

The Englewood Christian

"Seeking the city which hath foundations whose builder and maker is God"

- Hebrews 11:10 -



On Sunday, January 7, Englewood Church began a new tradition of Sunday Conversation following the morning service. This is a part of a new emphasis on the time we spend together on Sunday being constructive and inclusive of all: from Sunday School to the Service to Conversation, and including the work of leadership and teaching. This first conversation revolved around how we can be in conversation well together in this context, and what we might like to talk about in the coming months.

The Music of Green, Heard, and Mullins help us prepare for Easter in 2018 By Patrick Bowers

2017 was a year of anniversaries...for several deaths of musicians. Why do I bring this up in January 2018? Over the past 20 years I have reoriented my Christmas celebration with remembering the dead saints and preparing for the season of Easter. So in this spirit I would like to offer albums from musicians which had death anniversaries in 2017 to prepare us for the life of Jesus in the calendar year leading up to Easter.

First, 2017 was the 35th anniversary of the death of Keith Green. I would like to say that Keith Green died too soon. He still was in his youth and I don't think had hit his prime yet for song writing or recording. But his words still live on in our worship songs like "There is a Redeemer" and "How Majestic is Thy Name". Keith Green was very passionate, fiery, and witty in his songs. I would recommend listening to his albums "Songs for the Shepherd" and "So You Want To Go Back to Egypt." They are always in my record rotation.

Second, 2017 was the 25th anniversary of the death of Mark Heard. Most people will not be able to recall his music or his name, but he has had broad influence over music. Mark Heard started to record in the 70's, but died of a heart attack while playing at Cornerstone Music Festival in what some call his greatest musical period. Influenced by Francis Schaeffer and his perfectionism, he was always one to make art over selling hits. It is very hard to for me to recommend just one of his albums. I do think that if you listen to his album "Ashes and Light" from his younger years and his last album "Satellite Sky" it will give you enough of a taste.

The last anniversary was the 20th year since the death of Rich Mullins. I always think of Rich Mullins as being somewhere between Keith Green and Mark Heard musically. Both influenced him greatly and I think if Rich Mullins had lived longer he probably would have had his best years musically. I will admit that I am biased and I recommend Mullins' last three albums "Ragamuffin...", "Brother's Keeper" and the "Jesus Album" (which I recommend just listening to the stripped down versions of the songs with Rich on).

I hope these picks help us move toward understanding our place as the church in the world but also a way to listen through the season of Lent, Easter, the Resurrection, and the coming of the Holy Spirit.

Forming Character

A Review of : *The Tech-Wise Family: Everyday Steps for Putting Technology in Its Proper Place*

Andy Crouch

Hardback: Baker Books, 2017

Reviewed by Marci Rae Johnson

As parents, we all struggle with setting appropriate limits on technology use for our children, and there's no scarcity of related advice; it seems that hardly a day goes by without an article on the topic showing up in my Facebook or Twitter feed. With this little book, *The Tech-Wise Family: Everyday Steps for Putting Technology in Its Proper Place* by Andy Crouch, the good advice appears in one handy volume. I like the size of this book: not only does it feel good in the hand, the small pages lead me to believe that the subject is not as overwhelming as it often seems.

And while this is mostly a collection of common advice on technology limits for kids, there are a few major points in here that were new to me. One is the premise of the first chapter, titled "Choosing Character." In this chapter, Crouch wants us to consider the family as an environment for the building of character, and he tells us that we should keep this idea at the forefront as we engage with technology: "technology is only very good if it can help us become the persons we were meant to be" (63). How will we interact with technology in a way that increases our kindness, our ability to forgive, our creativity, our wisdom, etc.? This goes beyond just a list of dos and don'ts and allows us to think more deeply and philosophically about our interactions with technology, which is vital not only for our own development as persons, but for explaining to our children the reasoning behind our rules. This chapter is also a refreshing break from the "don't do this, don't do that" format of much advice on the topic.

Chapter Nine also presents a new take on our interactions with technology: "Why Singing Matters." In this chapter we are reminded that "every other generation of human beings, in every culture, ... cultivated ... the ability to make music on our own" (186). I may not agree completely with Crouch on the subject that to sing well is to know wisdom (191), nor that we've really forgotten how to make music, but the chapter made me think, and I appreciate how Crouch brings one of the fine arts into the discussion. And here Crouch does admit that "there is no way to deny that this easy-everywhere abundance of music is a gift." Indeed, throughout the book we see him stating that technology is wonderful and miraculous and useful – which creates balanced and reasonable advice for all of us who can't just purge technology from our lives completely.

Another aspect of the book that creates balance is the little section at the end of each chapter titled "Reality Check," in which Crouch admits that even he cannot follow his own rules to the letter all the time. This gives us hope that we don't have to be perfect; that this is a struggle, and we are all in it together, and it's often a process of trial and error.

But while it's enlightening to see how Crouch's own family has struggled with technology use, one important struggle seems to be missing from this book, and that has to do with the fact that the book seems geared toward middle-class to upper middle-class two-parent households, a demographic that is becoming increasingly rare. According to the U. S. Census Bureau, in 2016 there were 12 million single-parent households in this country (<https://singlemotherguide.com/single-mother-statistics/>). As a member of that statistic for several years, I found myself thinking things as I read the book like, "great advice, but what if my child spends 40% of his time at his father's house, where there are no limits on technology and I have no control over that;" or "what if I have to work in order to put food on the table, and some days I can't pay for a babysitter other than the television?"

And his advice that even restaurant workers get a day off (a Sabbath) per week seems unrealistic (88). How many restaurant workers can afford to feed and clothe their families, pay the rent, etc. and also enjoy a day off? Even Crouch's list of "Spaces without Devices" (74) seems geared toward the wealthy. Some items: original art, a grand piano, (including a section on page 80 about how it's important to have an acoustic piano rather than a cheap keyboard), a cabinet full of board games, a fireplace, etc. I found myself frustrated at parts of the book such as these that assume people of faith who want to encourage their children to interact with technology in a healthy manner are wealthy and are always part of two-parent families.

Another frustrating aspect of this book was the periodic and unrealistic nostalgic for the past. For example: "A peasant family in the Middle Ages had none of this technologically uniform pleasantness. They would not have had a lawn, or possibly even a yard. Their children would have wandered out into meadows and perhaps the thin edges of forests" (145), which does not take into account the fact that the lives of peasants in the Middle Ages were short and brutal. The peasant children weren't out wandering "lonely as a cloud" in fields, picking flowers and using their imaginations; they were working hard from a young age (if they even lived long enough to do so), and struggled with disease and starvation, etc. in ways that we can't even imagine today.

The frustrations I experienced with the book may be mirrored by other readers, but they don't keep the book from being an important and useful read, and even single parents and/or parents who are struggling financially can find plenty of techniques in here to put into practice if they are able to overlook these flaws. Indeed, Crouch's evident humility, along with his willingness to show us his own brokenness and imperfections go a long way toward making this book an appealing read.

Marci Rae Johnson is an editor and award-winning poet. Her latest collection of poems is *Basic Disaster Supplies Kit* (Steel Toe Books, 2016).

January

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 Mano De Amistad - 7:00pm AA Group - 8:00pm	 josh bowling 4	5	 priscila muniz 6
 susan geisendorff 7 Epiphany Sunday new schedule begins: 900a - Sunday School 1015a - Church Service 1130a - Conversation	8	 rose durcholz 9 Faith Circle - 10:00am	 daniel muniz 10 Mano De Amistad - 7:00pm AA Group - 8:00pm	 melanie arellano 11	12	13
14	 tracey spurling 15 Ministry Council - 7:00 pm	 jason knoop 16	 john clanton christopher servin 17 Mano De Amistad - 7:00pm AA Group - 8:00pm	 john krieg 18	 betty rehfus chris smith 19	20
mission indy staying in the building						
 joseph jimenez kyle mobley 21	22	 lucilla bowling mary bowling 23	 curtis kester jim schrum landyn stephens 24 Mano De Amistad - 7:00pm AA Group - 8:00pm	25	26	 nathan durcholz lillian durcholz ken swann 27
 sherry berlin 28	29	 jacob bowling 30	 evangeline binkley 31 Mano De Amistad - 7:00pm AA Group - 8:00pm			

Playing Together

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Curtis Kester's Spinach Pesto Pasta

For the spinach pesto:

1/2 cup raw cashews (you could also try toasted pine nuts, walnuts, etc.)

6 cups loosely packed spinach leaves (6 oz.)

1 small bunch basil (0.75 oz.) thick stems removed

1/4 cup plain, unsweetened non-dairy milk

1/2 lemon juiced

1/2 tsp salt

pepper to taste

For the spinach pesto pasta:

10-16 oz pasta of choice (I use bowtie or shells)

1 tsp olive oil

1/2 yellow onion (or 1 shallot), diced

2 cloves garlic minced

Make the pasta: Cook your pasta (if you are low carb, there are lots of other pasta options out there: quinoa, chickpea, even black bean pasta!) according to package directions, adding a little salt to the water.

Make the spinach pesto: Add the cashews to a food processor or blender and pulse a few times until crumbled. Add the spinach, basil, nondairy milk, lemon juice, salt, and pepper, and continue to pulse, stopping to stir and scrape the sides if needed, until the spinach and basil are finely chopped. Add more lemon juice or seasonings to taste if desired, and set aside.

Finishing touches: In a large pan, heat olive oil over medium heat. Add the onion or shallot and a sprinkle of salt. Continue to cook, stirring occasionally, until the onion is softened and browning slightly. (Note: to save time, you can begin this step while the pasta is still cooking). Add the garlic and cook for just about 60 seconds more, stirring occasionally, until the garlic is fragrant. Add the cooked pasta and pesto and fold everything together gently. Remove from the heat and adjust seasoning to taste. Ready to eat!

Optional Additions:

1. If you like spicy add in some red peppers flakes (or spicy sprinkles as we say in our house)
2. Roasted tomatoes: halve several handfuls of cherry or grape tomatoes and roast on parchment paper for 20 minutes at 400 degrees. Fold in tomatoes at the end with the pesto.
3. Be creative! Add anything you want that might sound good!

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**We appreciate the opportunity to contribute our gifts in this way!
You can contact Jeni Smith or Amber Lanman if you have anything
to submit for future newsletters. Thanks!**

