

Vision and Philosophy of Ministry

Children's Ministry

Purpose

{why our children's ministry exists}

The children's ministry at [church name] exists to provide opportunities for children to encounter and be changed by the gospel of Jesus Christ within the context and support of the church, God's covenant community.

Vision

{where we are headed—our destination}

Our hope is for children to be transformed to love and glorify God through a personal faith in the Lord Jesus that is lived out in the church community and as a witness of the gospel to the world around them.

Mission

{how we strive to reach our vision}

- Proclaim the gospel to our children that they may understand God's redemptive plan for his people and their need for Jesus as their only hope of salvation
- Assist parents in "the spiritual nurture, instruction and training of the children of the Church"¹
- Embrace children as part of the body and help disciple them toward faith and communing membership within the church
- Recruit, train, and equip teachers and volunteers to be effective and joyful communicators of the gospel who show children the love of Jesus

Mission Tactics

{what we do to reach our vision}

CARE AND TEACHING

"We will not hide them from their children, but tell to the coming generation the glorious deeds of the Lord, and his might, and the wonders that he has done. That the next generation might know them, the children yet unborn, and arise and tell them to their children, so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments." Psalm 78:4, 6-7

At [church name], we take seriously this call to teach our children the truths and promises of God. Our ongoing ministry programs accomplish this as described below. One way our church body shares the responsibility of teaching the next generation is asking that all members serve in the children's ministry (placed according to their gifts).

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Sunday School

Sunday School is the primary time for the Christian education of children and youth at [church name]. Weekly classes for all ages² teach from a reformed and covenantal perspective to equip children with an understanding of Scripture³ and God's saving work to redeem his people through Jesus. (We are currently using *Show Me Jesus* and *Dwell* curricula.)

Children's Worship

Children's Worship takes place during the sermon and provides a time of teaching for children (4 years to 2nd grade) to be shaped by the practices of worship and living by faith. The curriculum follows a two-year rotation that children repeat (covering in greater depth the second time through):

The Apostles' Creed- Foundations of the Christian faith are taught through lesson units on each portion of the Creed. Science discovery, music and service themed projects help children relate the words of the Creed to their own lives.

The Order of Worship- Lesson units teach through the order of our service and encourage children to love and worship God in all of life. The curriculum includes art projects the children complete together as a creative expression of worship.

Nursery

Our nursery rooms provide safe care for our youngest children (birth through three years) throughout our worship service. Children are nurtured through play, music, snack and Bible story time. Our primary teaching tools are Bible storybooks such as the *Read Aloud Bible Stories* series.

Youth Community Group

Kids in grades 6-12 meet regularly together for Biblical teaching and fellowship intended to grow them toward maturity in faith through deepened relationships with God, parents, peers, and the church.

Communicants

Classes are periodically held for children who may be ready to become communing members. These classes review principals of faith and also help parents gauge their child's level of spiritual maturity and growth to determine when appropriate for him or her to join the church.

CONNECTING, FELLOWSHIP AND SERVICE

"And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple

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together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved.” Acts 2:42-47

Throughout Scripture we are called to love one another and live in community. We encourage families to have strong relationships and significant involvement in the church. These connections happen through Sunday morning services, retreats, community groups, church cookouts, and other gatherings and events.

We also desire that volunteer service within the children's ministry connects church members with one another and is one way our congregation lives out its baptismal promise to undertake the responsibility of assisting parents in the Christian nurture of their children⁴. We also value the gifts and talents of our children and therefore welcome and provide opportunities for them to serve one another, whether that be older kids assisting in nursery or Children's Worship or during the service greeting or helping collect the offering.

OUTREACH

“But seek the welfare of the city...and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.” Jeremiah 29:7

We take the call to love the city seriously and long to be a church and ministry that engage in and care for our communities. We desire our families and children's ministry to be intentional in sharing the gospel with neighbors and inviting them to church, that the kingdom of God may grow. We seek to create such outreach opportunities through backyard bible clubs and other social or community events.

¹ *The Book of Church Order of the Presbyterian Church of America, Ch. 28-1.*

² *with the exception that those under 3 years receive care but no instruction*

³ *The Book of Church Order of the Presbyterian Church of America, Ch. 28-2.*

⁴ *The Book of Church Order of the Presbyterian Church of America, Ch. 56-5.*