEPTEMBER

1 Have your children write their grandparents a note letting them know how thankful they are for them. Have them draw pictures for their grandparents. Take a picture with the grandparents. If you don't live near grandparents or don't have any, invite over some older people from church or the neighborhood for dinner and let them share their memories with your family. Treat them like royalty!

2 Visit a pumpkin patch and have your children look for the smallest pumpkin, the largest pumpkin, the pumpkin with the oddest shape, the least orange pumpkin, etc. Take lots of pictures!

3 Rake leaves and take family pictures jumping in the piles of leaves!

4 On the first day of school, be sure to measure everyone on the door frame of your choice! Write down the date and the person's name next to their height.

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## OCTOBER

**1** Plan a day on which you can have an autumn nature scavenger hunt. Make a list for each family member with items like a red leaf, an acorn, a feather from a bird, a yellow leaf, a caterpillar, etc. Give out small prizes as a reward such as a new coloring book, a new set of stickers, a trip to the dollar store.

**2** Make pumpkin cookies or muffins together.

**3** Dress up one day like your favorite characters from a book. Act out a scene from the book.

**4** O.K. ... no one is allowed to become upset over this one. For the McLeod family, October 1 has always been the "First Official Day of Christmas Music Season!" I am a firm believer that Christmas music is just too good to be relegated to only one month a year. So let the Christmas music begin!!

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## NOVEMBER

1 Create a "Thanksgiving Tree" on November 1. Attach large sheets of construction paper to an available wall and draw a large tree on it. Then, cut out hundreds of leaves and make them available to family members or anyone who visits your home during the month of November. Every day, write down on a leaf at least one thing for which you are grateful.

2 Check out books about pilgrims, the first Thanksgiving and the Mayflower from the library and read a book every day.

3 Listen to the Radio Theater version of "The Legend of Squanto". Pop popcorn and drink apple juice or make pumpkin pie!

4 Sing songs about being thankful all month long. Make it a family goal to memorize the 100th Psalm during the month of November.

5 On the day after Thanksgiving, rather than going to the mall, go out and cut your own family Christmas tree down. Come home and put on Christmas Carols and drink hot chocolate. Read the Christmas story for the very first time of the Christmas season.

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## DECEMBER

**1** Make a "Giving Tree". Take several large pieces of construction paper and attach them to an available wall. Draw the outline of a large Christmas tree on it. Then, cut out dozens of ornament-shaped pieces of paper of different colors. When someone does a good deed for someone else during the month of December, they can attach an ornament to the tree. The goal is by Christmas Eve to have the entire tree filled with decorations and at that point the entire family can share some of the things they have done for others that month.

**2** Fill the house with Christmas music!

**3** Make a different kind of Christmas cookies every week. Share them with neighbors and friends.

**4** Go to a church Christmas concert as a family.

**6** When you put up your stockings on Christmas Eve, take time to first read the Christmas story. Pass around the Bible and have everyone read a verse or two. This will become a treasured tradition as the years quickly pass.

**5** Get out the notebook in which you recorded your goals for the year on January 1st. How did you all do?

**7** On New Year's Eve, get out all of the left over holiday napkins and plates from the year just passed. Save your Thanksgiving napkins, napkins from Easter and from graduation, from different birthday parties and from Valentine's Day parties. Then, use them on New Year's Eve to celebrate the joy of the year that God gave to you!