CD 656 Discipling Children in the Large Church

Catherine Stonehouse

Follow this and additional works at: http://place.asburyseminary.edu/syllabi

Recommended Citation
http://place.asburyseminary.edu/syllabi/2677
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
Course Overview

Although I do not have 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

Reading (20 points)
1200 pages of reading, drawn from the attached bibliography and other sources pertinent to your research.
Submit a report of reading completed, including number of pages.

Due: April 14

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

**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**
The details of the schedule will be spelled out in consultation with the leaders of the churches to be visited. In addition to times of observation, there will be presentations by the church leaders, time
for personal processing of notes, group reflection and discussion on the experiences and observations of the day.

**Bibliography**

(To be revised prior to the 2007 course)


Freudenburg, Ben and Rick Lawrence *The Family Friendly Church*.


Ng, David and Virginia Thomas *Children in the Worshiping Community*. 
In Process Draft

Ratcliff, Donald, ed. Children’s Spirituality: Christian Perspectives, Research, and Application.
Roehlkepartain, Jolene L. Nurturing Faith in Families.
Zimmermans, Martha. Celebrating Biblical Feasts in Your Home or Church.