

Overview: Growing in Faith as Family, Practicing Faith at Home

Our church reopening guidelines maximize safety for worship but do not yet permit in-person gathering for children, so until conditions change we offer the following formation pathways and gatherings online for children, parents, families, and youth. Our change in direction and emphasis is that these offerings are meant first to support parents as you grow in faith and second in helping you share your faith with your children (all ages).

For Parents

Practicing the Faith in the Family

Fr. Jenkins will be interested to hear your thoughts about this when he calls. Given your own formation needs, interests, and availability, we hope to form small parent groups, (one or more) that meet online for a short-lesson and discussion about faith and ways to deepen faith practices at home, whatever your children's ages.

Depending on parent needs and interests, this could look a periodic zoom gathering to discuss some *very light* reading and have focused conversation on practicing faith at home with specific resources. I suggest we read together ***Faith at Home*** by Wendy Barrie. "Parents long to give their children a strong moral foundation rooted in God through Jesus... Wendy shows how to do it simply, adding depth and meaning to the traditions families already have..." We can look at HOW to incorporate and use rich resources like ***Common Prayer for Children and Families*** by Jenifer Gamber and Timothy Seamans and ***Call On Me: A Prayer Book for Young People*** by Jenifer Gamber.

For Families

"This is NOT Sunday School" — Even if we can't physically worship and learn together, we can still draw closer to Jesus Christ. That's the aim of a new learning experience called "This is NOT Sunday School." This free, weekly online resource is intergenerational, making it a perfect tool for families and people of all ages. **[REGISTER HERE](#)**. Tune in each week on your schedule with your kids. Each session features video teaching by Episcopal formation professionals as well as downloadable lessons and readings. Sessions use **[Forward Movement's Exploring the Bible](#)** curriculum, and include many of the most famous stories in the Bible. Weekly sessions are streamed on ChurchNext. 14 lessons will take us through December 20.

For Middle and High School Youth

We suggest offering separate monthly face-to-face gatherings for middle and high school youth—more frequent if desired as possible. Gatherings will focus on relationship building and a prayer practice. Fr. John needs to hear from parents about what is possible (since these probably have to be outdoor gatherings) and what makes sense for our youth and for parents (who drive them). If in person gatherings do not seem right yet, let's discuss what is worth pursuing.

For Children Pre-K to 5th

GodlyPlay — Expanding to 2 “Circles”!!! **note time changes**

We are thrilled to announce that we are expanding our beloved GodlyPlay program into two separate circles.

What is GodlyPlay?

GodlyPlay, an Episcopal formation curriculum based in the Montessori Method, engages children in spiritual practices that explore the mystery of God's presence in our lives. We experience Biblical stories, Christian worship life, symbols, and our rituals in a setting that allows us to learn to still ourselves, listen, wonder, and respond to God's call. How does this work for children of differing ages? GodlyPlay uses a spiral curriculum meaning the spiritual growth of the child moves upward and outward through early, middle, and late childhood. We honor their growth by having separate spaces for younger and older children that meets them where they are developmentally. We will be recruiting and training 3-5 more teachers this fall so that we are prepared when we return to in-person gatherings. This also means outfitting a new GodlyPlay room. Kim Butler and Ivey Coleman will continue to teach both groups while we grow our capacity.

New practices to support parents

Sunday afternoons, we will email you the video of the day's story with a supporting “Parent Page” so you are able, if you wish, to share and reflect on the story with your child(ren). We hope this will provide new opportunities to expand on the faith journey at home for you and for them.

GodlyPlay Circle for Older Children, 3rd to 5th, Zoom **9:45 - 10:30**

Our older children will be provided the opportunity to expand and deepen their understanding of the foundation that has been established in their younger years. They will revisit some of the sacred stories but they will be extended. For example, they may revisit a core story like “The Exodus” but extend that with an additional story specifically about Moses. The children will also enrich and

deepen their understanding of core lessons by approaching the lesson in a new way or with additional detail and sophistication.

GodlyPlay Circle for Younger Children, Pre-K to 2nd, Zoom **9:00 - 9:40**

Our younger children will spend time with the core lessons. This will include learning key sacred stories from the Bible, liturgical action, parables, and lessons on silence and listening to God. It usually takes three encounters with a lesson for a child to be able to understand it and its context in the liturgical year. The child may encounter a particular lesson once a year over several years. This allows them to develop confidence and competence with the story and language and allows the child to make meaning at each developmental stage.