

The Rec-Connection

Physical exercise has some value, but spiritual exercise is much more important, for it promises a reward in both this life and the next. 1 Timothy 4:8

Dangerous Recreation

October 2007

I have played sports all my life, and thankfully never sustained a serious injury. I sprained my ankle once and since I'm getting older by the minute, recently broke a toe playing catch with a buddy. Thus far I have been blessed with only minor scrapes and irritations. Any physical activity inherently contains some amount of danger, be it torn ligaments from tennis, or concussions from 280 pound linebackers. This physical danger is real and I could build an equally compelling argument for emotional dangers. The drive to win and be successful is instilled in all of us at a very young age, often pushed to an unsafe level. We have all seen the out-of-control parent whose identity is tied to their child's success on the playing field. The same could be said for any adult whose personal struggles push them to be successful at something, even if it's just hitting a golf ball straight. The physical and emotional dangers of sports are easily seen, but I would like to discuss the spiritual dangers.

What is the purpose of a church constructing a recreation center? Why would a non-profit organization invest enormous amounts of resources into a building whose duplicate can be found just down the street?

I believe the answer lies in Matthew chapter 28, verse 19. This verse is called the Great Commission and it is Jesus' charge to us as followers to spread the Good News of freedom through salvation. How can a recreation center help deliver this message?

We as Christians have a tendency to create holy huddles, insulating ourselves from the outside world. We want to label our music, books, friends and movies "Christian" because we assume anything bearing this title is safe. Labeling something "Christian" often has the same effect as a parental advisory sticker, just in reverse. Saying something is "Christian" can become a sticker that says "this is OK!" As mentioned before, we often put this sticker on everything in our life in an attempt to minimize any risk. Believe me, this is not a finger pointing sermon. I personally have very few "non-Christian friends" and even took my truck to "Christian Brothers Automotive" just because of the name! I am an insulator and a huddle builder. I do these things because we all want to associate with people of like values and interests. And let's face it, things that are different can be scary! But what about this idea of "community?" I have written several times about the need for community and the benefits associated with living in "Christian" fellowship. When we live in community we build each other up, we encourage each other, and we have the opportunity for a more fulfilling life. We were designed to live in community! So how do we balance our need for the rejuvenating, refreshing effects of community, and yet prevent our creation of holy huddles? One option is recreation. It is an easy invitation. We all have the need to play and most often recreation is designed for more than one person. So it is group based and non-threatening. But how is it spiritually dangerous? Because recreation at Christ United Methodist Church is not a private club. The Christian Life Center is not another "members only" place where we insulate ourselves from the outside world, and it should never become such. It is a tool for showing others that we as Christians really aren't all that bad and actually know how to have a good time. This is also a way to demonstrate what Christian community looks like and the benefits of living in faith together. The idea is that people will see the difference that Christ makes in our lives, and this will encourage them to seek Christ as well.

News & Events

Upward Basketball and Cheerleading

Coaches recruitment begins Sunday October 14th! As an Upward coach you will receive \$15 off your child's registration. Coaches training is Thursday December 6th at 6:30 PM. All coaches must attend.

teaching more than just the game

Player registration begins Sunday October 28th. Sign up before Sunday November 18th and save \$30.

All basketball players must attend one evaluation. Cheerleaders may attend for uniform sizing. Evaluations are:

- Friday November 30th: 6:00 PM
- Saturday December 1st: 10:00 AM: This is also the player Registration Deadline

For more information and a complete schedule of events, please see <http://www.cumcsports.com/upward/basketball>

All registration will be done online

Over the past several months you have heard a lot about Invite1 and have probably seen the logo all over the place. Unless Invite1 becomes an action, it will be nothing more than a catchy name and logo. Recreation is dangerous because it can be one of two things. A way we exclude, or a way we welcome. I challenge you this month to take seriously Invite1, not because I care about enrollment numbers or usage stats, but because I desperately desire that all people come to know Christ and believe that recreation is an amazing way to help make this happen.

Chris Jones

**Director of Sports and Recreation
Playing with a Purpose**

Christ United Methodist Church
3101 Coit Road Plano, Texas 75075
www.cumcsports.com

Christian Life Center
972-596-6073
Recreation@cumc.com