

Family Ministry: Statement of Philosophy



The Family Ministry Team exists to partner with parents in helping children become mature followers of Jesus.

At Faith Church we are committed to *intentionally making mature followers of Jesus Christ*. Every aspect of what we do as a church is working toward this end. We have this as our mission because it is what Christ has commanded us to do.

Just before He ascended into heaven, Jesus Christ commissioned the ministry of the church with these words:

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.

And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.” Matthew 28:18-20

The church has been commissioned to make disciples of Jesus Christ. We are to go and baptize these disciples in His name. We are to do so under the authority and by the authority of Jesus. The means by which all of this is accomplished is clear, “teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.”

We are called to take the Word of God and teach it, all of it. By so doing, people will see Christ, will hear His voice and repent of sin, they will believe and trust in the work and word of Christ and will follow Jesus for the good of the nations.

This is an awesome calling that we are given. All the earth and heaven is subject to Christ’s authority. However, He calls *us* to go and make disciples. He very well could do it without us, but He has chosen to use human instruments to carry this out. We are sent not just to one group or people, but we are to go to all nations, all peoples, and proclaim Him.

Partnering with Parents

The church and parents are partners in fulfilling the Great Commission, especially when it comes to helping children become mature followers of Jesus.

The Role of Parents:

When it comes to the discipleship of children, God’s word gives us clear instruction that parents have a significant privilege and responsibility in the passing on of a legacy of faith to their children. The words of Psalm 78 display this for us:

“Give ear, O my people, to my teaching; incline your ears to the words of my mouth!

I will open my mouth in a parable; I will utter dark sayings from of old, things that we have heard and known, that our fathers have told us.

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.

He established a testimony in Jacob and appointed a law in Israel, which He commanded our fathers to teach to their children,

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 78:1-7

Our prayer is that generation after generation will continue to put their hope in God. This is accomplished by fathers (and mothers) who tell their children of the works of God and the commandments of God. When we teach our children the glorious deeds of God and His law (Word) we are thinking not just of them, but also their children and their children’s children.

So how are parents supposed to do this? What does it look like to teach our children according to the Bible? We find help in a couple more passages:

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.
‘Honor your father and mother’ (this is the first commandment with a promise),
‘that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.’
Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger,
but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” Ephesians 6:1-4

In these words we see the call for the children to honor and respect, obey and follow their godly parents. This is a reminder and reaffirmation of the fifth commandment (Deut. 5:16). We also see here the instruction for fathers to not provoke their children to anger but to bring up their children in the discipline (training) and instruction (teaching) of the Lord.

This last sentence helps us gain a clearer vision for the parental calling. We see here the importance of cultivating a healthy relationship between parent and child. The parent is to exercise godly character and love and the child is to respect and obey. This makes the last phase of the verse (about training and teaching) possible.

The idea of bringing children up is not one of disconnected information transfer. It carries with it the idea of nurture and guiding the young minds, hearts and bodies of our kids so that they grow up well. The main avenue for this (like we saw in Psalm 78) is by training and teaching our children.

The New Testament audience would have known well what Paul was getting at here. They would have known the words and instructions of Deuteronomy 6:

“Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one.
You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart
and with all your soul and with all your might.
And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart.
You shall teach them diligently to your children,
and shall talk of them when you sit in your house,
and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down and when you rise.
You shall bind them as a sign on your hand, and they shall be as frontlets between your eyes.
You shall write them on the door posts of your house and on your gates.” Deuteronomy 6:4-9

We see here a great picture of what the training up of our children should look like. These verses capture the idea of a culture of the Lord and His Word that surrounds the child. The parents are to be teaching diligently (with effort) at all times and at all places. There is also the idea of how everything that the parents and the children do (*bind on your hands*) and everything they see (*frontlets between your eyes*) is to be a part of loving and learning about God.

The home that Christian parents create should be one that is permeated by God’s Word. The activities, the words spoken, the traditions created and kept, even down to what is on the walls and doors should display the beauty and holiness of God. The child should be learning about God through study of Scripture but also through the life and lifestyle that they see displayed in their parents and home.

We learn from Scripture what God intends to be the ideal for the family. The parents, growing and maturing under the ministry of the church, are called to rightly exercise their significant influence upon their children. The parent will make every effort to train up the child to love and obey the Lord. The child should see the love, work and word of God displayed in the parents and the home and should want to obey them and follow God because of it.

The Role of the Church:

Parents need to know that they are not alone. Some could read these verses and think that parents are left to themselves to follow God in His instruction. As we have already noted, the opposite is actually true.

The responsibility of bringing up godly children is significant, and the parents have the greatest impact toward this end given the amount of time and influence that they have on their children. The weight of this calling should always bring parents to their knees in humble prayer. What the parent will notice is that other people are right there with them, praying and bearing the responsibility alongside them.

The church and its spiritual family is called upon to support and equip parents for their own maturity and also to be an additional voice in the life of any and every child. The understanding in all of the scriptures mentioned above is that these families are existing within a supportive community. Nowhere in scripture do we see families disconnected from other families and a broader Christian community. On the contrary, for example:

“But as for you, teach what accords with sound doctrine. Older men are to be sober-minded, dignified, self-controlled, sound in faith, in love, and in steadfastness. Older women likewise are to be reverent in behavior, not slanderers or slaves to much wine. They are to teach what is good,

and so train the young women to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled. Likewise, urge the younger men to be self-controlled. Show yourself in all respects to be a model of good works, and in your teaching show integrity, dignity, and sound speech that cannot be condemned, so that an opponent may be put to shame, having nothing evil to say about us.” Titus 2:1-8

Here we see that the men and women in the church are to lead the younger men and women, showing and teaching them godly parenting and faithful living. What it does not say is that these older Christians are only leading their own children. We need older believers to support younger believers, especially when it comes to what it looks like to lead a Christ-centered home. Here is another great example:

“Do not rebuke an older man but encourage him as you would a father, younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, younger women as sisters, in all purity.” 1 Timothy 5:1-2

All members of the Body of Christ are responsible for the faithfulness and health of the other members. We must always see the women in the church as sisters, mothers and daughters and the men as brothers, fathers and sons. Therefore, all people in the community of Faith Church are not alone. In the same way, all of the children, even those that come from homes where the parents are unbelievers, will find a family with parents, brothers and sisters here at Faith.

This partnership preserves the role of parents while also showing that the church has a direct role in the discipleship of children.

In Helping Children

It takes care and patience to teach children, especially when it comes to training a child in the Lord. We must approach this task with humble hearts, surrendered to God’s will. In short, we must follow after the Master teacher in how He taught. Jesus approached the rough fisherman and the little child in the same way, full of love and full of submission to God the Father in all things. His approach may have changed depending on the situation, but the motivation was always the same. He came to love us by showing us how to love the Father and bring Him the glory due His name.

Our homes, classrooms, small groups, and other ministry programming must be places where the model that Christ presented to us is lived out in real life. We must be motivated by love and by the desire to see God glorified above all. This will take a variety of forms and methods but a few elements should be seen in all of them.

Scripture

“All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be competent, equipped for every good work.” 2 Timothy 3:16-17

First and foremost in our responsibility as parents and as extended church family is our call to teach the Word of God to children. It is through the Bible that people, young and old, are given opportunity to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ. When they are born again, the Bible will continue to be the central curriculum for life and further sanctification.

One of the most loving things that we can do for children is to teach them about God. As we open the Bible with them, they will see that we are under its authority and that it is very important to listen to God’s voice. We have not been left without a guide. God’s Word, all of it, has been given to us to make us fully equipped for a life of maturity.

Comprehension

When we teach children the Word of God, we are not simply distributing information. We strive for the comprehension and understanding of the Bible in the mind and heart of the child. This is a part of what we are commanded to do.

“We proclaim Him, teaching and admonishing everyone with all wisdom, so that we may present everyone mature in Christ. To this end I labor, struggling with all His energy that He powerfully works in me.” Colossians 1:28-29

The key presented here to developing mature believers is *proclaiming Him* (Jesus, the Word of God) by *teaching everyone with all wisdom*. The word used for *teaching* carries with it the idea of instructing in such a way that the learner understands. We need to do our best to clearly and effectively communicate the Truth to our children. It is also good to see that the scope of this effort is for “*everyone with all wisdom*.” No one is left out of this and we are to use all wisdom in coming up with the effective strategies and methods that lead to comprehension.

A beautiful picture of this is seen in Nehemiah 8:1-8. In this passage, the Word of God is being read before the people of Israel for the first time in years. The people come with anticipation for what the Lord will say. What we see in this account is that those who gathered were “*men and women and all that could understand what they heard*.” (vs. 2 and 3) We also see in verses 7 and 8 that the leaders that were there went among the people for a special purpose:

“*They were helping the people understand the law while the people remained in their places. They read from the book, from the Law of God, clearly, and they gave the sense (meaning), so that the people understood the reading.*”

Clearly, God is concerned that we communicate the Word of God in ways that help children (part of *all that could understand*) comprehend the meaning of God’s Word.

Modeling

Beyond the effective teaching of God’s Word, parents and leaders need to be a visible example for the children to see of what maturity looks like. Again, this is instruction that we glean from the Bible:

“Command and teach these things. Let no one despise you for your youth, but set the believer’s an example in speech, in conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to exhortation, to teaching...Practice these things, immerse yourself in them, so that all may see your progress. Keep a close watch on yourself and on the teaching. Persist in this, for by so doing you will save both yourself and your hearers.” 1 Timothy 4:11-16

The truth that parents and leaders teach needs to be seen. Children should see that godly words, actions, trust in God, etc. is a natural outworking of the a life changed by the Truth in Scripture. This passage puts an emphasis on the character and maturity of the parent and leader as well. They are to keep a *close watch on their life and the teaching*. Teaching and life need to be consistent or else they will be open to the charge of being hypocrites. This doesn’t mean we are called to be perfect. But we should be those who are being perfected by the Truth we proclaim.

As the students hear and see the godly examples at home and church, the message will be preserved and they will know what it means to be a mature follower of Jesus.

Summary

These three (Scripture, Comprehension and Modeling) are the essential elements of what we should do to help children become mature followers of Jesus Christ. As stated earlier, these will work themselves out differently in the various contexts of home and church life.

Parents who know and understand their children must craft a culture at home that pursues these elements in the best ways suited to the abilities, learning styles, maturity, etc. of their children. Whether the family is involved in family devotions, worship, Bible study, traditions, serving in the church and community, etc. these things should always be grounded in Scripture, focussed on comprehension, and allowing for modeling of the truth.

At Faith Church, we take these elements and put them into practice in four distinct ways. These are called the Four Transformational Experiences. On every level of programing for children we will provide opportunities for:

- **Worship:** Celebrating and praising God for His wondrous deeds. Hearing from God’s Word. Responding in faith.
- **Time With God:** Preparing for and experiencing personal study of the Bible and prayer.
- **Small Groups:** Time of connection, accountability, and encouragement with a community of believers.
- **Serving:** Putting the truth in action to love others, support the mission of the church, and reach out to unbelievers.

Each of these experiences will look different depending on the age level, but they will all be evident in what we do in Family Ministry. The partnership of parents and church working towards these elements is essential to helping children in their process toward maturity.

Become mature followers of Jesus Christ.

As parents and members of the Faith Church community are faithful to what God has called for them to do, the children in the church will have many opportunities to hear and see the Word of God and the glory of God. They will have been taught from the Bible what God's Word says to us and how it is sufficient for all of life. They will also have been impacted by the character, leadership and servanthood of the pastors, teachers, connection group leaders, etc. that have been with them in the Faith family.

The prayer is that these children will set their hope in God. Our love, faithfulness and obedience puts the truth and power of God before them. The Spirit must take His Word and open the eyes and hearts of the child, bringing them to life in the new birth. We do our part, but He makes it work.

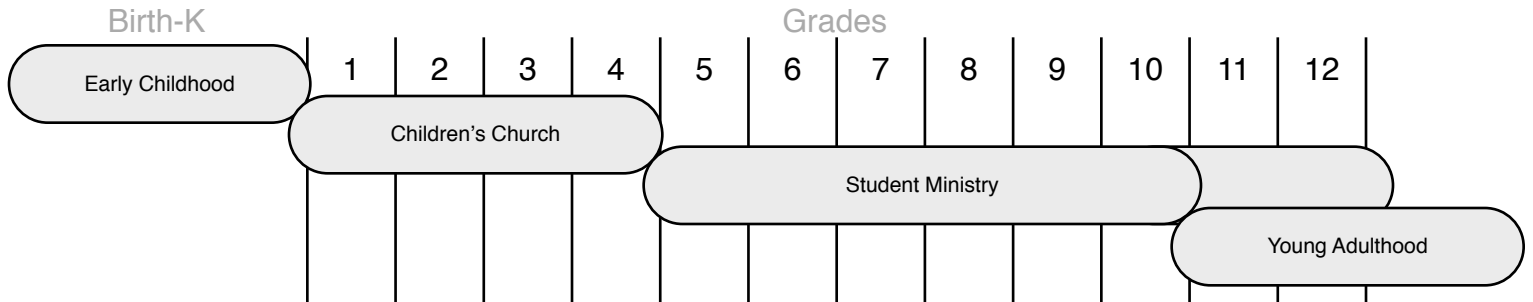
Therefore, our dependence in all of what we do is on the Holy Spirit. God uses His Word to bring life to the unbeliever, to train the Christian in righteousness and to empower us for works of service. The parents and leaders are called to first be faithful and obedient. After doing so, they will have the privilege of seeing Him work in children as they are born again, grow in sanctification, and become ready to serve and exercise Spiritual gifts. We don't make it happen, but we do get to see the Holy Spirit accomplish it.

We can even see this in the Great Commission from Matthew 28, "*And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.*" We have been called to obedience in reaching the nations for Christ, but we also see that He is still with us through it all. In Colossians 1:29 we see the same idea, "*To this end I labor, struggling with all His energy that He powerfully works in me.*" Paul was clear with what he was called to do, but he was also clear that he was powerless to accomplish it. Just like Paul, we struggle to teach and train the people in our care, but we do so in reliance on the Holy Spirit within us and in the hearts of the students for the accomplishment of the mission.

At Faith Church we explain this through the Traits of Maturity that are woven in to the fabric of church life. As we see the Holy Spirit work, the students will show signs of His work in their life. When they are born again, we will see them abide in Christ. As they learn more and more from God's word, they will be obedient to it. As the child continues to grow, the fruit of the Spirit (Love, joy, peace, patience, etc) will be evident. The child will also develop the skills to self-feed through personal Bible study and through fellowship with others. These things will be continually modeled by parents, leaders and teachers, but the reality of them in the life of the child will increase as they grow in maturity, empowered by the Holy Spirit.

Family Ministry: Program Overview

The Family Ministry Team exists to partner with parents in helping children become mature followers of Jesus.



Above is a diagram that gives a quick overview of the structure of family ministry. While there are four distinct divisions within the structure, the Family Ministry Team at Faith Church will work to provide a consistent and continuous approach that partners with the parents to help children become mature followers of Jesus Christ.

We have provided below a brief description of each program division and its particular objectives as it relates to children and parents. To further illustrate this, we use a construction metaphor to capture the place of family ministry as it pertains to spiritual growth. We will move our children through a process of laying a strong foundation for life and faith so that the rest of life will be a house built on Christ.

Early Childhood: Establish the Foundation

When building a house, you start with the foundation. This is work done at the most basic level. You prepare the ground, put down the footings, smooth out the gravel, and pour the concrete. In the same way, the Early Childhood Division is where a child begins a life of faith.

As we establish the foundation, we will provide ways for children to become familiar with the major stories of the Bible, learn essential lessons on interacting with others, and begin to see godly examples in parents, teachers and other ministry workers. This will all be done in a safe and nurturing environment where the child associates positive feelings and experiences with the name and people of God.

Children's Church: Expand the Foundation

Once the most basic things are in place, you can begin to expand the foundation. With the essentials of the Bible and Christian community in place, the Children's Church division will expand that foundation to include more knowledge of God's Word, more focused interaction with others, and a greater degree of mentoring and modeling by parents and leaders.

This time in a child's life is key for the creation and implementation of family and church traditions that will encourage spiritual growth. The parents and church leaders will work together to accomplish this, relying on each other for help and support.

Student Ministry: Strengthen the Foundation

A foundation is ready to build upon when it is strong. Weak foundations can't support much, at least not for long. A weak foundation will crumble under the weight of an even a small house.

The focus for the Student Ministry division will be in strengthening the foundation that has been established and expanded by the previous divisions. This comes in the form of testing the structure (Beliefs and Worldview), correcting or repairing weaknesses (Accountability and Character), and preparing the surface for the structure that it will support (Leadership and Service).

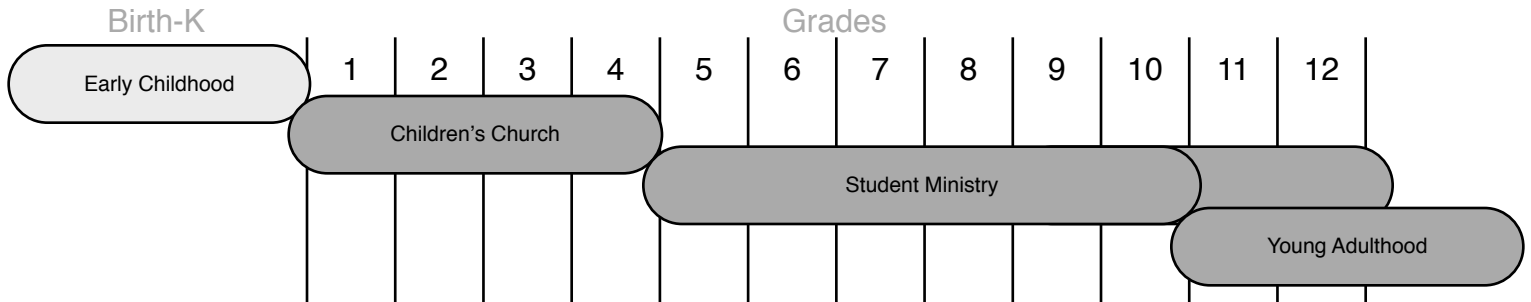
Young Adults: Build on the Foundation

As students near the end of their high school years, they need to begin to transition into the adult life of the church. Now that their foundation has been established, expanded and strengthened, they are ready to start building. Their life as an adult has now begun. Even though these students still remain within the student ministry division, the desire is that they would sense the need to move beyond it and seek the challenges and community that exists within the greater church community. By this point, this should be a natural and easy move.

Family Ministry: Early Childhood Division



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In Family Ministry at Faith Church, our goal is to help children become mature followers of Jesus Christ. This is accomplished through the partnership between parents and the greater church family. The key elements of this effort are Scripture (teaching the Word of God), comprehension (teaching in such a way that children understand) and modeling (showing the truth by our lives). Our homes and our church will be places where these three things must be present. Our desire is that children will “set their hope in God” through hearing His voice, understanding and knowing Him and His truth, and seeing Him at work in the lives of the people that are leading them.

In the church setting as well as in the home, we will pursue these key elements through the Four Transformational Experiences: Worship, Time with God, Small Groups and Serving. These will be evident in the Early Childhood Division (Birth-Kindergarten) in the following ways:

At Church

At Home

	At Church	At Home
Worship	<p>Worship is learned in the Early Childhood division as we identify and cultivate each child’s natural curiosity, awe, and wonder and point it God-ward.</p> <p>Nursery:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infants will be introduced to God and Jesus in the context of a nurturing, loving environment. A worshipful atmosphere will be provided through music and decorations that point to God. Caretakers will speak about God while caring for infants. <p>Toddler/2’s:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Toddler/2’s will be introduced to God’s loving care through guided conversations, brief Bible stories, and simple songs and finger plays. <p>PreK/K:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young children will be introduced to the Bible, through structured play activities with guided conversations followed by a worship/teaching time which will include Bible stories, songs, and memory verses. 	<p>The Bible calls us to a life of on-going, continual worship, both corporately and individually. It teaches that God is present in the lives of children – even before they are born. Parents are encouraged to provide many opportunities for worship for their families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Families attend church regularly. Parents will at times worship with their children in Sunday morning services (at Faith Family Gatherings or more regularly as parents see fit.) • Parents encourage an attitude of worship by incorporating guided conversations throughout the day. Parents will direct a child’s natural curiosity and wonder to a God-ward focus. • Parents begin to establish opportunities for worship in the home. These should be regular times of reading God’s Word, repeating Bible truths, singing, and prayer.

<p>Time With God</p>	<p>Young children learn best by example and repetition. Teachers will establish the importance of time with God by providing examples of prayer and Bible reading. As children are able, they will be given opportunities to participate as well.</p> <p>Nursery & Toddler/2's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nursery staff will pray for infants and their families as they provide care. • Toddler/2's will begin to learn that we can listen to God (through the Bible) and that we can talk to God (through prayer). <p>PreK/K:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers will present the week's story from the Bible. Children will be encouraged to read picture Bibles and retell the stories that they have learned. • Teachers will model group and spontaneous prayer, and children will be given opportunities to pray throughout the morning. 	<p>Young children learn best by example and repetition. Parents are encouraged to provide an example of prayer and study.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents develop personal habits of daily prayer and study, including prayer for their children. • Parents model short, simple prayers for their young children to repeat. • Parents provide guidance and opportunities for their children to pray and read the Bible.
<p>Small Groups</p>	<p>Teachers will build caring relationships with babies and young children, providing a foundation for children to develop relationships with others as they grow.</p> <p>Nursery and Toddler/2's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teachers will provide babies and very young children with one-on-one attention and teaching. These youngest children are not yet able to interact in a group setting. <p>PreK/K:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children will be encouraged to interact with one another and to share and help each other during structured play activities. 	<p>The family can be seen as a small group – a place where lives can be lived together and each member can encourage one another to grow and develop.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents will teach and demonstrate that all family members will love and help each other, recognizing the father's God-appointed leadership. • Parents will be willing to learn childlike faith from their children.
<p>Serving</p>	<p>The focus of the early childhood ministry division will be to provide and demonstrate service to babies and young children.</p> <p>Nursery and Toddler/2's:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Babies, young children, and their families will be blessed by the service of the nursery staff. <p>PreK/K:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children will be taught that we please God when we show love to others. Many opportunities will be provided to share and help in the classroom. 	<p>There are many opportunities to serve one another in the family. Parents will be encouraged to develop an atmosphere of service in their home.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents will provide for their children's needs. • Parents will teach their children to please God by sharing and helping. Even young children may be given small household tasks as an opportunity for service.

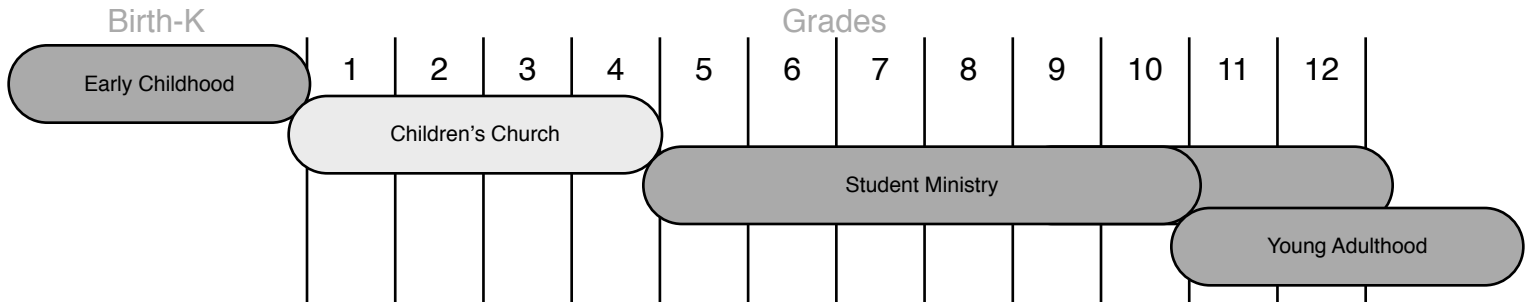
Other Experiences:

Family support will be provided through Sunday morning worship and teaching, adult connection groups, parent newsletters, weekly take-home pages, a resource lending library, training for parent volunteers, family service opportunities, and parenting classes/seminars/workshops.

Family Ministry: Children's Church Division



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In the church setting as well as in the home, we will pursue these key elements through the Four Transformational Experiences: Worship, Time with God, Small Groups and Serving. These will be evident in the Children's Church Division (1st-4th grade) in the following ways:

	At Church	At Home
Worship	<p>The central element of the Children's Church Division will be the weekly gathering for worship. This will take the form of regular preaching and teaching of God's Word as well as worship in song.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children will be welcomed into the morning worship service to sing, read and pray along with parents and adults. • Children will be released from the morning worship service before the sermon to be taught in an age appropriate large group format. 	<p>Families will provide opportunities for worship within the home; regular times where the family gathers together to read God's Word, give instruction, share, sing and pray.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents lead the family in some form of regular family devotions and prayer. • Parents worship with their children in the Sunday morning worship services. • Parents cultivate a worshiping home by bringing a God-ward focus to daily activities and cultural/media choices.
Time With God	<p>Studying God's Word and talking to God in prayer require training and practice. At church we can provide both of these.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will be taught inductive Bible study skills and have it modeled by their leaders and teachers. • Students will be taught about prayer, shown examples of godly prayer, and given opportunities to pray for and with their peers. 	<p>The leadership and accountability that parents can provide is key to the child's growth in this area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents lead by example what it means to maintain a life of regular study and prayer. • Parents provide input, mentoring and accountability for the child as they learn and maintain this discipline.

<p style="text-align: center;">Small Groups</p>	<p>Small groups provide a helpful environment for learning how to live in community. Children benefit from large group teaching, but they also need to be checked for comprehension and challenged to live out what they are learning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children and a leader will be grouped into gender specific small groups following the large group teaching. • These small groups will be for discussing and expanding on the lesson and for prayer. 	<p>The family itself is a sort of small group, an example of community that supports and encourages growth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents show that all the members of the family exist to be a help for each other under the leadership of the father as he is led by Christ. • Parents cultivate an atmosphere of humility and respect as they live their lives before and with their children.
<p style="text-align: center;">Serving</p>	<p>Children need to learn the connection between what God says to us in the Bible and our life and actions. Children’s Church will be a place to learn this connection and put it into practice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children will learn through teaching and modeling what it means to serve one another both inside and outside of the classroom. • Children will be given special opportunities to serve the church, local and global communities. 	<p>The family provides a setting for service on a more intimate and daily level. Parents not only have a keener way to discern their child’s Spiritual gifts, but they also get to see they way the child serves in daily life at home. The family can serve together in various ways and settings that provide a connection and impact that is deeper than any other setting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents discuss Spiritual gifts with their child and discern what ways God may be equipping their child for service. • Parents involve the family in service in the home, neighborhood, church, and the local and global community that is best suited for the gifts and maturity of their children.

Other Experiences:

Beyond the regular programming at church and the family traditions and culture, there will also be additional ways to pursue the three key elements of Scripture, Comprehension and Modeling. Here are a few:

Children’s Choir:

For seasonal celebrations (Christmas and Easter), children can be a part of a choir to be featured in the morning church services.

Special Events:

At different times of the year, students, parents will be able to participate in activities that will allow for focussed spiritual growth or just enjoying the company of other believers. This may include camping trips, professional athletic events, bowling and roller-skating parties, movie nights, zoo trips, etc.

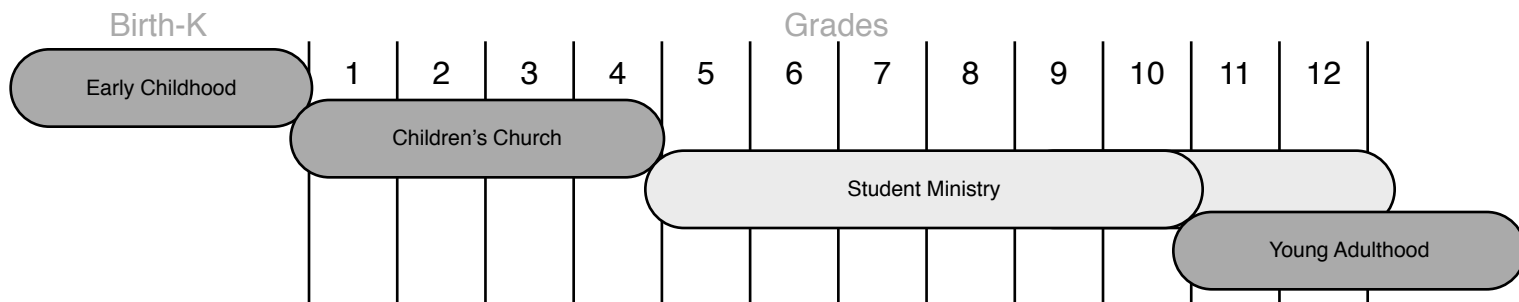
Service/Missions Projects:

At different times during the year, children will be given opportunities to serve people in need both locally and around the world. Operation Christmas Child and the Angel Tree are good examples of this.

Family Ministry: Student Ministry Division



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In Family Ministry at Faith Church, our goal is to help children become mature followers of Jesus Christ. This is accomplished through the partnership between parents and the greater church family. The key elements of this effort are Scripture (teaching the Word of God), comprehension (teaching in such a way that children understand) and modeling (showing the truth by our lives). Our homes and our church will be places where these three things must be present. Our desire is that children will “set their hope in God” through hearing His voice, understanding and knowing Him and His truth, and seeing Him at work in the lives of the people that are leading them.

In the church setting as well as in the home, we will pursue these key elements through the Four Transformational Experiences: Worship, Time with God, Small Groups and Serving. These will be evident in the Student Ministry Division (5th-12th grade) in the following ways:

	At Church	At Home
Worship	<p>The central element of the student ministry division will be the weekly gathering for worship. This will take the form of regular preaching and teaching of God’s Word as well as worship in song.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will participate in Sunday morning worship services alongside their parents. • Additional age/grade specific programs will be provided for worship with peers at times other than Sunday morning. 	<p>Families provide opportunities for worship within the home, regular times where the family gathers together to read God’s Word, give instruction, share, sing and pray.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents lead the family in some form of regular family devotions and prayer. • Parents worship with their children in the Sunday morning worship services. • Parents cultivate a worshiping home by bringing a God-ward focus to daily activities and cultural/media choices.
Time With God	<p>Studying God’s Word and talking to God in prayer require training and practice. At church we can provide both of these.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will be taught inductive Bible study skills and have it modeled by their leaders and teachers. • Students will be taught about prayer, shown examples of godly prayer, and given opportunities to pray for and with their peers. 	<p>The leadership and accountability that parents can provide is key to the student’s growth in this area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents lead by example what it means to maintain a life of regular study and prayer. • Parents provide input, mentoring and accountability for the student as they learn and maintain this discipline.

<p style="text-align: center;">Small Groups</p>	<p>Youth Connection Groups form community and encourage interaction among students. These are key to the <i>strengthening</i> that is happening during this phase.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will be connected to an age-level Youth Connection Group led by an adult and a parent leader. • Students will maintain a commitment to the group by prioritizing this time over other commitments and by accepting their responsibility for the lives and growth of their peers. 	<p>The family itself is a sort of small group. The relationship of the parents and siblings together should be a good example of community that supports and encourages growth.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents will show that all the members of the family exist to be a help for each other under the leadership of the father as he is led by Christ. • Parents will cultivate an atmosphere of humility and respect as they live their lives before and with their children.
<p style="text-align: center;">Serving</p>	<p>What we learn needs to be put into practice. As students are given opportunity to serve they will be able to see in themselves and each other their strengths and weaknesses. They will also learn to depend on the Holy Spirit for the strength to obey the commands of God when it comes to the care and maturity of others.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students will be connected to service opportunities within the Faith Church family according to their Spiritual gifts and personal abilities. • Students will be given oppprtunities to serve the local and global community through outreach, missions, and other serving ministries. 	<p>The family provides a setting for service on a more intimate and daily level. Parents not only have a keener way to discern their child's Spiritual gifts, but they also get to see they way the child serves in daily life at home. The family can serve together in various ways and settings that provide a connection and impact that is deeper than any other setting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents will discuss Spiritual gifts with their child and discern what ways God may be equipping their child for service. • Parents will involve the family in service in the home, neighborhood, church, and the local and global community that is best suited for the gifts and maturity of their children.

Other Experiences:

Beyond the regular programming at church and the family traditions and culture, there will also be additional ways to pursue the three key elements of Scripture, Comprehension and Modeling. Here are a few:

Retreats and Special Events:

At different times of the year, students, parents will be able to participate in activities that will allow for focussed spiritual growth or just enjoying the company of other believers. This may include camping trips, professional athletic events, retreats, bowling parties, overnighnters, scavenger hunts, movie nights, cookouts, etc.

Intergenerational Classes:

Throughout the year parents and students will be able to learn together in a unique environment. These classes, offered on Sunday mornings and other times, may be topical in nature or cover specific passages or books of the Bible. These will be given in 4-8 week segments with breaks in between.

Intergenerational Mission Trips:

Local and global mission trips are a special setting for intergenerational learning and service. In the past we have sent teams to Belize, Philippines and needy areas impacted by natural disaster.

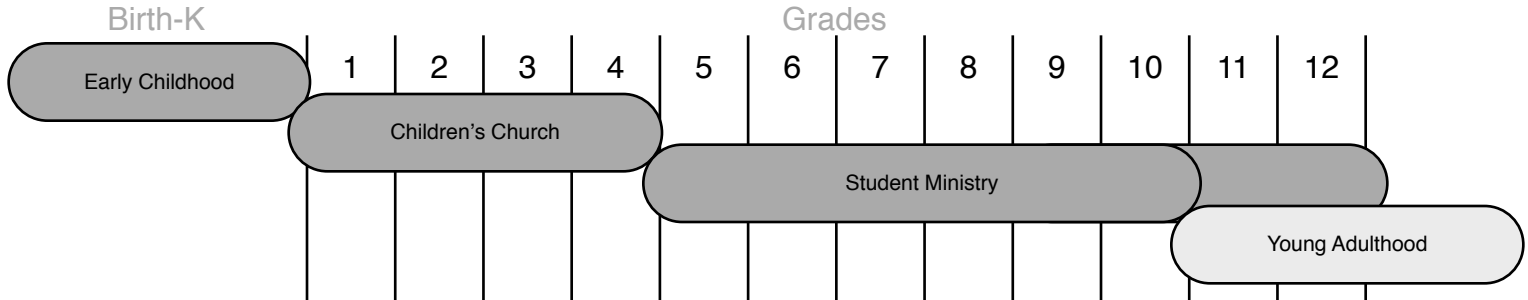
Conferences and Concerts:

These special events are ways that we can partake of other regional, national or international ministries that seek to make mature followers of Jesus Christ in their own unique way or specialty.

Family Ministry: Young Adult Division



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In the church setting as well as in the home, we will pursue these key elements through the Four Transformational Experiences: Worship, Time with God, Small Groups and Serving. These will be evident in the Young Adult Division (11th Grade and Up) in the following ways:

	At Church	At Home
Worship	The expectation during this division is that students will begin to make the transition into the worship life (preaching, teaching, worship in song) of the Faith Church community. Since they are being treated as an adult they will move to being under the care of the Discipleship Ministries Team.	While maintaining the traditions and modeling of previous divisions, parents encourage their children to form their own traditions and practices for personal and corporate worship. Parents encourage leadership and maturity in this by allowing their child to lead or enhance family worship and devotions.
Time With God	The disciplines established in earlier divisions will be encouraged and nurtured in the young adults. Whereas accountability before was peer to peer and student to leader, the relationships as young adults will begin to form in a peer group of wider ages.	Parents continue in providing accountability and support to the devotional life (study and prayer) with the goal of self-motivated time with God in their child's life and routine.
Small Groups	Young Adults will be encouraged to connect with and eventually be fully participating in the Adult Connection Groups at Faith Church.	Parents, with the help of other ministry leaders, will connect their child to other adults in the church family to be additional mentors in their life.
Serving	Young Adults will be encouraged to serve in the various ministries and opportunities under the leadership of the Discipleship Ministries Team at Faith Church.	Parents continue to be an example of servanthood to their children while maintaining a family culture of service and ministry.

Other Experiences:
See the Discipleship Ministries Team.

Family Ministry: Discussion Questions and Survey



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Thanks for taking the time to fill out this survey. Your input is a valuable asset that we welcome. The questions below will provide the launching pad for our FMT Vision Huddles.

How long have you been attending Faith? _____

Are you a member? Yes No If yes, since when? _____

If you currently have children involved at Faith, at which level? (Check all that apply)

Nursery ____ Toddler/2 ____ Pre K and K ____ Children's Church ____ 5/6 ____ 7/8 ____ 9-12 ____

(Feel free to use the back of this sheet or a separate piece of paper to answer the following questions.)

What components of the Philosophy of Family Ministry at Faith Church are most important to you?

Please comment on any areas of confusion or disagreement with the Philosophy of Family Ministry.

What are the greatest challenges you face in discipling your children?

Describe an effective tradition, activity or event within the culture of your family that has been instrumental in encouraging your child's spiritual maturity.

In what ways can the FMT staff, leaders or Faith family as a whole help you most as a parent?

What aspects of current ministry to children at Faith Church are having a positive or effective impact on you and your children? Why?

What aspects of current ministry to children at Faith Church are having a minimal or negative impact on you or your children? Why?

What would you like to see happen this fall to increase the positive impact of the ministries at Faith Church on you and your children?

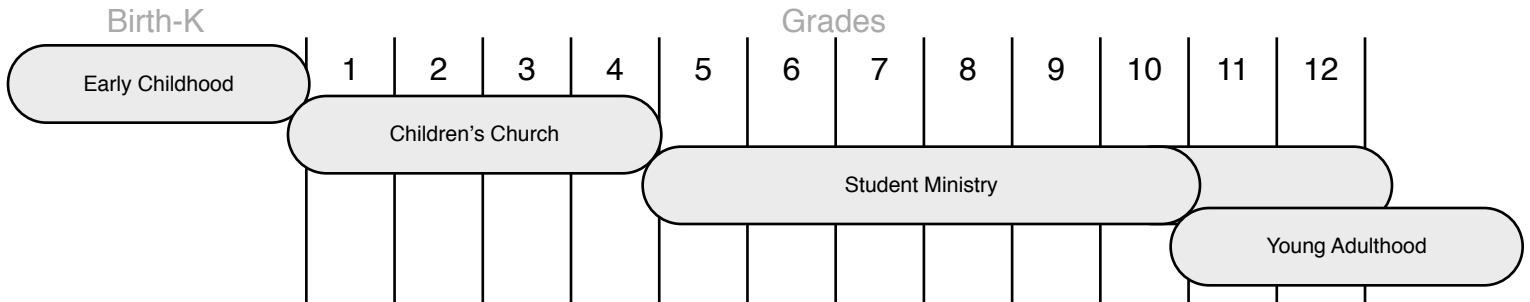
Do you have any comments about the times and structure of Sunday mornings, Sunday nights, or Thursday night meetings?

If a different a night during the week was utilized for ministry programming would it particularly improve involvement for children and parents? Any Suggestions?

Family Ministry: Volunteer Opportunities



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Above is a diagram that gives a quick overview of the structure of family ministry. While there are four distinct divisions within the structure, the Family Ministry Team at Faith Church will work to provide a consistent and continuous approach that partners with the parents to help children become mature followers of Jesus Christ.

Many opportunities exist within this structure for service and leadership. Below is a list of available positions and needs. Please check all that you are interested in learning more about.

Early Childhood: Establish the Foundation

- Associate Ministry Director – Early Childhood
- Nursery Coordinator: infants - toddler/2's
- Nursery Caregiver: infants – toddler/2's
- Nursery “Clean Team”: infants – toddler/2's
- Early Childhood Teacher: 3-Kdg
- Early Childhood Classroom Assistant: 3-Kdg
- Early Childhood “Clean Team”: 3-Kdg

Children’s Church: Expand the Foundation

- Associate Ministry Director – Children’s Church
- Teacher Grades 1-2
- Teacher Grades 3-4
- Girls Small Group Leader
- Boys Small Group Leader

Student Ministry: Strengthen the Foundation

Grades 5-6

- Small Group Leader- Adult
- Small Group Leader- Parent
- Sunday School Teacher

Grades 7-8

- Small Group Leader- Adult
- Small Group Leader- Parent

Grades 9-12

- Small Group Leader- Adult
- Small Group Leader- Parent

All Levels

- Event Sponsor
- Gym Supervisor
- Games Coordinator

Personal Information:

Name: _____ Attending Faith Since: _____ Member: Yes No

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

Have you filled out the volunteer survey at Faith Church? Yes ___ No ___

If “No”, when would be a good time for the Volunteer Coordinator to contact you?

Times: Mornings Afternoons Evenings Days: M T W Th F S Su