

JUNIOR CHURCH AT UCC

SEPTEMBER NEWSLETTER

Whose Job is it Anyway?

"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." - Deuteronomy 6:4-7

Whose responsibility is the spiritual formation of children?

Many churches expend tremendous amounts of money and energy presenting massive children's ministries in order to attract parents. Often these programs give the impression that the church will take care of the children's spiritual instruction.

We believe that the biblical answer to the question is pretty clear: parents, and fathers especially. As the passage above shows, the responsibility to pass along the Word of the Lord falls to the family: "You shall teach them diligently to your children..." This conviction is further bolstered by the repeated image of the father instructing his son in the book of Proverbs.

So what is the church's role in the spiritual development of children?

We believe that the church exists to support families in their God-given responsibility to shepherd their children. We seek to do this through *both* the adult-targeted and children-focused ministries. We're trying to capture this vision in our new Jr. Church mission statement: "Forming families by fostering familiarity with the fundamentals of the faith." What this means practically is that we see Jr. Church as a place where we can familiarize children with the "raw materials" of the faith—biblical stories, key passages, church music, and worship practices—that parents can then use in their instruction of their children. Our focus is less on explanation and more on exposure. Additionally, we will keep parents informed of what the children are learning and offer suggestions for engaging with them on these topics. Our hope is to strengthen parents and children by giving each what they need to fulfill their responsibility before God and one another.

Order of Service

Opening

Entrance and greeting
Songs and singing
Prayer
Prepare to hear God's Word
Scripture Reading

Focus Activity (1/wk):

Bible Story
Songs of Faith
Bible passage

Breaking Bread

Closing

Closing song
Benediction
Dismissal

Junior Church meets during the main service, after worship. Feel free to join your child and experience Junior Church for yourself!

Forming families by fostering familiarity...



More on back!

Godly Play – Ruth

The story of Ruth is a connecting story. It connects the wilderness experience of the People of God and living in the Promised Land, with living in the Promised Land and King David. Ruth was not one of the People of God. She was a Moabite and she was a loyal and devoted friend to Naomi. Ruth could have left when she was faced with difficult times but she chose to remain with Naomi and the People of God. She married one of God's people, Boaz, and became the great-grandmother of David the King.

I wonder...

What you can tell me about today's story?
 What part of this story you liked the best?
 What part was the most important?
 What part was about you or what part you were in?

"Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God."

- Ruth 1:16

SONGS (9/20)

This Little Light of Mine

The Doxology

10,000 Reasons



*Questions? Comments? Willing to help?
 Contact Ryan Ruta (ryanruta@yahoo.com)
 Stephen Jenks (unionpastor@gmail.com)*

Godly Play – David

David brings the tent of God into Jerusalem and sets up the possibility of a house for God. David was chosen by God to be the king of Israel. God directed the prophet Samuel to name David as king. When David needed to make decisions he prayed about it and trusted God. Even if he had all sorts of feelings, like sadness, happiness, confusion, fear, peacefulness, David would still go to God just as he was and often he would sing and make music (as in the Psalms). With God's help David was brave enough to do what was right. He also made many big mistakes but afterward he would admit his mistake and say he was sorry and God would forgive him.

I wonder...

What you can tell me about today's story?
 What part of this story you liked the best?
 What part was the most important?
 What part was about you or what part you were in?

"Create in me a pure heart, oh God. Put a new spirit within me."

Psalm 51:10

PASSAGE (9/27)

The Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12)

- Read the passage several times this week with your child(ren)
- Throughout the week, ask questions about specific beatitudes, like:

What does it mean to be a peacemaker?

When is it hard to be a peacemaker?

- Consider memorizing the passage together as a family this month.