

Children & Youth Ministry Handbook

Introduction

“Let the children come to me.” Matthew 19:14. Nothing is more important than teaching children the basics of faith.

Christian Education & Other Children & Youth Ministry Programs

Sunday School

- One room school house concept
- Sunday School Director coordinates Sunday School program
- Ages 3-year-old through 4th grade
- Meets after church ends on Sunday mornings (approximately 10:30) for 25—30 minutes
- Ring the bell, prayer, Whirl Bible story, Whirl video and discussion questions, and activity/project.
- Bibles given to 3-year-olds and 3rd graders and any others who have not received a Bible.
- Traditional Christmas program presented/performed during Sunday morning worship and at Bethany Meadows during Sunday School time (if allowed) in December. Simple retelling of the Christmas story and singing of Christmas songs. Practice held on Sunday mornings. Families are asked to help children learn songs which are posted on the church website and Facebook page.

Children’s Choir

This is an optional opportunity for Sunday School children. The children’s choir practices for 10-15 minutes on Sunday mornings after Sunday School and sings in church approximately once a month during the Sunday School year.

Vacation Bible School

Each summer, a mini-VBS (one story) is held on a Sunday morning after church.

5th Graders

Our fifth graders are in a special place within Beaver Valley. No longer young, Sunday School kids, they are now invited into their young adult life in the congregation throughout this "pre-Confirmation" year. The year begins with First Communion training. After they have passed that milestone event, they will be invited to become a servant team in fun and meaningful ways.

First Communion

- 5th graders and older children who have not yet received first communion.
- Meet a couple of times with pastor prior to receiving first communion.
- Paint a chalice to commemorate first communion milestone.
- First communion is held on the first Sunday in November.

Bible Camp

Children are encouraged to consider attending Bible camp during the summer.

Confirmation

- 6th-8th graders + fall session for 9th graders
- Meets on Wednesday nights from 7:15 to 8:00 p.m.

- Lead by Pastor with the help of adult mentors/confirmation guides.
- Bible, handbook, and curriculum provided to 6th graders
- “I Send You” curriculum focusing on learning the joy and importance of serving others.
- Servant and ‘fun’ events incorporated throughout the confirmation year.
- Confirmation Sunday is held on the last Sunday in October.

High School Youth Group

- 9th-12th graders
- Meets once or twice a month on Sunday evenings at 5:00 p.m.
- Servant and ‘fun’ events held throughout the year.
- Group faith experience/trip offered every three years.
- Assist with Easter sunrise worship (worship assistants, readers, song leaders).

Volunteering

Opportunities for Adults to Volunteer

Teach Sunday School for 3-year-olds -4th graders. Commit to teaching just one Sunday or multiple Sunday’s during the year.

Serve on the Christian Education committee.

Serve as a Confirmation Guide.

Opportunities for Families to Volunteer

- Help with pasta meal fundraiser in January or February AND/OR Palm Sunday brunch in March or April
 - Planning team
 - Donate food or other items
 - Set up
 - Prepare meal
 - Serve meal
 - Clean up
- Sell grocery gift cards after church on Sunday mornings.
- Provide treats for high school youth group.
- Serve as a worship assistant on a regular basis on Sunday mornings. (Complete time and talent sheet.)
 - bell ringer and candle lighter (additional opportunities not listed on time and talent sheet – sign up on the church website volunteer opportunities link)
- Serve treats for coffee hour after church on Sunday mornings.

Funding – Budget, Fundraising, & Special Funds

Budget

- Sunday School - curriculum and supplies, Bibles for 3 year-old’s and 3rd graders and any others who have not received a Bible.
- Vacation Bible School - curriculum and supplies (advertising, decorations, and food)
- First Communion – curriculum and supplies (chalices)
- Confirmation – curriculum, Bibles, servant activities, and fun activities/short trips

Fundraising (Pasta Meal Free Will Donation, Palm Sunday Brunch Free Will Donation, and Grocery Gift Card Sales)

- High School Youth Group – curriculum, servant activities, and fun activities/shorter trips
- Bible Camp – A portion of Bible camp cost will be paid. The amount provided to each child will be determined based on the amount of funds available and the number of children attending camp.
- Youth Trips (National Youth Gathering or other longer trip) - A portion of the cost of longer youth trips will be paid. The amount provided to each youth will be determined based on the amount of funds available and the number of youth going on the trip.
- Donations to International, National, State, and/or Local Causes/Charities – A portion is donated each year to support causes/charities.

***Additional funds for camp registration and longer youth trips may be requested by talking to Pastor. He will inform the education committee of the request while keeping the identity of the family requesting funds anonymous.

***Additional fundraising may be done by specific groups of youth attending longer youth trips. This fundraising will be coordinated by members of the group and will be completed outside the church (i.e. concessions at an auction, waiting tables at Pizza Ranch, cleaning the Canaries stadium, etc.). The funds earned will be split between the youth participating in the fundraiser to help fund their trip.

Special Fund (donated by Trudi Roberts)

- Use of the money in this fund is determined by the pastor.

Conclusion

The goal is to provide the opportunity here at Beaver Valley Lutheran for families to find the resources and opportunities to raise children in the faith. We ask for families to support the teaching of children and to be involved throughout the year in support of our Christian education activities, as well as occasional fundraising events. We want children to be safe here; to be reminded that they are loved for who they are and that God needs them to live healthy, faithful lives in this world.