

# Activities for the Soul

Inspirational, spiritual, and religious programming ideas.

## Celebrate Life

*Celebrate good times, come on! (Let's celebrate)  
Celebrate good times, come on! (Let's celebrate)*

*There's a party goin' on right here  
A celebration to last throughout the years  
So bring your good times, and your laughter too  
We gonna celebrate your party with you  
~ Kool & the Gang*

### Props and Preparations

1. Click [HERE](#) for a large print copy of the lyrics, prayers, and stories to read aloud.
2. Download the music for the following songs: (See our Music Matters page if you are not sure how to download music.)
  - “We Will Understand It Better By and By” 🎵
  - “Wonderful Words of Life” 🎵
3. Check out the links and the Sites to Visit below for additional information to bring to the activity.



---

## Introduction

Do you believe life should be celebrated? If so, then it's important to find something to rejoice about every step of the way. That's easy to do when things are going well, but not so easy when they're not. It helps to keep in mind that, from beginning to end, our life is what we make of it. A strong faith, a positive outlook, and a liberally applied sense of humor all help us make the most of our lives and remind us to “celebrate good times.”

### Opening Prayer

Prayer is when you talk to God; meditation is when you listen to God.  
~ Author Unknown

Do not look forward to what may happen tomorrow; the same everlasting Father who cares for you today will take care of you tomorrow and every day. Either He will shield you from suffering, or He will give you unfailing strength to bear it.

Be at peace, then. Put aside all anxious thoughts and imaginations, and say continually, "The Lord is my strength and my shield. My heart has trusted in Him and I am helped. He is not only with me but in me, and I in Him."  
~ St. Francis de Sales

**Opening Song** – "We Will Understand It Better By and By"  
~ Music & Lyrics by Charles Tindley – 1905

We are tossed and we're driven, on the restless sea of time;  
Somber skies and howling tempests, oft succeed a bright sunshine;  
In that land of perfect day, when the mists have rolled away,  
We will understand it better by and by.

By and by, when the morning comes,  
When the saints of God are gathered home,  
We'll tell the story how we've overcome,  
For we'll understand it better by and by.

Temptation's hidden snares, often take us unaware,  
And our hearts are made to bleed for a thoughtless word or deed;  
And we wonder why the test when we try to do our best,  
But we'll understand it better by and by.

By and by, when the morning comes,  
When the saints of God are gathered home,  
We'll tell the story how we've overcome,  
For we'll understand it better by and by.

## Life Lessons

*(Read aloud, or have group participants read aloud, each of these stories/poems and the life lesson associated with it. Does the group agree with the life lesson identified or are there other lessons to be learned?)*

### Hang In There

~ Author and Source: Unknown

Nicolo Paganini was a well-known and gifted nineteenth century violinist. He was also well known as a great showman with a quick sense of humor. His most memorable concert was in Italy with a full orchestra. He was performing before a packed house and his technique was incredible, his tone was fantastic, and his audience dearly loved him. Toward the end of his concert, Paganini was astounding his audience with an unbelievable composition when suddenly one string on his violin snapped and hung limply from his instrument. Paganini frowned briefly, shook his head, and continued to play, improvising beautifully.

Then to everyone's surprise, a second string broke. And shortly thereafter, a third. Almost like a slapstick comedy, Paganini stood there with three strings dangling from his Stradivarius. But instead of leaving the stage, Paganini stood his ground and calmly completed the difficult number on the one remaining string.

*Life Lesson:* If you're only given one string, make the most of it.

## Keep Swimming

~ Author: Unknown, Source: *After Hours Inspirational Stories*

Two frogs fell into a deep cream bowl.  
One was an optimistic soul.  
But the other took the gloomy view.  
"We'll drown," he lamented without much ado,  
And with a last despairing cry,  
He flung up his legs and said "Goodbye."

Quote the other frog with a steadfast grin,  
"I can't get out but I won't give in,  
I'll just swim around till my strength is spent,  
Then I'll die the more content."  
Bravely he swam to work his scheme,  
And his struggles began to churn the cream.

The more he swam, his legs a flutter,  
The more the cream turned into butter.  
On top of the butter at last he stopped,  
And out of the bowl he gaily hopped.

*Life Lesson:* This lesson is easily found... If you can't hop out, keep swimming around!

## Everyday Choices

~ Lynne Allison Grip

Lying in bed, eyes shut, brain not in gear.  
What will the day bring? I do not fear.  
I'm the captain of my destiny.  
Sink or swim, it's up to me.

I laugh, I sing, I take time to pray.  
I celebrate life every day.  
Why be sour when you can be sweet?  
Why be down instead of upbeat?

Open your eyes and get the day going.  
You never know what seeds you are sowing.  
To harvest later for a life well spent.  
The life for which your Creator meant.

*Life Lesson:* A positive attitude positively makes life better. Persevere through the hard times and be sure to celebrate the good times.



## Celebrate the Special Blessings in Life

*(Read aloud, or have group participants read aloud, from this list of life's special moments. Ask for volunteers to share their memories related to each of the events. At the end of the reading, ask the group to offer examples of other favorite moments not on the list.)*

1. Falling in love for the first time.
2. Your wedding day.
3. The birth of your child.
4. Laughing so hard your face and sides hurt.
5. Spending an afternoon with a good friend.
6. Hearing your favorite song on the radio.
7. Lying in bed listening to the sound of raindrops on the roof.
8. Warm clothes fresh from the dryer.
9. The smell of a new car.
10. A big dish of ice cream smothered in chocolate sauce.
11. Taking a nap in the middle of the day.
12. Finding money in your pocket that you forgot was there (on a day you really needed it).
13. A day at the beach.
14. Having someone you care about tell you how wonderful you are.
15. Diving into a pool on a hot summer day.
16. Getting a new puppy or kitten.
17. Waking up early and realizing there is nowhere you have to go and then happily falling back to sleep.
18. Being part of a winning team.
19. Knowing you have made a difference in someone's life.
20. Facing a difficult challenge and emerging from it victorious.



## **Closing Prayer** - The Serenity Prayer

~ by Reinhold Niebuhr (1892-1971)

God, give us grace to accept with serenity  
The things that cannot be changed,  
Courage to change the things  
Which should be changed,  
And the wisdom to distinguish  
The one from the other.

Living one day at a time,  
Enjoying one moment at a time,  
Accepting hardship as a pathway to peace,  
Taking, as Jesus did,  
This sinful world as it is,  
Not as I would have it,  
Trusting that You will make all things right,  
If I surrender to Your will,  
So that I may be reasonably happy in this life,  
And supremely happy with You forever in the next. Amen.

## **Closing Song** - "Wonderful Words of Life"

~ Music & Lyrics by Philip P. Bliss (1838-1876)

Sing them over again to me,  
Wonderful words of life;  
Let me more of their beauty see,  
Wonderful words of life;  
Words of life and beauty  
Teach me faith and duty.  
Beautiful words, wonderful words,  
Wonderful words of life.  
Beautiful words, wonderful words,  
Wonderful words of life.

## **Sites to Visit**

Life Quotes  
Olive's Story  
Motivate Us.com  
Inspirational Stories