

Family

By Ashli O'Connell

FUN!

Eight ideas to help you stay connected

With a picnic quilt spread on the living room floor and a hot box of pizza in the middle, my girls know something different is up. Instead of a kitchen table set for dinner, the living room picnic offers paper plates and cups. Cheesy breadsticks and a pan of brownies round out the menu.

The cry goes up, "Pizza picnic!"

An O'Connell family tradition transforms another ordinary day.

The girls never know when to expect a pizza picnic. But when they discover the picnic blanket and the pizza, they know they're about to enjoy special family prayer, their favorite foods and a specific theme for discussion (everyone tells the funniest thing that happened that day, shares their most embarrassing moment, makes up a funny joke, or the girls' favorite: Mom and Dad tell about the times they got in trouble when they were kids).

The pizza picnic is one way my husband, Brian, and I have found to squeeze precious family time into the middle of a hectic day. Our girls — ages 7 and 3 — have a lot of fun, but there is a greater purpose in the pizza and giggles. Relationships we build today will help them decide whether they will adopt our faith and value system tomorrow.

In Psalm 26:3 we learn why David chose to live according to God's purpose and plan: "For your love is ever before me, and I walk continually in your truth" (NIV). Was it the truth that compelled David to follow? Was it the rule of a law? No, it was his Heavenly Father's love. If we want our children to follow our truth, it will be our love that compels them to do so.

Children spell love T-I-M-E

With the school year back in full swing and the holidays just ahead, families are busier than ever. But the need for quality family time knows no season. Here are seven more ideas for activities that will foster the relationship your children long for and need so desperately.

The family book club

Book clubs are all the rage — from national television to your church's

women's group. Why not adopt the idea for your family? Choose an age-appropriate book for your children and get a copy for every family member.

If your children are older, have everyone read on his or her own and then come together for weekly book club meetings. If children are younger, it might be better to sit with them and take turns reading. However you design it, there is nothing like reading together to enrich your minds and hearts.

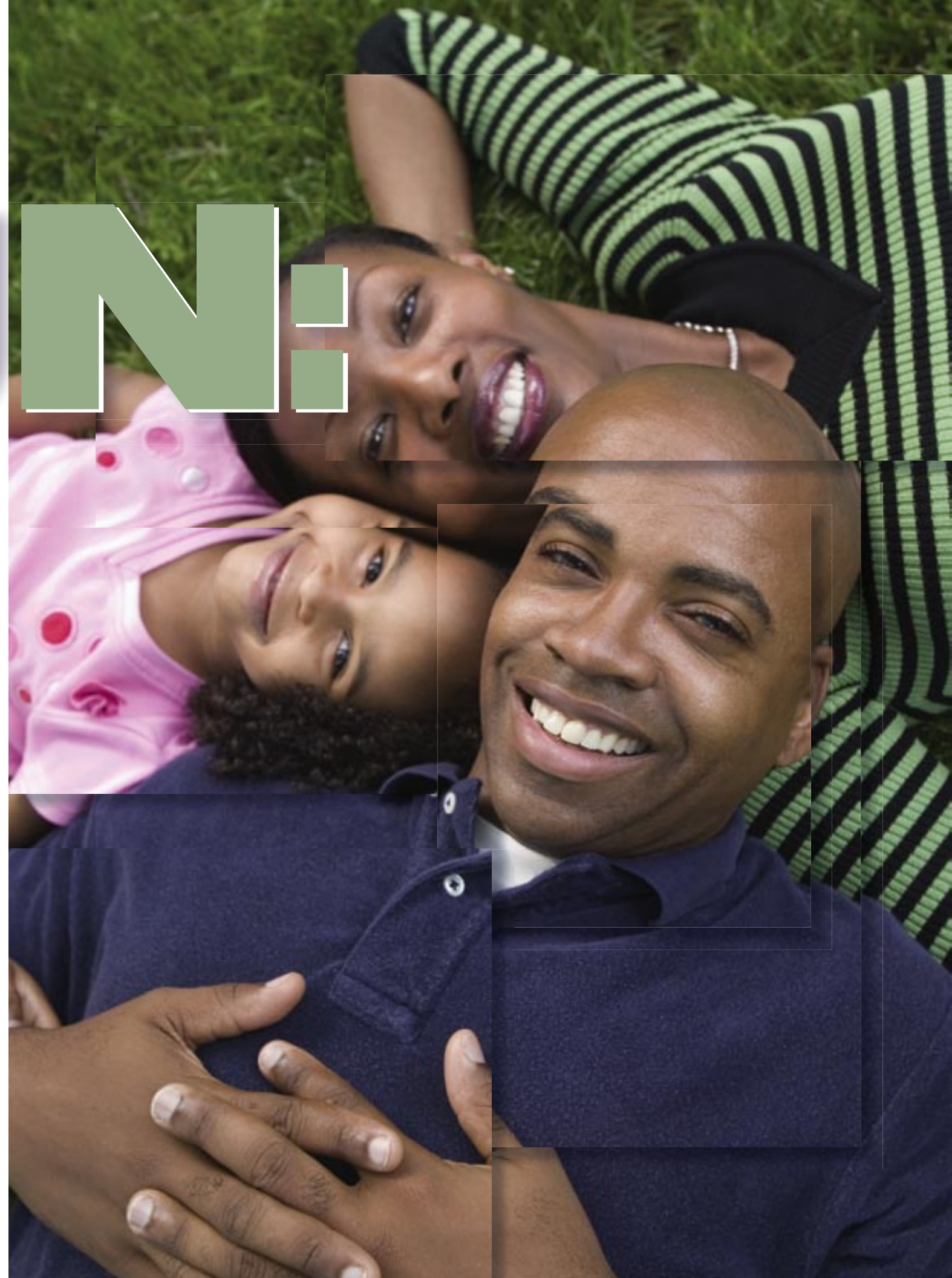
Puzzle mania

Turn off the TV set and tackle some puzzles as a family. Don't take them apart when you are done. Glue the puzzles together and use them to decorate your home.

I recently met a family who decorated their den together in a jungle theme — every wall hanging was a jungle-themed puzzle. It took several years to finish the project and they had the memories hanging all over their walls to remind them of the love, laughter and bonding that went into that decorating project.

You might let each child choose a puzzle that could be used as a wall hanging for their bedroom.

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Their future,
your purpose

TEACH

Assemblies of God faculty positions now available

Assemblies of God Higher Education continues to develop a national database of all interested persons who would like to be considered for faculty positions at endorsed AG colleges and universities.

The greatest area of need is in the non Bible and theology disciplines, particularly math, science, behavioral science, business, and music. However, all interested persons are encouraged to apply regardless of discipline.

Previous college teaching experience preferred but may not be required in all situations.

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Member of Assemblies of God with faithful attendance at an AG church ●

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Online application available at
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For further information, please contact:

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Plant a tree

Autumn is a great time to plant a tree — or two or three. How about one for each child? A few years ago we planted a tree for each of our girls. Every fall we take a picture of each daughter with her tree, and we look forward to watching how the trees and the girls grow and change over the years.

It's an idea I took from my parents, who planted an ash tree for me (Ash-li) when I was a girl. I have pictures of that tree when I was twice as tall as it. Today I have a picture of me with my husband and girls standing under the beautiful towering tree that is a living monument of my parents' love for me.

For a \$10 donation to the National Arbor Day Foundation, you can receive 10 trees, shipped to your home and ready to plant. The fall shipments are between October 15 and December 10, and the organization sends trees that are healthy and particularly suited to your climate and growing conditions. Don't have a big yard? Get permission and plant the trees together at a school, a retirement community or a park.

Study-time fun

If your daughter has a spelling test or your son is studying for a history

exam, turn it into some family fun. Have a family spelling bee or create your own *Jeopardy*-type game to study history. Your children will never forget the first time they beat their parents, and they'll return to school ready to ace their tests.

Family day

Once a month, take an all-day family excursion. It's not easy to find a day when every family member is free of work, meetings, practices, games, etc. That's why I recommend planning them for the next six months.

Sit down together as a family and put the dates on your calendars. Keep those dates sacred. Some months you may choose an elaborate outing. Other times you may choose an activity close to home.

Let the children have a hand in the planning, making the arrangements and saving their allowance for special activities. This will be the day they look forward to all month.

Create a family tree

If you have older children, work together to create a family history. Teens are expert at researching online, and the Internet has great resources for this type of project. Visit genealogy libraries, take a trip to discover some of your ancestors'

burial sites and interview grandparents and great-grandparents. You and your children will learn a lot about each other as you work together to create a family history that will be cherished for generations.

Get physical

Have your kids teach you their favorite sport, or discover a new outdoor activity together as a family — rock climbing, hiking, biking, skiing, tennis, etc. Everyone in the family needs the exercise, and often the best communication, especially with teens, happens when we're not trying to have a conversation. There's nothing like fresh air and an adrenaline rush to lift spirits and create memories that last a lifetime.

When it comes to quality family time, there are truly only two necessary ingredients: family and time. The money you spend isn't important, and the details matter little. But when you make an investment of time in your family relationships, you will all reap eternal rewards. **tpe**

ASHLI O'CONNELL recently left the staff of *Today's Pentecostal Evangel* to pursue a teaching career.

E-mail your comments to tpe@ag.org.

WITH CHRIST

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Alex Karmarkovic, 86
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David G. Morgan, 90
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Charles B. Morrison, 76
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U.S. Missionary

David R. Dohm, 57
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ABCs OF SALVATION

To know God and be ready for heaven, follow these steps:

A. Admit you are a sinner.

"There is no one righteous, not even one ... for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Romans 3:10,23 (See Romans 5:8; 6:23.)

Ask God's forgiveness and repent of your sins.

"Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." Romans 10:13 (See Acts 3:19.)

B. Believe in Jesus (put your trust in Him) as your only hope of salvation.

"For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life." John 3:16 (See John 14:6.)

Become a child of God by receiving Christ.

"To all who received him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God." John 1:12 (See Revelation 3:20.)

C. Confess that Jesus is your Lord.

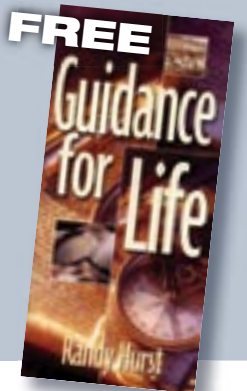
"If you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved." Romans 10:9 (See verse 10.)

For further help, contact the Assemblies of God church near you.

If you would like someone to pray with you concerning your decision to follow Jesus Christ, please contact the church indicated on the back cover or call:


1-800-4PRAYER

Assemblies of God National Prayer Center




"Tear down this wall!"

Remember the Berlin Wall?
President Ronald Reagan declared,
"Tear down this wall!"




and that great wall began to fall. Today you can help tear down spiritual walls in the former Soviet Union by training ministers at CIS Bible schools. Sergei is tearing down walls in the CIS as he trains for full-time ministry at our Bible school in Chernivtsi, Ukraine. Sergei was mute, but God loosed his tongue and called him to reach the Romanian people living in Ukraine.

\$100 trains a leader like Sergei for one month. Can you help us train a leader this month? Please train as many as you can and tear down walls in the CIS!

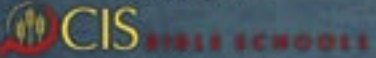


Ukrainian Bible school graduates proudly display their diplomas. They are currently ministering to the lost in their home communities.



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