

Children's Ministry Values at Common Ground Midtown

Introduction

Common Ground Midtown **values** children as uniquely gifted individuals who are integral members of Christ's body. Accordingly, our guiding **vision** for children is to include them in the life and work of the church so they can encounter Jesus. This begins with coming alongside parents to nurture each child's relationship with Christ. We believe that parents, before any institution, have the primary responsibility for the spiritual nurture of their children; the church's role is to assist in the cooperative effort of that task.

One way we work to fulfill this purpose is by providing children's ministry on Sunday for children from newborn to fifth grade. Activities and lessons are designed to foster a deep understanding in children of a few simple points:

- They **belong** to God and His community.
- They are invited to **grow** to be more like Jesus.
- They can **respond** to the Holy Spirit's leadings to serve others.

Values

Partnering with parents and guardians by

- encouraging parents to be the primary source for the spiritual nurture of their children;
- equipping parents in their God-given roles;
- having parental involvement in the children's ministry rooms;
- and providing meaningful take-home materials, family application from sermons, family-focused training (called T&Es), and house church resources.

Belonging to God and His community by

- focusing on God's love, grace, and being made in His image;
- creating a safe, fun, and loving environment (physically, emotionally, spiritually) that fosters trust and belonging;
- providing diverse materials so all children see themselves represented;
- including children as an integral part of the church community and helping them use their unique giftings to bless the community;
- and having passionate, committed, adult mentors who teach and lead.

Growing in the image of Christ by

- helping children encounter Jesus personally and communally;
- considering different learning styles, life, and faith developmental stages of all children;
- sharing "God-centered" biblical curriculum that emphasizes the "way of Jesus";
- teaching for formation/application and not merely information;
- and practicing spiritual disciplines in the children's ministry rooms and at home.

Responding to the Holy Spirit by

- giving time for God to speak;
- making space for all children to respond personally and creatively to the lesson;
- and helping children discover their part in God's story to make things right in the world (i.e. encouraging children to pray/dream of solutions to justice issues).