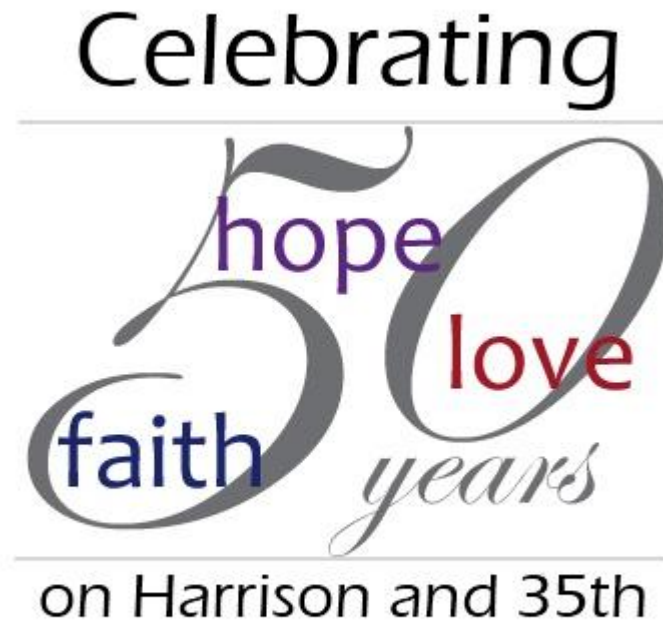


GOOD SAMARITAN EPISCOPAL CHURCH



SUNDAY SCHOOL HANDBOOK



2011 - 2012

Good Samaritan Episcopal Church

Sunday School Handbook 2011 – 2012

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CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MISSION STATEMENT

Christian Education for Children at Good Samaritan Episcopal Church is dedicated to being a ministry that invites the children of God to become joyful learners.

Vision:

We will help to provide an environment in which God's children (of all ages) can grow in faith, through learning, serving and loving each other and the world as God loves us. We hope to encourage all to become lifelong seekers of the way of Christ.

We will teach and invite questions about God, Jesus, the Holy Spirit, the Bible, as well as the history and traditions of the Episcopal Church in ways that are developmentally appropriate.

We will offer support for Parents as they fulfill their calling to nurture their children in the faith of the church and to fulfill the promises made at baptism and confirmation..

We will reach out to new families with a welcoming spirit.

A Message from Fr. Lance

In a recent conversation a person shared with me her experience growing up “free to choose”. She said,

“My parents never wanted to force religion or God on me, so they never took me to church. They wanted me to feel free enough to be able to make my own decision when I was older. Now that I’m older, I don’t feel I know how to talk about religion or God well enough to be able to make a decision!”

Certainly I’ve heard this before and I agree. Forcing people to believe is not the example Jesus gave us. However, this person’s childhood experience gave me pause for thought. How can we expect our children to speak the language of faith if we don’t teach them to speak it and speak it with them on a daily basis? To honor the value of giving our children the ability to make important life decisions when they are older, we have to give them more information and experiences now, not less! This is why a child’s regular and consistent participation in the Children’s and Youth Ministries at Good Sam are so important. By immersing our kids in the important stories of our faith, we give them the “language of faith” and a solid foundation for those important decisions later.

Recognizing that developing the language of faith is not something that is just developed by practicing once a week, I would like to also provide you with a simple five minute faith activity that every family can do together each day at home. Imagine making it a priority every day for your family to actually talk about faith, God, Church and the world.

I trust that when worship, Sunday school, daily prayer and conversation become a regular part of your family’s life that you’ll notice something significant happening within your family. This is not a “cure”, but it will help your family to grow stronger in love and faith as you tackle the challenges and celebrate the joys of life together.

May God richly bless you and your family in your learning, loving, and growing in faith together! May God bless us all during the coming school year!

Fr. Lance+

How to Get Started with Spark Online

Spark Online is the website for our Sunday School curriculum, and it is a tool to help you stay connected to the lessons your children are learning each week in Sunday school.

To get started with Spark Online, follow the directions below:

Begin by Creating a User Profile:

1. Visit your congregation's custom Spark Online URL:
<http://goodsamchurch.sparksundayschool.org>
 2. Under "Request an Account", complete the requested information and click "Submit".
 3. You'll be prompted with "Thank You" screen. This confirms that your "account access request" has been successfully submitted.
 4. You will receive a confirmation email welcoming you to Spark Online once your account administrator has approved your request.
-

Logging into Spark Online for the first time:

1. Visit your congregation's custom Spark Online URL:
<http://goodsamchurch.sparksundayschool.org>
2. Enter your email address and password in the "Log In to Spark Online" box
3. Click "Log In"
4. Complete your profile information and click "Save".
5. Next, you'll be taken to your profile page. Through your personal Spark Online profile, you can create profiles for your children and other family members. By "Adding Family Members" to your profile, you'll be able to register your family members for upcoming Spark events.

Registration:

You only have to register your child with the first Sunday School Rotation. Here's how!

1. Add your child to your Spark Online profile
 - a. Click the "Profile" tab
 - b. Click "Add Family Member" and scroll down the page to view the "Add Family Member" form.
 - c. Complete the requested information and click "Save"
 2. Next, click on the "Home" tab.
 3. Click on the event name in the "Register for Open Events" area.
(Note: If your director has not yet published an event, or has not selected "Open Registration" for an event, the event will not appear).
 4. Click "Edit Registration" under "Register Family Members"
 5. Check the box next to your child's name and click "Register".
 6. Once your account administrator has assigned your child to a group, you will see a list of your child's upcoming Sunday school events in the "My Family's Events" section of the Home page.
-

Accessing your Spark Family pages for your child's Sunday school lesson:

1. Once your child has been assigned to a group, you will see your child's upcoming Sunday school lessons or "Event" in the "My Spark Events" section of the Home page.
 2. Click on the name of the event.
 3. Next, on the "Event Details" page, you can preview and download the Spark Family Pages.
-

Message Center:

Click on the "Message Center" tab to send messages to directors, leaders and other parents.

PARENTS AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Promises made at Holy Baptism

Question: Will you be responsible for seeing that these children are brought up in the Christian faith and life?

Answer: We will, with God's help.

Question: Will you by your prayers and witness help this child to grow into the full stature of Christ?

Answer: We will, with God's help.

Question: Will you do all in your power to support these children in their life in Christ?

Answer: We will, with God's help

Promises made at Confirmation

Remembering back to our own confirmations, in which we made a public declaration of our faith, we promised to:

- † Live among God's people
- † Hear God's Word and share together in the Eucharist.
- † Proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed
- † Serve all people, following the example of our Lord Jesus
- † Strive for justice and peace in all the earth.

FAITH AND FAMILY BUILDER

You want a great relationship with your kids? You want openness, honesty, caring and sharing in your family? You want to raise a child who is a strong, thoughtful, empathetic, positive and healthy adult in the world some day? Keep your family communicating every day, and grow in your understanding of yourself and God.

Choose the same time each day at a time and in a place that allows you to be together. Put down the newspaper or homework, set the cell phone on silence and gather in a room of your choice. Then take turns going through these five simple steps:

1. **SHARE** highs & lows of the day (*not to advise- just to listen in love!*) asking questions such as "When were you the happiest today?" and "When were you the saddest?"
2. **READ** and highlight a verse of Scripture in your Bible (Your Family Pages from Sunday School are a great resource here!)
3. **TALK** about how the verse relates to your highs & lows.
4. **PRAY** for your highs & lows, for your family, and for the world (nothing fancy, just "real" talk with God...don't forget to listen too!).
5. **BLESS** one another (you can make the sign of the cross on each other's foreheads or use the traditional "forehead, navel, shoulder/shoulder" crossing) and say, "As we ... (start our day, go to sleep, etc..) may we be blessed in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit" or create your own blessing.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven. Hallowed
be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will
be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us
this day our daily bread. And forgive us our
trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass
against us. And lead us not into temptation, but
deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom
and the power and the glory forever and ever.

Grace Before Meals

Thank you God for night and day,
For food and shelter, rest and play
Be our guest and with us stay,
Amen, Amen, Amen we pray.

-or-

(Sung to the tune of Frere Jacques)

Thank you Father (2x)
For our Food (2x)
And our many blessings (2x)
You are good! (2x)
Amen!

Prayer at Bedtime

Thank you God for this good day
A time to learn and love and pray
Keep me safe through the night
And wake me with your morning light.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES IN CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Teacher: 3 week commitment teaching one rotation theme. Teachers are actively supported by the Sunday School Committee and Shepherd.

Shepherd: 3 month minimum commitment. No planning involved! Shepherds are the 'familiar face' following a particular group of children where they go on this journey through the year.

Storyteller: 30 minute commitment. Each week we begin with a large group gathering activity.

Snack: Bring in snacks for that day's Sunday school.

Childcare: Volunteer in the nursery during the 10am services

Special Events:

Christmas Pageant - assist with rehearsals

Advent Celebration - assist with special activities/crafts and food.

Easter Egg Hunt - stuff and hide eggs

Bulletin Board: let the creative juices flow! A different board based on the current rotation theme.

Photography: capture what's happening in the lives of our children during Sunday school.

To volunteer, please contact Fr. Lance (lvpeeler@gmail.com) or one of our Sunday School Committee members:

† Claudia Benfield (sweetpea@burntangel.net)

† Stacie Peeler (staciepeeler@gmail.com)

† Cindy Preece, (ctpreece@gmail.com)

SUNDAY SCHOOL BEHAVIOR EXPECTATIONS

1) We believe that we should love each other the same way God loves us.

Therefore students will...

- † Play gently at church and use walking feet in hallways
- † Use caring and respectful language
- † Include others in our play and activities
- † Listen and follow directions
- † Take turns and share

2) We believe we should be curious about God and want to learn more

Therefore students will...

- † Attend Sunday School regularly
- † Invite friends
- † Participate with enthusiasm
- † Share our ideas
- † Listen to other people's ideas

3) We believe in working for a peaceful, just and free world.

Therefore students will...

- † Ask for and accept help when we need it
- † Help each other when needed

4) We believe God wants us to care for all of creation.

Therefore students will...

- † Take good care of our church and be careful with our space, materials and furniture
- † Help clean up
- † Use only what we need

5) We believe God loves us even when we make mistakes - on purpose or accidentally. We understand that these actions may sometimes disrupt the classroom activity.

Therefore Sunday School leaders will...

- † Speak kindly and directly to the student to name the disruptive behavior, encourage problem solving and attempt to redirect the student toward positive participation with the rest of the class;
- † Offer the student time apart from the group for personal reflection if verbal redirection is not successful.
- † Contact parents, if previous efforts are not effective in helping the student to rejoin the group and to request parents' assistance and support.

2011-2012 SUNDAY SCHOOL CALENDAR

September

- 11 - Harvest Celebration
- 18 - Sunday School Begins!
Daniel and the Lions
- 25 - Daniel and the Lions

October

- 2 - Daniel and the Lions
- 9 - Hannah and Samuel
- 16 - Hannah and Samuel
- 23 - Hannah and Samuel
- 30 - Solomon Builds the Temple -
Wear your Halloween Costumes!

November

- 6 - Solomon Builds the Temple
- 13 - Solomon Builds the Temple
- 20 - Advent Celebration!
- 27 - Pageant Rehearsals Begin!

December

- 4 - Pageant Rehearsal
- 10 - St. Nicholas Celebration
- 11 - Pageant Rehearsal
- 18 - Pageant Rehearsal
- 24 - Christmas Eve Pageant
Performance!
- 25 - Christmas Day - No Sunday
School

January

- 1 - No Sunday School
- 8 - The Lord's Prayer
- 15 - The Lord's Prayer
- 22 - The Lord's Prayer
- 29 - Jesus Feeds the 5,000

February

- 5 - Jesus Feeds the 5,000
- 12 - Jesus Feeds the 5,000
- 19 - Jesus Feeds the 5,000
- 26 - Lenten Project

March

- 4 - Lenten Project
- 11 - Lenten Project
- 18 - Lenten Project
- 25 - Lenten Project

April

- 1 - Palm Sunday
- 8 - Easter! - Easter Egg
Hunt/Brunch - No Sunday
School
- 15 - Ten Men Healed
- 22 - Ten Men Healed
- 29 - Ten Men Healed

May

- 6 - The Widow's Offering
- 13 - The Widow's Offering
- 20 - The Widow's Offering
- 27 - The Lord is My Shepherd

June

- 3 - The Lord is My Shepherd
- 10 - The Lord is My Shepherd
- 17 - Sunday School Picnic

July

- 8 - 11 - Vacation Bible School