

Children's Ministries Volunteer Guidebook

2008-2009

COMING
SOON!



St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church

*"Making disciples of Jesus Christ;
growing in faith, hope, and love"*

WELCOME TO ST. JOHN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH Sunday School

Dear Parents and Children,

We hope that this guidebook will address any questions that you may have about our Sunday School Program. We at St. John hope to provide a safe and nurturing environment in which your child can learn about the Love of God. The future of St. John is found in the lives of our youngest disciples - our children.

In this guidebook we have provided a basic calendar of Sunday School events, though it is always best to check the times in the weekly Update. This guide includes a map of room locations and lists emergency procedures to follow. Please read this carefully and contact us if you have any questions.

In His service and love,

Lisa Thompson
Coordinator of Children's Ministries
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Ministry Outlines

Family Worship Experience is held 6 times a year on special celebrations. The children share music in the sanctuary and listen to a sermon designed for them and their families. Materials for Family Worship will be sent home.

Parent Small Groups will be held each semester in 6 week series. Come learn with other parents' neat ways to help your children grow in faith. Sign up in the Education Wing or see your student's Sunday School Teacher.

WAVE (Wednesday Awesome Voyage Experience) is a midweek worship and activity experience for 3 years to 6th grade. Family dinner together in the Fellowship Hall is at 6 PM. At 7 PM activities begin, which include age appropriate Bible stories and lessons, recreation, crafts and music.

Children's Choir is a fun time during Sunday School where the children learn songs which glorify our Lord. All the children participate in this experience. They need not be able to sing well, the music is from the heart.

The Recorder Choir is open to our Sunday School children from 3rd Grade and up. They rehearse directly after Sunday School in the 4th grade classroom.

The Orff Ensemble is open to our Sunday School children from 3rd grade and up. This group works on musical pieces using the church Orff instruments. They may share their songs at any of the gathering.

The Band and Orchestra comprises of our Sunday School students who play a string, woodwind, percussion, or brass instrument. They rehearse on Sunday mornings and share their music at the Children's Wonderful Worship Experiences.

Christian Clowning & Puppet Ministry is a visual approach to faith development. Dressed as clowns, the presenters pantomime Bible stories and lessons. Look for this ministry during Family Worship or Sunday School. Puppet Ministry is a theatre art where puppets are the characters who teach the Biblical lessons. St. John's puppet stage is where you will find these one-of-a-kind puppets. The puppets are designed and made by their operators.

KIDZ KAMP (Vacation Bible School) is an exciting weeklong adventure. Each night focuses on a Bible verse about Noah and his family. The program runs from 6 PM ‘til 8:30 PM and includes a carnival complete with inflatable rides on the following Sunday and even a musical called “A Technicolor Promise”.

Sunday School

Music Schedule

ATTENDANCE

We encourage continuing attendance for all children. Attendance will be recorded on a chart in class. Our goal is to provide a warm and supportive environment for children to learn the Word of God.

DROP-OFF PROCEDURES

- Arrive on time. Parents or guardians of students 3rd grade or younger must accompany their children and sign them in no earlier than 10 minutes prior to the start of class.
- Please provide contact information and phone numbers as to where you will be during your child's class. You may write this information next to your child's name on the sign-in sheet.
- Please be sure that the teacher or another responsible adult is present before leaving your child.
- We discourage children from bringing toys to class. Please make sure that all personal items are labeled if brought to class.

PICK-UP PROCEDURES

- Please be in the Sunday School classroom by 11:10 AM. This is a time of fellowship for parents and their children.
- At 11:15, make sure to collect all materials and personal items.

INCLEMENT WEATHER

- Weekdays - If Howard County schools close early or are closed for the day, it can generally be assumed that evening activities at St. John are cancelled. There have been exceptions, but they are rare.
- Sundays - These decisions are made by the pastors no later than 7AM on any Sunday morning. As soon as services are officially canceled, the web site will be updated to indicate what is happening. Go to www.stjohnmd.org. Also, the recording on the phone in the church office will be updated: 410-799-8888.

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

In the event of an emergency:

- The teachers will take all students out of the classrooms to the parking lots. Emergency route maps are posted in each classroom.
- Teachers will take attendance.
- Parents or guardians will proceed to the area when instructed to do so. Parents or guardians are not to remove children without informing the teacher.
- Teachers, students and parent/guardians are not to return to the building until the "ALL CLEAR"* signal has been given.

* EMERGENCY SIGNAL - 4 SHORT BELLS

* ALL CLEAR SIGNAL - 2 SHORT BELLS

A Fire Drills will be conducted during the Sunday School Year.

Your support and cooperation will help these run smoothly.

WORSHIP SERVICE ATTENDANCE

Children are an integral part of God's family and therefore of this faith community. By gathering regularly with this faith community in worship, children participate, to varying degrees, in the songs, prayers, Scriptures, teachings, and sacraments of this faith community. By children's presence and participation in worship, the faith community helps children grow in faith, hope, and love, and knits them into God's family. Parents & other care-giving adults who participate in worship with their children add another source of spiritual formation, strengthening the spirituality they share with their children in the home. So, in addition to Sunday School, bring the children in your care to worship and grow together in faith, hope, and love, thereby encouraging them to carry on a lifelong relationship with God.

“People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. [14] But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, ‘Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. [15] Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.’ [16] And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them.” -- Mark 10:13-16 (NRSV)

HOLY BAPTISM AND 1ST COMMUNION

If you would like information on The Sacrament of Holy Baptism for you or a child in your care, contact the church office to find out the date of the next baptism class, which is usually held every 3 months.

If you would like information on The Sacrament of Holy Communion for you or a child in your care, contact the church office to find out when the next First Communion class will be held. Children and their parents or care-giving adults are welcome to attend this class if they attend worship regularly, are asking about Communion, and the parents are in agreement with the child receiving Communion. This class is held in the weeks before Easter. Some years, a single session class is held in the fall for Confirmation students (grades 7-9) who are not yet communing.

CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

Responsible behavior is a positive character trait of a disciple of Christ. Through all of our Children's Ministries, we strive to develop Christ-like behavior and self-control in children, so they can behave responsibly in class and throughout the church. We hope to encourage children to adopt biblical principles as part of their lives.

We expect all students to recognize the authority of teachers and parent volunteers, thereby treating them with respect, just as these adults will treat the children with respect.

During classroom discussions, we expect others in the room to listen to the teacher or the student designated by the teacher to be sharing.

Any behavior that disrupts the learning atmosphere will be handled first by the teacher directly with that child in a grace-filled way that encourages all students to learn and grow together. If the behavior persists, the teacher will consult with the parent or care-giving adult on the best course of action that will appropriately empower the student and class to learn together. To this end, share with your child's teacher any particular needs you know your child has so that the teacher can be that much more effective.

Classroom Behavior Expectations

St. Johns Evangelical Church Sunday School Behavior Prevention and Intervention Plan

Children demonstrate inappropriate/undesirable behaviors generally for three different reasons.

1. **Escape Behaviors:** they are trying to escape a task, activity, or event so they use undesirable behavior to escape.

Example: A child acts out during reading Bible stories because they are afraid to read/not confident about reading in front of their peers.

2. **Tangible Reasons:** For example, they do like holding hands in group time or doing crafts during craft time. You may want to give this student a modified task (hand out crafts/help others).
3. **Attention Seeking Behaviors:** Keep these reasons in mind as you guide and discipline because children usually have a purpose for their behavior.

Ways to Prevent Undesirable Behaviors

1. Give children specific positive praise often that labels the behavior that is desirable. (Especially for those who really need it.

Example: “I like how this table is already gluing their flowers on.” or “I like how the people in the front of the line are being respectful and showing me they are ready” or “You guys are doing an awesome job raising your hand to share.” You can do this with individual students, groups or the whole class.

2. If you do give a warning to a student because of a behavior...soon, very soon try to “catch them” doing the desirable behavior and praise them (in front of the whole class or with a silent thumbs up-based on the child).

3. Praise those who are demonstrating the desirable behavior instead of singling out the one who isn't (attention seekers will increase their undesirable behavior sometimes if you single them out).

Example: “I like how the boys are lining up quietly and following directions! Awesome!” This behavior strategy works for younger students and most elementary age students.

4. Give attention seekers lots of positive attention from you and give them opportunities to receive it appropriately from their peers.

Example: “Bobby your Ark looks great. Hold it up so everyone can see!” Or, “Look at how great your Ark is Bobby. Can someone give Bobby a compliment on his Ark?”

5. Give overactive students jobs to keep them positively busy.

Example: Pass out crayons, collect papers, gets to pick who is next to read or line up, or for older kids let them be the one to write everyone's ideas on the chalk board while everyone shares and the teacher guides the lesson.

6. Effective way to grab a group’s attention when everyone is getting too loud, or too silly, etc. You the teacher start whispering in your teaching or direction giving. This works much better than yelling and shows you have respect for your students too! They will stop and strain to hear what you are saying!

Class Rules

Be Respectful, Speak Kindly & Follow Directions

Behavior Intervention — Follow these steps each time systematically so the children will respect you, know you are the one in “control” and know that you expect them to respect each other.

1. Warning Number One. State in the positive.
Example: Please hand the glue to someone. (Not-Stop throwing the glue) or Please use your indoor voice. Now try to catch the student doing the desirable behavior and praise!
2. Warning Two. Repeat or State new direction.
Example: Please use your indoor voice to talk to your neighbors.
3. Warning Three. Please come take a time-out or quiet-time. Pull chair to the side for them to sit in quietly. Minutes should generally be based on age. A three-year old three minutes, a nine year old gets nine. When the time is up have a private conversation (short and sweet) asking them why they were in time out. Many children sit in time-out every day and have no idea why they are there. Allow them to go back to the group and say, “Lets try to make better choices now. I know you can do it.”

We thank Gina Robinson for developing these guidelines.

NURSERY INFORMATION

A Child Care Provider staffs the Nursery at St. John on Sunday mornings. At the 9:00, 10:15 and 11:30 AM services, Nursery Staffers provide an essential service, but cannot do it alone. We need the support of parents and senior youth from our church. Maryland law dictates that the ration of adults to infants is 1:3 and for toddlers the ratio is 1:6. We don't want to turn children away, but we must if we exceed these regulations.

If your child uses the services of the Nursery, we ask that you share in the responsibility of this quality care program. Your role would be to assist the Nursery Provider with the children while their parents are in worship. A parent is asked to assist at least one Sunday every month. Please call the Nursery Coordinator to schedule a time when you can help. Your support will allow us to provide a friendly, caring and loving Christian environment for our children.

CHILDREN'S OFFERING

The children are invited to bring in a small offering for collection during Sunday School. This simple act teaches the concept of giving. Envelopes are not necessary and all monies are forwarded to the church funds.

SERVE & INVITE OPPORTUNITIES

Several months during the school year, students and their families will have opportunities to help others in their communities and abroad.

Watch for the Weekly Update and the Herald.

ASSET BUILDING

Why do some kids get involved in risky behaviors, while others thrive and lead productive lives? The usual answers focus on problems, but Search Institute* decided to focus on why some kids prevail, not fail. They identified 40 developmental assets that protect and empower youth. The more assets you have, the less likely you are to struggle and the more likely you are to succeed in life. These assets fall into 8 categories: Support, Empowerment, Boundaries and Expectations, Constructive Use of Time, Commitment to Learning, Positive Identity, Social Competencies and Positive Values. As a church community, we impact a large number of these assets. If done with intention, St. John Church can have a major impact in giving young people what they need to be achievers. Our Sunday School Staff is dedicated to this goal.

Quotes from Peter Benson, Ph.D., President of Search Institute:

“I would argue that after the institution of family, the communities known as temples, synagogues, mosques, parishes or churches have the greatest potential to help youth emerge into adulthood as caring, responsible and committed citizens.”

“As assets increase in a young person's life, his or her openness and willingness to engage deeply and meaningfully with a tradition of faith increase.”

* Search Institute is a non-profit, non-sectarian organization whose mission is to advance the well-being of adolescents and children by generating knowledge and promoting its application.

EDUCATION BUILDING

Room 25 2-Year Olds	Room 26 NURSERY	Room 27 Storage (Not available for meetings)	M E N	W O M E N
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SECOND FLOOR

Room 24 3-Year Olds	Room 23 Pastor Yi's Office (Not available for meetings)	Room 22 Classroom/ Ministry Storage	Room 21 Resource/ Library	Room 20 Music
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Room 14 Fourth Grade	Room 15 Third Grade	Room 16 First Grade	M E N	W O M E N
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FIRST FLOOR

Room 13 Fifth Grade	Room 12 2 nd Grade	Room 11 Kindergarten	Room 10 4-Yr Olds
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6th Grade meets in Room 30 (end of Fellowship Hall)

PARENT RESOURCES

For more reading, please visit these web sites and seek out these books:

Youth and Family Institute Resources:

www.youthandfamilyinstitute.org

- * I Can Pray With Jesus: The Lord's Prayer for Children
- * Pray and Play Bible for Young Children (Also available from www.grouppublishing.com)
- * Parenting With A Purpose: Nurturing Faith and Life From Birth to Age 6
- * FaithTalk with Children-Ages 3-10 or *FaithTalk-Ages 11 and up
- * Boundary Lines With Children by Dr. Henry Cloud & Dr. John Townsend, Zondervan Publishing House

(Designed to provide opportunities for parents and other adults to have meaningful conversations with children about God's presence and faithfulness in their lives.)

Children's Books by Max Lucado

www.maxlucado.com

Happy Day Books

www.parable.com

VeggieTales Videos

www.bigidea.com

Sunday School Curriculum

Seasons of the Spirit

www.spiritseasons.com