



tips for youth workers

OCTOBER 2020

THANKS-LIVING

October is a month where we can look around and see the beauty of God's creation through His colourful landscapes. All around us the air is changing along with the spectacular view; we just need to look and take it in. This month we may or may not be meeting face to face with the kids we minister with, but we can still help them "thanks-living", to daily give thanks for the blessing God gives to us. Here are a few ideas that you can easily make and use with your kids or share with families.

1. **Gratitude Garland** – collect scrap paper with at least one side that can be easily written on, scissors, markers, tape or a stapler. Cut the paper into strips. Each day during a week or over the month of October write on a slip of paper one thing that you are thankful for. Make a loop with your strip of paper and then add new strip loops and see how long a garland you can make. Hang your garland in your kitchen or where you hang out the most at home so that each day you are reminded of God's goodness to you.
2. **Glowing with Gratitude** – look through your collection of gift wrap for tissue paper (fall or your favourite colours). You'll need scissors, glue, markers, a tea light (battery operated will work) and a jar for each child or family member. Cut the tissue paper into 1 to 2-inch squares. Each person will need their own jar, marker and stack of tissue paper squares. Encourage your kids to think of things that they are thankful for and write each one on a piece of tissue paper. When you are finished writing out your "thanks", glue the tissue squares onto the outside of the jar. Place the tea light inside the jar and let its light glow your gratitude for the gifts God has given to you. (Optional: tie ribbon, raffia or twine around the top of the jar.)
3. **Thanksgiving Jam Jar** – each family will need a jar, scissors, paper and pens. Decorate a large jam (or pasta) jar in any way you wish. You could cover it with tissue paper or colour it with colourful permanent markers or simply tie a seasonal ribbon around the top. Cut your paper into strips. Place the jar, the pens and the strips of paper on your table. Each day give each other an opportunity to write down one thing they want to thank God for. Add your ideas to the jar and then on Sundays read out and remind each other of the wonderful things God has given and done for you and your family.
4. **Thanks-Living Letters** – each child/family member will need a small journal or notebook and a pen. (Optional: gather brown paper or paper grocery bags and cover the journal with the paper and decorate with the title "Thanks-Living Letters"). Encourage each other to spend a few moments each day this month writing God short letters of thanksgiving for the way He cares for you; provides for you and the beauty you see in the world around you.
5. **Thankful Tree** – go for a walk outside and find a fallen branch and some stones. Gather colourful paper, pens or markers, scissors, string or yarn, a hole punch (or tape) and a jar/can. Place your branch into the jar or can, pour the stones you found into the jar to help it hold the branch in place. Using colourful paper cut out a big pile of leaf shapes (or collect real leaves from outside). Spend time each day reflecting on God's goodness to you. Write on a leaf one thing you are thankful for, then attach the leaf to the tree branch either with a piece of string or with tape. (If using string, punch a hole in the leaf and tie the string to the leaf and then the tree.)