

# Marriage and Family Ministry (MFM) Newsletter



MARRIAGE AND FAMILY MINISTRY

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## Sanctity of Human Life Awareness Week at MWC

The Marriage and Family Ministry joins the efforts of churches and other pro-life organizations in promoting the sanctity of human life through **Sanctity of Human Life Week to be celebrated from January 20-27, 2008**. This year marks the 35th anniversary of the Roe v. Wade decision that legalized abortion in the United States.



So what can we do to restore the sanctity of human life ethic? The following is an excerpt from the Sanctity of Human Life Handbook put together by Focus on the Family:

*“First, restoration can begin with your own heart. It is safe to say that most Christians are not murdering their neighbors with handguns. However, we should examine our hearts for attitudes toward our fellow humans that violate the spirit of the sanctity of human life ethic. We must struggle against the subtle ways we dishonor or fail to acknowledge the intrinsic worth of each individual. The spiritual sins of superiority, contempt and slander are more frequent and easier to hide than the physical crimes of assault, rape or murder. These seemingly minor and unimportant sins of the heart are, in fact, expressions of disrespect for God’s human image in our world. These heart sins represent the core of our fallen nature—the very nature that motivates man to violate man, thereby violating God.*

*Second, we need to teach the next generation a respect for all human life: parents teaching children through word and deed, and churches instructing children through explicitly pro-life curriculum and Bible study. Children who are respected and cherished will better comprehend the concept of sacred human life. Spiritual leaders should make the subject of life a prominent part of church activities and teaching. The affirmation of life can also be modeled through church support of pro-life pregnancy resource centers and hospices.*

*Finally, we must continue to support public policy that protects human life and oppose legislation that threatens it. Examples include supporting legislation requiring that mothers receive factual information about their preborn child before an abortion and opposing efforts to legalize physician-assisted suicide. Active efforts to defend life must continue while the church works to reiterate the value of each life through its teachings. The law is a teacher, and Christians must remain active to advocate for the passage of life-affirming laws that restore the sanctity of human life ethic in our society.”*

## Valentine Dinner-Dance on February 9

The Marriage and Family Ministry, in cooperation with the Men’s and Women’s Ministries, invites you to a **Valentine Dinner-Dance to be held on Saturday, February 9 from 6:30-10:30 p.m. at Sunny Palace**, an elegant restaurant serving fine Chinese cuisine located at Route 18 South in East Brunswick, New Jersey.

This event is open to both singles and couples. Tickets are priced at \$45 each. A DJ and dance instructor will be on hand as they call on “the saints to the dance floor.” Different kinds of line dances will be taught that night. Great prizes will also be raffled off that include a Garmin Nuvi 260 GPS navigation system with a gift certificate for a fully-paid registration at any Weekend to Remember marriage conference (conducted by Family Life), a BOSE wave II series radio controlled by a credit card-sized remote, a \$75 worth Cheesecake Factory gift card (good for both dining and bakery purchases), an Oleg Cassini heart-shaped crystal votive plus many other exciting prizes.

So wear your dancing shoes and come in your fancy outfit to celebrate a memorable evening with your loved one and fellow church members. See you there!

## MARRIAGE RALLY IN TRENTON



Monmouth Worship Center was well represented at the “one man + one woman” marriage rally held on October 21 in front of the Trenton State Capitol. Thousands of supporters from New Jersey attended the state-wide citizens rally to express their stand on the marriage debate.



## Safety: for Parents

The Internet can be a great place for kids to learn, be entertained, and to communicate with others. However, it also can be a dangerous place. With more and more children accessing the Internet these days it's important for parents to understand technology and set the stage for productive computer time for their children.

Dangers include the obvious such as pornography, graphic violence, and foul language. Chat rooms may seem innocent but are often frequented by predators. Other more subtle dangers are also prevalent such as instant access to the latest styles and advertising that sucks kids into wanting more.

It's unrealistic in our technology driven world to isolate yourself, not get a computer, or pretend you can avoid the Internet. Although you may delay your child's involvement in the Internet, the reality of its presence in your home is inevitable.

There are several things you can do to protect your children and your family from the dangers of the Internet. Here are some suggestions to guide your thinking and decisions.

### 1. Get an Education

Most parents are behind their children when it comes to the latest in Internet technology. Kids today have social network web sites, download music both legally and illegally, publish information about themselves that others can see, enter into online dialogue with strangers, and surf the Internet for the latest information both good and bad.

As a parent, you have to learn what's out there and how the system works. You may find the Internet rather complex and daunting but you don't have an option. You have to get started and learn all you can.

### 2. Put the Computer in a Public Place

Children should not have private access to the Internet. The temptations are too great. The computer should be in a place where Mom or Dad can walk by and see what's going on. Keep in mind that privacy is a privilege, not a right. Children on the Internet are faced with new and challenging temptations so close monitoring is essential. Parents should be able to read email and review sites that the child has visited.

Keep in mind that in this age of wireless Internet access, a child with a computer in a bedroom may have access to the Internet through the neighbor's open Internet system.

### 3. Establish Accountability

You don't have to be obnoxious about monitoring your children but kids need to know that what they are doing on the computer is being watched. It's amazing how easy kids will say things through their fingers that they wouldn't consider saying in person. Foul language and explicit discussion about sex are quite prevalent in online dialogue between young people today.

Check up on your kids often. Look at the history of the sites they've visited. If they are erasing their history then you can assume something is wrong and take action accordingly. Read the emails they are receiving and sending. You don't have to do this secretly. Your child should already know that accountability is required for Internet use.

If you're not too savvy with a computer you may want to have a friend occasionally check the computer to make sure guidelines are not being violated.

### 4. Install a Filter or Some Other Safeguard Program

Filters provide the safeguard of preventing access to offensive sites. Most filters allow you to choose the degree of filtering based on the age of the child. Install the filter and make sure that it is not being violated with some kind of technological work around.

The National Center for Biblical Parenting offers a unique Internet protection program that functions differently than a filter and is very safe for kids. You might want to check out Noah's Internet at [www.biblicalparenting.org/noah.asp](http://www.biblicalparenting.org/noah.asp) for more information.

### 5. Set Up Family Computer Rules

The needs, age, development, character, and maturity of each child should be taken into account as you set up guidelines for computer use. Some children shouldn't be on the computer at all because they aren't responsible enough to handle it. This doesn't just involve visiting forbidden sites but also means wasting time or being consumed by particular games or entertainment.

Computer addiction can start very young so setting firm limits is essential for balance in a child's life. Set up appropriate boundaries for your children and a system for monitoring them. Some computer safety programs have built in timers that allow parents to set limits on a child's computer time.

Be ready to adjust the boundaries and guidelines based on a number of factors. If the child is not being responsible in other areas of family life, is getting poor grades, or is developing some attitude issues, computer time may need to be reduced.

### 6. Dialogue about the Issues

Plenty of stories are in the news about people who abused the Internet and got into serious trouble. You might share some of those stories with your kids. Also, children need to understand the dangers so have conversations about your concerns. Don't make the whole dialogue negative however. There are plenty of positive ways to take advantage of the Internet. Discuss those with your kids as well.

### 7. Use Technology to Build Relationship With Your Kids

Sending email to your children can open dialogue that you might not have otherwise. The same is true for using text messages on a cell phone. Kids today love to communicate using technology. You can join into the communication by understanding how the various tools work and then using them to interact with your kids.

Keep in mind though, that technology can't take the place of personal face-to-face contact with your children. Take your child out for ice cream or sit on the couch and talk. The Internet has a lot of advantages in our society but nothing takes the place of spending time together.

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