



Spiritual Education for Children

from Holli Best, Early Childhood Coordinator

Spiritual education has been a focal point for us for the past few months as we have been searching for a new curriculum for some of the younger classes. After several years of using our current curriculum we needed something fresh. When I first began reading about spiritual education for children I needed a starting point. You can't just Google "rich, reformed, children's curriculum" because the number of hits would be overwhelming, not to mention the question of which ones to trust? I spoke with other directors of children's ministries, and that was somewhat helpful. But what I needed was to understand, what is the spiritual education of children?

It was then that a little publication arrived in the mail, ordered by my husband. Baylor University's Center for Christian Ethics puts out a journal called Christian Reflection. The 2003 series included a focus on children. More specifically, how should the church be thinking of children? I quickly opened the publication and read the following introduction "In Scripture and Christian tradition we discover a rich picture of childhood that should inspire creative religious education for our children..." I was already drooling over this gold mine resource. I flipped to the next essay by Susan Garrett, professor of New Testament at Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, titled Beyond Noah's Ark. She begins by saying, "We want to tell our children the ancient stories of promise, deliverance, human failure and divine forgiveness and fidelity so that they, too, may come to 'love the Lord with all their heart, soul, and strength.' But just how do we go about imparting to them deep knowledge of scripture."

Knowledge and Love -- how is this immense twin goal accomplished in a single hour of Sunday school curriculum? The answer I found in this essay was: it is not. Garrett's essay suggests that it cannot be done only in an hour of Sunday school; rather, it must be the combined efforts of the church and the family to tell our children the rich story of our redemptive history, as we talk about God's nature and point to Christ.

This caused me to start my search all over. While the content mattered (obviously), what also mattered was that this ministry provided parents with the tools to continue spiritual education at home. The parent support was just as important as the Sunday morning lesson. We searched for a curriculum that would provide resources to families so that parents can partner with our Sunday morning education. As we begin this semester be looking for the new ways that we will be offering this to you.

Throughout the past months as I have been doing research I have gained much more than learning how to pick children's curriculum. Please continue to check out the "Children's" section of our church blog for more to come on a more vibrant theology of children.

Check out our new blog!

Visit <http://christcommunitychurch.com/blog/> for updates on church activities, notes from the pastors and ministry directors, pictures and much more!

\$107 - Water Filter

+ Chicken & Mosquito Nets

This gift helps prevent waterborne diseases by providing a water filter which can clean up to 500 gallons of water per day.

\$152 - Goat

+ Water Filter, Chicken & Mosquito Nets

A goat is a valuable asset for rural families as they provide milk and meat to eat or sell, and extra income when kids are born.

\$52 - Chicken

+ Mosquito Nets

A chicken means more than food for a family—it means a source of income, manure for the vegetable garden and a supply of eggs.

\$20 - Mosquito Nets

Give children and their families a mosquito-free sleep with an insecticide-treated bed net.

Children's Ministry Fall Offering




Beginning August 21 the money collected for the Children's Offering will be designated for Gifts of Compassion through Compassion International. (For more info, please visit <http://gifts.compassion.com/>)

Thanks for making VBS great!

We had a wonderful week of learning more about Jesus and building relationships during Vacation Bible School in July. Thanks to all our fabulous volunteers for your time and your love of our children, thanks to the youth for all their hard work and thanks to all the parents who brought their children. We hope everyone joins us again next year and brings a friend!



August 2011

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
				<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Now recruiting volunteers for the 2011-2012 year! If you are interested please contact kids@christcommunitychurch.com</p>  </div>		
7 Return to two services 8:30 am Worship 10:00 am Education 11:15 am Worship	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21 Sunday School Kick-Off!  Meet your teachers at 10 am	22  Alachua County Schools Begin	23	24	25	26	27 Vision Awareness Weekend OPUS Church-wide event 7:00 pm
28 Vision Awareness Weekend Ministry Reports 10:00 am	29	30	31 Children's Ministry Volunteer Training 6:00 pm	<div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 5px;"> <p>OPUS - What is your calling? Please join us as we thoughtfully interact with the idea of the church as Christ's creative, collective work in the world. Please let us know if you require child care that evening, as child care will only be available on an as needed basis. Subject "OPUS" to kids@christcommunitychurch.com.</p> </div>		