

InterVarsity Parent Resources

Practical Wisdom for Parents of College Students

My heart breaks a little every time someone bumps into our Christmas tree and one of the old, glass ornaments drops and shatters on the floor. The shining shards represent the beauty of Christmases past and the frustration of Christmas present. The pandemic has bumped into our holiday season, and many favorite Christmas traditions — family gatherings, candle light services, caroling — are shattering around us. But disrupted traditions give us opportunities to make intentional choices about how to welcome Christmas — and our returning, older children — into our hearts and homes this season.

If you're the parent of a college student, InterVarsity wants to serve you — whether or not your child participates in InterVarsity on campus. This monthly newsletter offers a mix of insights, tools, and tips drawn from our experience of connecting with and discipling students on campus. We hope the content encourages you, equips you, and challenges you.



When the Kids Come Home

Our students are home—maybe for a *long* time as colleges and universities continue their efforts to contain the spread of Covid-19. Perhaps your student came home for Thanksgiving and will not return to campus until the new year, if at all. Let's enter into this elongated break with our eyes open and with a spirit of gratitude, remembering that this may be an opportunity to be together in unique ways.

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Blessing Your Child's Choices

Sandy Schaupp first shared her own experiences as an Asian-American college student and InterVarsity staff worker in 1999. We're sharing her story here as it first appeared in the *Student Leadership* journal. It comes from the perspective of a young adult who struggled with her parents as she made a choice of career, wishing for their blessing even as she went against their hopes and expectations. But we aren't stopping there! We just asked Sandy to tell us how she is doing now that her own children are nearly grown up. You'll find her latest reflections at the end of this article.

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Trusting God as Night Falls — an Excerpt

How can we trust God in the dark? Framed around a nighttime prayer of Compline, Tish Harrison Warren explores human vulnerability, suffering, and God's seeming absence as she recalls her own experience navigating a time of doubt and loss. This excerpt from *Prayer in the Night* (IVP) explores nighttime as a symbol in Christianity and the prayers that go with us in darkness. (This excerpt is a PDF file.)

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I Wish I Hadn't Been Too Busy

I wish I had never allowed myself to become too busy for my kids. The movie *Hook*, starring Robin Williams as the adult Peter Pan, had just come out. In it Peter is always on the phone and always late for his kids' games and performances because of work. When we saw this as a family, all the kids said, "That is so much like mom!"

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Be Kind to Yourself — a Review

Self-kindness can sound self-indulgent. Self-care, as described in social media posts, often seems merely like baptized hedonism. Self-anything may feel impossible as a parent when we are relentlessly focused on our kids and spouse. But it doesn't have to be this way. In her book *Be Kind to Yourself*, Cindy Bunch invites us to be attentive — to what bugs us and to what brings us joy. And she does so in a way that will bring you — and your family — real joy.

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Mary: Believing the Impossible — A LifeGuide Bible Study Excerpt

We often use the phrase "Nothing is impossible with God." Mary, however, is called upon not just to use this phrase, but to believe it. In this LifeGuide Bible study excerpt from *Women of the New Testament*, Phyllis Le Peau explores Mary's relationship with God and the things she was asked to believe. (This excerpt is a PDF file.)

[Download Bible Study](#)

What Bible Study is Right for You?

InterVarsity loves helping students and faculty learn to study Scripture — letting God’s Word shape us and our world. Each issue of the Parents Newsletter invites you to study Scripture too, drawing on resources from InterVarsity Press’s LifeGuide® Bible Study series. Use the [LifeGuide finder](#) to identify the study that might be right for you or your small group.

[LifeGuide Finder](#)

InterVarsity Press Christmas Sale!

It’s not too early to think about Christmas gifts! We’re biased, but we think the best gifts are practical, thoughtful, and soul-shaping. *Books, of course!* Get a head start on finding books that will linger in your heart, mind, and soul at InterVarsity Press’s Christmas sale! Their offering a selection of books for children, youth, adults, and academics at 50% off. Simply use promo code **XMAS20** to take advantage of this [offer](#).

[IVP Christmas Sale](#)

Connect with the campus ministry at your child’s campus (or with your alma mater!). Even though many universities are mostly remote, InterVarsity fellowships continue to engage in evangelism and discipleship. Our staff would love to tell you more. You can find our chapters [here](#).

Find a Chapter

We hope you found this newsletter helpful. If you did, we would be grateful if you forwarded it to other parents of college students that you know. They also can subscribe to this newsletter by visiting [this page](#).

Sign up for this Parent Resources newsletter



In our next issue:

- When They No Longer (Have to) Go to Church
- Free book excerpts from *Not Done Yet* and *Life Questions Every Student Asks*
- Free Bible study excerpt
- And more!

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