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FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF BRIDGEPORT
FAMILY MINISTRIES



*“Partnering with Families to help
raise their children in
Christian Faith”*



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WHAT YOU'RE HOLDING IN YOUR HAND IS A PLAN

It's a plan for how your church hopes to partner with you and your family. One of the first lessons parents learn is that you cannot actually make your child do anything. Research suggests that parents typically learn this first lesson around 2:00am sometime in the first week of parenthood. Though we cannot make our children do anything, we can create environments that encourage certain behavior: the new parent turns on sound machines and turns off lights.

We cannot make the next generation grow up to be disciples of Jesus. We can, however, create environments that make this more likely to happen. The plan is pretty detailed (there's more info than can fit in this booklet, in fact!), but it's really a simple plan. Here's what we want to do.

Partner with parents to help you raise your family in the Christian faith.

Our plan, as you might imagine, is rooted in Scripture, Luke 2, to be exact. Luke 2:40-52 paints a brief picture of Jesus' childhood and, if you read it closely, also a picture of the kind of environment in which Jesus was raised.

We want to partner with you to create the same environments for our family, namely:

 A Family that practices the faith together (Luke 2:42)

 A Community of trustworthy family & friends (Luke 2:44)

 A Church the whole family can love (Luke 2:49)

A SAFE PLACE TO ASK QUESTIONS, DEVELOP FRIENDSHIPS, AND PURSUE CHRIST THROUGH WORSHIP, BIBLICAL TEACHING, & SERVICE.

High School is an exciting, trying and at times very stressful season! From 9th - 12th grade, we help our high schoolers find a safe community in which to navigate these waters & prepare for what comes next! With everything we do, we are intentional about equipping & empowering high schoolers to continue to live as disciples of Jesus into the 13th grade.

SENIOR HIGH BIBLE STUDY

10am Sundays; South Hallway

A fun environment to study the Bible with other high schoolers.

THE U - SENIOR HIGH

4pm Sundays; FUMC

A gathering to meet each other, have fun, grow in knowledge of the Bible, create lasting friendships, and forge deeper faith

The phase where families...

 **Rally around a common project.** Identify a local organization for your family to "adopt". Decide how much time & money you'd like to donate to the organization annually.

 **Recruit 3-5 adults to help prepare for the 13th grade.** Launch is just around the corner; find a handful of adults who are helping your family prepare. Youth small group leaders are some of these adults for many families.

 **Encourage their high schoolers to lead others.** High schoolers make great small group leaders for elementary & middle school students.

Senior High



THE PHASE WHERE everything is graded, NEW FREEDOMS COME EVERY YEAR and with the 13th grade just around the corner, YOUNG MEN & WOMEN BEGIN TO ASK: "WHO AM I, & WHY DO I MATTER?"



Scope and Sequence

Goals for a 13th grader	<i>Infant & Preschool</i>	Nursery	<i>1st—5th Grade</i>	Children's	<i>6th Grade</i>	Youth	<i>7th—8th Grade</i>	Youth	<i>9th—12th Grade</i>		
Prayer: To pray routinely for him/herself and others	Adults pray for & with them.	Children have a basic understanding of prayer & lead prayers at church & at home.	Students have a routine for personal prayer.	Students turn to God in prayer in both good times & bad	Students regularly pray for & with their peers.	Scripture: To read scripture devotionally and study it in community	Children hear the basic stories & truths of Scripture.	Children learn the basic stories & truths of scripture.	Students learn about the history of the Bible & how it is primary resource for faith & practice.	Students have a routine for personal scripture reading	Students actively seek answers to their questions about life & faith through the scripture.
Worship: To make finding a worshipping community a priority	Children hear songs of the faith.	Children learn to worship with peers & adults.	Students dedicate their lives to Christ & are taught the meaning of living a life of worship.	Students develop a heart for worshipping with others.	Students model a lifestyle of worship inside & outside the church.	Community: To join or lead a group	Parents connect to a group.	Children connect to a small group.	Students establish relationships with peers & adults through small groups.	Students establish a group of "church" friends through their grade & small group.	Students do life" with their group.
Service: To find a way to give help & hope in their new setting	Parents "adopt" an FUMCB outreach partner for their family to support.	Families have a habit of serving others together.	Students attend their first mission trip.	Students desire to give their time & money to their family's outreach partner.	Students see their future through the lens of God's calling.						

Nursey and Preschool



THE PHASE WHERE a child grows from a speck INTO THE MOST SPECTACULAR BABY IN THE WORLD...into a spectacularly curious preschooler who just wants to know:

“WHY?”



A PLACE WHERE MIDDLE SCHOOLERS FEEL ACCEPTED AND CONNECTED, ENABLING THEM TO GROW IN CONNECTION WITH GOD, OTHER STUDENTS, AND ADULT LEADERS

Middle school can be a unique time! Our middle school ministry is a place of acceptance where 6th - 8th graders can connect with God, their peers, and adult leaders committed to helping lead students closer to Jesus. In these three years, we are devoted to helping build a foundation of faith, character, and relationships.

CONFIRMATION (6TH GRADE & UP)

March - May; 10am Sundays; South Hallway

An experience where middle school students can have fun while actively engaging in worship and hearing messages relevant to their stage in development.

MIDDLE SCHOOL BIBLE STUDY

10am Sundays; South Hallway

THE U - SENIOR HIGH

4pm Sundays; FUMC

A gathering for meet each other, have fun, grow in knowledge of the Bible, and participate in Small Groups.

The phase where families...



Have a plan to serve together regularly. Discuss as a family how you would like to serve, make a plan, get to it!



Make Small Group a Priority. Few things impact the MS experience more than a student's friend group. Prioritizing small group helps both students & parents stay grounded during these turbulent years.



Attend a Mission Trip. Youth family mission trips are life changing experiences & a great way to bond with others at the church. Parents consider serving as a worksite leader on a youth trip.

Middle School



**THE PHASE WHERE popularity matters,
IS MEASURED IN likes & followers, AND
YOUNG TEENAGERS want to know:**



**“WHO REALLY
LIKES ME?”**



**A LOVING ENVIRONMENT WHERE CHILDREN EXPERIENCE AN
IRRESTIBLE FIRST IMPRESSION OF OUR HEAVENLY FATHER.**

Our early childhood environment are designed to partner with parents to share God’s love with each little one in a developmentally appropriate way. From the nursery, which is focused on creating a loving and nurturing environment, to the preschool, where children begin to grasp an understanding of God, our goal is to create a safe environment where each child can begin to discover who God is and that he or she is made in the image of a wonderful God.

NURSERY (Birth - 3 years)

During Worship on Sundays, South Hallway

Our loving staff provide a loving environment where your child will play and learn about God.

PRESCHOOL-GUPPIES (3-4 years)

10:00am on Sunday, South Hallway

This class is geared toward kids who are too big for the nursery, but too small for the Elementary classes. The teachers use age-appropriate lessons and activities to teach God’s word.



Pray the Lord’s Prayer at night. Parents, it’ll just be you for a while. The kids will join in when ready.



Ask 3-5 adults to pray for your children daily. In time, these will be the same people that will help you raise them in the faith.



Make regular church attendance a habit. Routine is important for children and families, develop your church routine early!

Children's Ministry



THE PHASE WHERE school begins, the
POSSIBILITIES ARE ENDLESS, Saturday
should be called sports day, **AND EVERY**

KID WANTS TO KNOW:



“WHAT AM I 
CAPABLE OF?”

A PLACE WHERE KIDS FEEL KNOWN AND LOVED WHILE LEARNING BIBLICAL TRUTHS THEY CAN BEGIN TO APPLY TO THEIR LIVES

Our children's program is designed to excite kids about learning about Jesus. We use engaging stories, games, music, crafts, and activities to foster a lifelong journey of faith. The Children's Director, along with dedicated volunteers, bring the lesson each week in creative and relevant ways.

KIDZ ZONE

4pm; Wednesdays; South Hallway

Kidz Zone is a mid-week recharge. Kids are pulled in so many different directions and activities each week. This is a chance to slow down and count our blessings. We use music, games/activities, crafts and fellowship to remember that everything we do is to share the love of Jesus for us. Kids are welcome to come right after school and enjoy a light snack before the fun begins.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

10am; Sundays; South Hallway

Elementary (Kindergarten - 5th grade)

These classes are geared toward school age kids. Age-appropriate lessons are delivered using small/large groups. Kids work together to learn and experience the love of Jesus

The phase where families....



Circle up for a weekly devo time. Nothing fancy, just set a time each week to read a short Scripture together & talk about it.



Invest in a few “family friends.” Find some families with similar aged children & values & prioritize time for the whole family to hang out.



Help your children establish a heart for the church. Show them your heart for the church by serving at the church & calling it “our church home.”