



## Friends All Year Long



The Friends Into Serving Him group at **Our Saviour Lutheran Church, Bronx, New York**, meets weekly to study God's Word and hang out. Their advisor, Atlantic District's former Tampa YWR **Jessica Sauer**, reports the girls have hosted a "safe Halloween" com-

munity outreach party, organized a Christmas toy drive, kept a 30-hour fast during Lent to raise funds for world hunger, attended a local Christian concert, and made crafts with the residents of The Wartburg Adult Care Community in Mt. Vernon, New York.

### Our Readers Ask...

#### Teen Talk

**Q:** *My friend — a Christian — often breaks the Second Commandment by using God's Name in inappropriate ways. I know it is wrong, and it is also becoming a problem in our friendship. How can I tell her to stop using that language?*

**A:** It doesn't take long to hear our Lord's Name used in ways that are less than praiseworthy. Just turn on the TV or spend time at the mall. The next time you hear your friend using God's Name in vain, try saying, "What does *He* have to do with it?" or "I doubt *God* is to blame for this." Or be more direct with these words, "You know, you are talking about my Best Friend, and I really would like it if you didn't use His Name like that." Make your point in a firm but

casual way, remembering that your friend may be unaware of her habit. And you might open the door for a good conversation on the topic.

**Q:** *I was so excited about summer vacation when school ended, but now I'm not so sure. My best friend is starting to hang around with people who are not good influences. How can I help her and not be tempted to make bad choices myself?*

**A:** Summer is a hard time to make good choices of how to use time — because there is so much of it to use! Invite your friend to events with your family or church youth group, or include her with your Friends Into Serving Him activities. Don't be afraid to speak up and remind her of your values and your concern for her as a friend. Remember to share God's love. In time she will most likely need you and seek your friendship.



The Friends Into Serving Him group at **St. John Lutheran Church, Yankton, South Dakota**, enjoy making and eating s'mores and celebrate a mother-daughter tea.



## Topic: Friends — Even When

**Bible Verse:** *No one has greater love than this, to lay down one's life for one's friends* (John 15:13 NRSV).

"A friend is someone who likes you." A poster with that saying hangs in the youth room at our church. It serves as a good reminder of friendship to the group that hangs out there.

Frankly, it is sometimes hard to tell who are friends in our youth group. One minute I see Jessica and Lauren sitting on the couch talking like they would never stop, sharing everything about *everything*. The next thing I know Lauren is in the bathroom talking with Sarah about what a snob Jessica is. What's up with *that*?

The words of John 15:13 seem to go overboard. We don't often have an opportunity to die for a friend. Jesus

did that for us, in order to pay for our sins. Knowing that He did that, what if we look at it this way: "Laying down your life" for a friend may not just be about a physical life-and-death situation. It could also refer to laying down your reputation or image in order to defend someone else's.

A friend is someone who likes you — *even when* others don't; *even when* others speak ill of you; *even when* you are not fun to be around.

Be a friend today! Lay down your life, or at least your love!

**Prayer:** Dear Jesus, my Friend, thank You for sending friends into my life for love and support. Help me to be a good friend to them — *even when* times are rough. Thank You for the model of friendship You have given us. In Your Name, I pray. Amen.