

the garden

-A monthly newsletter for moms who desire to blossom into all God created them to be-

“For as the soil makes the sprout come up and a garden causes seeds to grow, so the Sovereign Lord will make righteousness and praise spring up before all nations.” Isaiah 61:11



Sowing the ‘Seed of the Word’ in Our Daily Lives Practical, Biblical Encouragement for Moms

See how the lilies of the field grow. They do not labor or spin. ...not even Solomon in all his splendor was dressed like one of these. ... seek first [God’s] kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Matthew 6:28-29

We can all relate to needing to simplify our lives somehow in the midst of the craziness. I’ve personally been striving to eliminate the “clutter” in my life and streamline things as much as possible in the last year. It feels so good to get organized and have more mental space for what’s really important: growing and blossoming into all God wants for me and to be all I desire for my family, friends, and community. This season of *the garden*, we’ll focus on simplifying life so we can focus on the truly important “stuff.”

The above verse holds much wisdom. We can learn a lot from the beautiful flowers of the field...

and our garden. God created them to radiate beauty. Amazingly, they don’t have to toil to do so. They just do what God created them to do, and He provides all they need for



Simplify your life and focus on what’s truly important.

life: water and sun to grow and thrive. Jesus compares this to our life in this parable. He instructs us to simply look to the Son, our source of life, and live in a way that pleases Him first

and foremost, and He will take care of our needs. I have found that to be true. When I’m focusing on Him and living my life for His purposes, the rest flows. He knows my needs better than I do. When I honor Him, He honors me.

Is God telling us that life as a Christian is always perfect and free of concerns? No. He clearly tells us we will all face troubles, but the key is that when we focus on Him and lean on His wisdom and strength, He gets us through those times. And we come out stronger in our faith and trust in Him. Together, let’s declutter our lives and fix our eyes on Jesus. -WL

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Hello Moms!

Welcome back to a new season of “the garden!” I hope you had an enjoyable summer.

This season, the newsletter is more streamline for busy moms. I hope you take time each month to read this and refresh a bit and take some time *daily* for **YOU**. We find better balance and are a happier person and a better mom when we do.

Starting in the October issue, I’d like to include you on page 2! This newsletter is *for moms, by moms* and it will be great if we all contribute something. Please email me something of interest to other moms to fit in the categories provided. Seasonal things are fun! I’ll also include personal stories of how God is working in your life in place of the garden section when I receive them (Remember “Nourishment for the ‘Soil’?”)

Many blessings, Wendy

P.S. Please forward this to moms you know to bless them!



Here’s To Your Health:

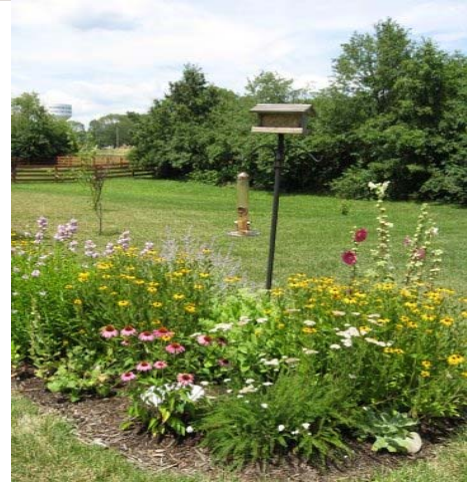
To be all we need to be as moms, we need healthy bodies

Grains are referred to as “the staff of life” for their historically vital role in our diets. Grocery stores offer many choices. What’s best? Simply put: 100% whole grains. Whole wheat flour needs to be listed *first*. My favorite bread is Aunt Millie’s 100% whole wheat bread. It’s free of high fructose corn syrup and partially hydrogenated oils/trans fats, which should be avoided. Whole grains are better sources of fiber and other important nutrients, such as selenium, potassium and magnesium than refined grains. A high-fiber diet helps you feel full longer after meals, aids in elimination, and helps lower your risk of diabetes and heart disease. For better health, choose whole grains which include barley, brown rice, buckwheat, bulgur (cracked wheat), millet, oatmeal, popcorn, whole-wheat breads (pitas, bagels, pasta, crackers, waffles, and pancakes. You can use half whole wheat mix with half buttermilk or plain mix if desired and add blueberry fruit spread for natural sweetness and nutrition.), and wild rice. -WL, R.D.

How Does Your Garden Grow?... Have a Garden? Share it & Your Story Here!

God has lessons to teach everyday if we're looking. What lessons have you learned in your garden?

Lessons keep popping up in my garden. Last summer it was exciting to witness my new garden bloom for the first time. I was very dedicated to tending to it. I watered it regularly, fed it plant food, and maintained it. This summer I've enjoyed my garden, but since it's established now, I've slacked a bit with its care. Mid-August I noticed some of my plants looking less radiant than last summer. Why? I realized that I had only watered it a *few* times all summer! With lack of rain, some plants looked a bit brown. Regret flooded me as I dashed for my garden hose. As I watered my beloved plants, I realized I had missed cherished time with God's beauties. The same can happen with our prayer life. Sometimes our life can be in a bit of a drought from lack of daily sprinkling with prayer. We can feel established in our relationship with God and inadvertently let our conversations dry up. God's still there, we're just not connecting with Him as much. We allow things to crowd out time with Him and we end up feeling withered and empty. It saddens God when His children don't talk with Him regularly. Don't leave out this *vital* daily connection. He's waiting to hear from you *today*. For a **WONDERFUL** teaching on prayer, go to www.riverhillssc.com, click on "Current Message Series", & choose the *audio* for "Wrestling- Jeff Metzger" (the video "take"). -WL



This Issue's Featured Garden:

Wendy Lempner's



Kitchen Connection: Pitas!

Got a recipe you love? Share it here...

Pita Sandwiches—from Wendy's Kitchen (Morrow, OH)
Stuff whole wheat pitas with your favorites for lunch at home, on the go, or for school, and they provide a good source of fiber.

Ideas of ingredients to stuff into your whole wheat pitas:

Turkey, ham, chicken, garden burger strips, tuna salad, chicken salad, egg salad, cheeses: provolone, pepper jack, American, muenster, cheddar, mozzarella, or Swiss cheese; lettuce, tomato, cucumber, alfalfa sprouts, peppers, grated carrot, red onions, olives, mushrooms, zucchini, broccoli, cauliflower, avocados, cream cheese (veggie is good or add French onion soup), American cheese, thai sauce, salad dressing of your choice... anything you like! Have fun experimenting. For pita recipes, log onto: www.pitabreadrecipes.com. Enjoy!

Your Tip "Pick": Just File It!

Share your everyday tips to simplify life...



In keeping with this season's theme, "**Simplified Living**", I've got a tip that if you aren't already doing this, you've gotta try it because it *does* simplify life!

Are your paper piles rising higher by day? Are they causing you stress? Is it difficult for you to find papers when you need them? You can reduce the clutter and get organized by creating a file for *each and every* category of papers. Make a folder for: insurances, medical, home maintenance, rebates, household appliance instructions, magazine recipes, driving directions and printed Map Quest maps, children's report cards, sports papers, and informational papers from school —per child, and on. I always keep plenty of file folders easily accessible to create new ones within seconds with just a quick labeling with a Sharpie. So simple! -WL



Babes in Bloom "Back To School!"

Your place to share fun things to do with our kids, parenting tips... whatever!

This time of year inevitably signals back-to-school time. No matter what grade your child/children may be in, you know the host of emotions this can trigger. Anything from joy to sadness. I just sent mine off to first and third grade. This is the first time they're both gone all day (till 4:10!). I'm faced with the reality that they're growing up quickly and things are changing! It's been a wake up call for me after our relaxed summer schedule to reassess our daily lives. My time is more limited with my children and I want to make the most of it. Priorities we've set may be like your own: Take time together after school to sit down and talk about their day over a healthy snack. -What good and maybe not so good things happened? Do a brief devotional together and discuss it. -Help them focus on God. Eat dinner together as a family as much as possible—begin with a prayer of thanksgiving. Balance physical activity and fun with homework.. And make bedtime be a special time. Let's help give our children the best balance and help make this a successful school year! -WL