CD 656 Discipling Children in the Large Church

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CD 656 – Discipling Children in the Large Church

Examines ministry with children in large churches to discover potentials, challenges, and approaches that provide effective Christian discipling for children and their families. This course involves traveling to visit large churches and learn from their children’s ministry staff members followed by research and reflective processing of the experiential learning. Prerequisite: CD655 or additional background reading to be completed before the course begins. Cost in addition to tuition may apply.

Course Format

The format and schedule of this course are non-traditional, involving group travel, independent research, and a one day seminar later in the semester when students will present their research papers. Students from the Orlando, Wilmore, and Virtual campuses may participate in the course.

1. During the travel days students will observe ministries with children in several large churches and learn from their staff members about the perspectives that guide their discipling of children, the ministries and programs they provide and the resources they use.

2. After returning to campus students will do additional research into the spiritual potential and needs of children and write a 15 page paper. The paper will evaluate some aspect of ministries with children that were observed, using the research to assess the adequacy of those ministries and identify ways of enhancing those ministries.

3. Each student will present his or her research paper at the seminar and be prepared to lead the discussion of one other paper. (Depending on the campuses represented in the class, the seminar may involve Distance Learning and ExL students who can not go to Orlando or Wilmore can participate in an online seminar.)

4. The course will involve additional cost to the students to cover accommodations and food while traveling. The amount will be determined each time the course is taught, based on the actual anticipated expenses.

Course Dates

Travel to Montgomery AL and Atlanta GA: January 27 – February 4
Seminar: April 14
Final Draft

Course Overview

Although I do not a full schedule for the course, I am thrilled to be able to announce the churches we will visit.

- Frazier Memorial United Methodist Church, Montgomery AL
- The inner City ministry of Frazier Memorial
- Cascade United Methodist Church, Atlanta, GA
- Johnson Ferry Baptist Church, Marietta GA
- Mount Pisgah United Methodist Church, Alpharetta, GA
- Peach Tree United Methodist Church, Atlanta, GA
- Perimeter Presbyterian Church, Duluth, GA
- Providence United Methodist Church, Atlanta, GA

Course Objectives

Having completed this course with competence, the student will be able to:

1. Identify the potential and challenges of ministering with children in large churches
2. Describe the leadership structures and relationships needed for effective ministry with children in the large church.
3. Articulate the core values and format of several children’s ministry models being used in large churches
5. Develop plans for effective Christian formation through one aspect of a large church’s ministry with children.

Assignments

For those who have not taken CD655 Ministry with Children in the Church:

Pre Course Preparation
Prior to the beginning of the course, those who have taken CD655 Ministry with Children in the Church will review the books listed below.
Students who have not taken CD655 will read the following books as extra reading in lieu of the prerequisite course;

- Pritchard, Gretchen Wolff, *Offering the Gospel to Children*
- May, Scottie, Beth Posterski, Catherine Stonehouse, and Linda Cannell, *Children Matter: Celebrating Their Place in the Church, Family, and Community*
Final Draft

Stonehouse, Catherine, *Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey: Nurturing a Life of Faith*

**Reading** (20 points)

*Note: bring these texts with you for the intensive week.*

**Observation Notes** (20 points)
Make thorough notes on observations and insights from the church visits.
The notes should include such things as:
- Descriptions of ministries and programs offered for children
- Responses of the children
- The place of children in the faith community
- The nurture of families
- The theology, vision, and core values of the leaders
- Leadership structures and functioning: paid and volunteer staff
- Strengths of the ministries
- Questions
- Weaknesses or concerns
Submit the notes to the professor for review.

**Due: February 13**

**Research Paper** (40 points)
In consultation with the professor and other class members select an aspect of ministry with children that you will address in your paper.
Through research increase your understanding of Christian formation during childhood and of your selected aspect of ministry with children.
In your paper describe why that aspect of ministry is important to the child’s Christian formation
and identify criteria to use in assessing the effectiveness of such ministry.
Assess the effectiveness of your selected aspect of the ministries in the churches visited.
Develop a plan for your selected aspect of ministry that will enhance the Christian formation of
children and be workable in a larger church.

**Due: April 9**

**Presentation and Discussion of Papers (20 points)**
Prepare to present your paper to the class.
Also, review the paper of one other student and prepare to lead the class in discussing that paper.

**Due April 14**

**Course Schedule**

**January 27 - February 4, 2007**

**Saturday January 27**
8:00 AM – Depart Wilmore: gather in front of Beeson Manor
8:00 PM – Arrive Montgomery AL
   Frazer Memorial United Methodist Church
   6000 Atlanta Highway
   Montgomery, AL 36117
   (334) 272-8622
   Overnight accommodations in homes Saturday and Sunday nights

**Sunday January 28: Frazer Memorial UMC: Marsha McGehee**
8:00 AM – Noon – Observe Children’s ministries – Francis Carr
8:00
   Wave Makers Sunday School: Combined classes
   Confirmation
9:30
   Four and Five year olds Children’s Worship
   First through Third grade Children’s Worship
   Fourth through Six grade Children’s Worship
11:00
   Sunday School: Many classes
   Confirmation
2:00 – 5:30 PM – Youth Worship Arts
6:00 – 7:00 PM – Evening Service
Monday January 29: Frazier Memorial and Travel
9:00 AM – Noon – Meet with Children’s Ministry Team – Marsha McGehee
1:00 PM – Depart for Atlanta
La Quinta Inn
Atlanta Roswell
575 Old Holcomb Bridge Rd.
Roswell, GA 30076
(770) 552-0200
7:00 – 9:00 PM – Group Gathering

Tuesday January 30: Johnson Ferry Baptist Church: Sheryl Beck
955 Johnson Ferry Rd
Marietta, GA
(770) 973-6561
9:30 AM – 12:30 PM – Meet with Children’s Ministries Staff
9:30 – 10:15 – Staff Panel: Introductions and Questions
10:15 – 12:00 – Tour and Ministry Presentations on Location
12:00 – 12:30 - Lunch
12:30 – 3:00 PM – Observe Home School support system
  Middle School and High School accredited classes
  Small groups
  Independent studies
4:00 – 5:00 PM – Reflection and journaling

Wednesday January 31: Peachtree City United Methodist Church: Betsy Haas
400 Wirdgate Rd
Peach Tree City, GA 30269
(770) 487-6499
9:30 AM - Drive to Peach Tree City
11:00 AM – Noon Observe Pre School and Children's Morning Out
12:00 – 12:30 - MidSabbath Lunch in the Fellowship Hall
12:30 – 3:00 - Time with the Children's Ministry Staff -
  Betsy Haas
  Beth Green
  Michelle Cole
  Carolyn Long
  Rhonda Williams
3:00 – 4:00 Tour both facilities
4:30 – 5:00 PM - Children's Choirs (at Robinson Rd.)
5:00 – 6:15 PM - Dinner with the church family
6:15 – 7:00 PM - God Stuff: 300 kids and parents in worship
7:00 Debrief GodStuff with Beth Green and Brock Tarno and lay leadership

Thursday February 1: Mount Pisgah United Methodist & Perimeter Presbyterian Churches
9:00 – 1:00 AM – Mount Pisgah: Anita Hunt
9820 Nesbit Ferry Rd
Alpharetta GA, 30022
(678) 336-3000
9:00 – 10:30 – Meet with Children’s Ministry staff
10:30 – 11:00 Tour the Lower School and the Preschool with Allison Hogsed

11:15 – 11:45 A Beacon Of Hope Informational meeting with Tracey Casale, Director of A Beacon Of Hope
11:45 – 12:30 Have lunch at Mount Pisgah (Sage Dining Services at the Church) and discuss any ministry questions
12:30 – 1:00 Tour North Campus and First Steps Academy

2:00 – 4:30 PM – Perimeter Presbyterian: Mike Gaskins
9500 Medlock Bridge Rd
Duluth, GA
(678) 405-2000
Meet with Children’s Ministry team

5:00 – 5:30 PM – Journaling and Reflections
7:30 – 9:00 PM – Group Discussion

Friday February 2: Fun in Atlanta
Drive to Fayetteville, GA for accommodations Friday and Saturday nights
Providence United Methodist Church
592 Bernhard Rd
Fayetteville, GA 30215

Saturday February 3: Providence United Methodist Church: Kathi Sewak
9:00 – 11:00 AM – Workshop with Providence Children’s Ministry team and Parents
1130 AM – 1:00 PM – Conversation with Children’s Ministry staff
Discipling Children in the Midsize Church – Kathi Sewak

Sunday February 4: Visit Various Churches
8:00 AM – Noon – Teams will go to assigned churches to observe Children’s Ministries in action
2:00 PM – Meet at designated location to begin trip back to Wilmore (Florida, or Georgia)
Arrive in Wilmore between 10:00 PM and midnight

Bibliography

Freudenburg, Ben and Rick Lawrence *The Family Friendly Church*.
Ng, David and Virginia Thomas *Children in the Worshiping Community*. 


Ratcliff, Donald, ed. *Children’s Spirituality: Christian Perspectives, Research, and Application*. Eugene OR: Cascade Books, 2004


Roehlkepartain, Jolene L. *Nurturing Faith in Families*.


Zimmermans, Martha. *Celebrating Biblical Feasts in Your Home or Church*.
