

## What is Family Ministry and who is on the team?

Family Ministry at Bethlehem is a partnership between church and family to lead children into a growing, healthy relationship with God that will carry them through life. We want to build a foundation in each child & student, making sure that at every age they have **3 key types of relationships**:

- (1) A strong relationship with their parents,
- (2) A healthy walk with God, and
- (3) That they are surrounded by adults that care about them and team with the parents to point them to Christ.

**Our Family Ministry team** serves under the leadership of Bethlehem's Senior Pastor, Dickie Spargo, and is made up of 4 staff members. See the back side of this sheet for complete contact information for our team.

## What is orange all about?

We love using colors to explain Family Ministry!

Yellow represents the church, the light of the world. The church shines the light of Jesus into the dark world to draw others into a personal relationship with Him.

Red represents the family, the heart and unconditional love for your children to lead them to grow to be everything they were created to be.

Orange is created when the church and family combine efforts and partner together to give kids a foundation that will stand the test of time. It is a much more vibrant and intense color and the combined impact is more than either the church or the family could do on their own.

## Is this strategy Biblically based?

Yes! It comes from Moses' teaching to the people of Israel in Deuteronomy chapter 6. We encourage you as a family to read through the first 9 verses of that chapter, especially noting verse 7. We believe that it is God's design that what happens at home to grow a child spiritually is more important than just what happens at church on Sundays.

## When I drop my children off on Sunday mornings, what happens there?

Children get to experience God in an environment specifically designed for their age range. Babies through 4 year olds go to the Cove, Kindergartners through 5th grade go to Startown, and middle & high school students head to the WHEREHOUSE.

Once your children are checked into their safe, fun and age-appropriate environment, they experience these elements:

**Large group worship** - music led by a band or worship team that connects with them at their age.

**Large group teaching** - relevant teaching, along with creative elements, that gives them a chance to hear truths from God's Word in a way that interests them and teaches them.

**Small group interaction** - they meet with the same small group each week, discussing the "bottom line" from the large group teaching, and building meaningful relationships with small group leaders and other kids/students.

**Tools to take home** - with every age, useful tools (like Small Talk cards or God Time cards) are sent home and others are emailed (like Parent Cues).

## What are the basics of what my child is being taught?

Each age group has several basic truths or checkpoints. Based on your child's age, here is the foundation of what they are learning:

### The Cove (preschool)

1. God made me.
2. God loves me.
3. Jesus wants to be my friend

### Startown (elementary grades)

1. I can trust God no matter what.
2. I need to make the wise choice.
3. I should treat others the way I want to be

### The WHEREHOUSE (middle/high school)

1. Authentic Faith - the heart meets the head knowledge.
2. Make Wise Choices - making decisions that honor God.
3. Real Friendship - Accountability.
4. Growing in Christ - having a daily quiet time.

### What is Bethlehem's role in this partnership?

We create environments for your child to experience God.

See the question on the other side that explains what happens when your child is checked in at church.

We train adults to connect with your child. These small group leaders and coaches are your partners in this Adventure - they want to speak the same Godly message that you are speaking to your child.

We provide tools - things you can take home on Sundays and other opportunities throughout the year (check out the next box for more details).

### What is a parent's role in this partnership?

Your role is to maximize the time that you have with your children during the week. We only get about 40 hours a year with your children - you have approximately 3000 hours.

We encourage you to leverage 3 key relationships in the life of your child:

1. The relationship between your child and you, as the parent.
2. The relationship between your child and God.
3. The relationship between your child and other adults in their life that are speaking the same message as you.

**Don't get overwhelmed** - we want to help you learn how to do this!

### What are some resources that I can access to help me as a parent?

Each child/student is given a tool to take home, whether it is a Small Talk or Parent Talk card (Cove), God Time card or Refrigerator Door (Startown) or Parent Cues (WHEREHOUSE). These tools are designed to only take a couple minutes to use and ideally, would be used in your daily routine by you and your child/student throughout the week.

We have books in our bookstore that we recommend. We offer events throughout the year to help you as a parent, including Family Worship (252 Avenue), Baby Dedication Services (new format), and Parenting conferences and workshops. Of course, **one of the best resources we offer is our people** - we encourage you to contact your child's small group leader, small group coach, or ministry staff member anytime that you feel like we can help you with challenges in your child's life.

### What is this Wonder, Discovery & Passion that I keep hearing about?

These are 3 key concepts that we see throughout Scripture in our perspective of who God is and how He wants to be a part of our lives. Here is how we describe these ideas about God —

#### Wonder

Our God made all of creation and is bigger and more powerful than we can fathom - yet His love for each of us is intensely personal. What if we lived our lives in wonder of Him and we understood that God is big enough to handle whatever we will face in life?

#### Discovery

Our God is unchanging, His Word is real and He wants to be a part of our everyday lives in a undeniable way. What if we truly lived a lifestyle of daily discovering who God is and understanding more about how He wants us to live like Jesus?

#### Passion

Jesus was passionate and lived a life of selflessness, sacrifice, and most of all...love. What if we lived with this same type of passion, truly caring for others, and keeping our vision on living a life filled with Christ-like love?

**The key to Wonder/Discovery/Passion:** The best way to help children experience God in this way is to show them how we as adults are experiencing God in this way. Our Family Ministry - and all of Bethlehem's Ministries - are committed to helping you and your children live a Christ-filled life that is characterized by wonder, discovery & passion.

### Bethlehem's Family Ministry Team

Amy Giles	The Cove (preschoolers)	amy@bethlehembc.com
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