

# sundays on the go!

by Ka'thy Gore Chappell, CBFNC Leadership Development Coordinator

*Sports, physical exercise, and recreational activity contribute to our development as spiritual beings composed of body and soul.*

Robert B. Kruschwitz,  
Director, Center for Christian Ethics,  
Baylor University, Waco, TX

Travel sports are BIG business and require time and money. Most often, travel sports take place during the weekend, which means kids, parents, and sometimes entire families are on-the-go and away from their community of faith on Sunday. What's a family to do? What's a church to do?

We asked you, via Facebook, for your ideas about how to incorporate spiritual formation and worship with travel sports. We received responses (and there were many) from both laity and clergy.

Laity parents were inspiring with their intentionality and creativity in providing spiritual formation and worship opportunities for their children, family, and teams. These parents literally put themselves in leadership roles through scheduling, preparing/presenting devotionals, and modeling the Christ life.

Clergy, even though frustrated at times with the reality of travel sports "taking families away from church" on Sunday mornings, were equally inspiring with their desire to embrace families involved with travel sports and provide alternative opportunities for spiritual formation and worship. Clergy also offered words of challenge for faith communities to support parents and athletes with their decisions "to play or not to play."

**As a family involved with travel sports, how and where does your family experience worship and spiritual formation?**

**Skip Everhart** *Both of our girls play travel volleyball and soccer. When we travel on Sunday, our family is intentional about locating and attending a church service in the area.*

**Jeanne Hollifield Baucom** *My husband and son would attend the 8:30 a.m. worship service—in baseball uniform—then head out to the tournament. We learned that what worked for us required up-front communication with coaches and families, careful selection of which tournaments to enter, a family decision to remain faithful to our community of faith, personal responsibility for faith development with our child, and a great partnership between youth families and spiritual leaders.*

**Susan Smith Wray** *With four daughters who play sports, we have managed weekend sports and "church" carefully.... At the Sunday games, there is a stoppage of play at approximately 10:30 a.m. and a brief sermon or scripture reading is provided for those who want to participate.*

**Kathryn Horne Yarbrough** *I lead Dug-Out Devotions with my son's baseball team. Sometimes we even have competing teams join us! I use lessons from the Fellowship of Christian Athletes ([www.fca.org](http://www.fca.org)) about baseball, famous people, life lessons, and how it relates to God and God's love for ALL OF US!*

**As a community of faith, what can a church do to assist families in the decision-making process regarding travel sports? What can a church do to resource families "on-the-go" regarding spiritual formation and worship?**

**Paula and Scot McCosh** (Co-Pastors) commission athletes in worship and are brainstorming ideas for development of "sideline services" to share with travel teams.

**Sally Queen** (Pastor) live-streams worship via Facebook Live, provides weekday services, and prepares devotionals to read on the road.

**Bruce Hermann** (Associate Pastor) has three girls who played travel soccer. He shared that their family desired to live the Christ life in sports and with competition. Bruce suggests that families can worship "on location" and churches can offer worship at alternative times.

Travel sports are a reality in our world. In this article, both laity and clergy have provided honest feelings and creative solutions for re-thinking opportunities for spiritual formation and worship through travel sports. Most importantly, travel sports can challenge our churches to discover new ways and venues to be "on mission" for Christ, through God's love.

