

## Proposal for Sunday A.M. Kids Schedule Change

At CLF, we have many opportunities for kids to experience God in a real & personal way. The typical schedule for a child is as follows:

### **Nursery (birth-age 2):**

**Sun. A.M.** – Nursery during morning service

**Sun. P.M.** – Nursery during evening C.E.

**Wed. P.M.** – Nursery during evening Kids Clubs

### **Pre-School (ages 2-4):**

**Sun. A.M.** – Toddler/4&5 Church

**Sun. P.M.** – Sunday School

**Wed. P.M.** – Kids Clubs (Rainbows)

### **Elementary (ages 5-12):**

**Sun. A.M.** – Children's Church

**Sun. P.M.** – Sunday School

**Wed. P.M.** – Kids Clubs

We at CLF are unique from other churches in that our Sunday evening time is for Sunday School & Home Groups. At no time during a typical week at CLF is a family together. Children and families are fragmented and never have the opportunity to experience God together.

After talking with Pastor Dan, he and I have noticed that some of our Jr. High students seem to have a difficult time transitioning from the children's church setting into adult service. As children's pastor, I see my job as not only helping kids experience God and develop a personal relationship with Him, but also preparing the kids of our congregation to serve the Lord as youth and adults. I have a great crew of Jr. High youth who faithfully minister in Children's Church on Sundays. But, I am finding that I have some Jr. High students that happen to come to Children's Church simply to "get out" of going to the adult service. It seems that somewhere along the line our kids have not been adequately prepared for the transition into the adult service.

At the same time, I see a possible solution to this problem in an adjustment to a child's church experience on Sunday morning. Children could sit with their parents until the end of the worship time and then would be dismissed to their age-specific children's church. There are many positives and negatives to a change like this, which have been detailed on the attached chart.

I have lead children's churches in both situations and both have been affective. After talking with Pastor Dan, we both agree that changing to a format where the children begin in the adult service and then are dismissed would have many positives for kids & youth that we minister to. Of course, this is only an idea and will fall under your discretion as Sr. Pastor.

- Jason Rhode

## **To Dismiss or Not To Dismiss**

Below are possible arguments for both opinions as to the length of Children's Church at CLF

### **Option 1 – Children in children's church for entire service (1 hr. 30 mins.)**

#### **Pros**

- More time to check-in kids
- Time for more elaborate features in kids service
- Kids service not dependent on adult service
- Children not a "distraction" to parents
- More time to involve children in ministry
- Greater opportunity for extended worship time and altar services with the children
- Time to preach a more complete message to the children
- Frees space in sanctuary

#### **Cons**

- Families with kids never worship together
- Children never take part in adult service
- Some parents want kids with them in adult service
- Children never experience Body building events such as communion, water baptisms, and baby dedications
- Often times the lack of children in a morning worship service promotes the "out of sight, out of mind" concept among pastoral staff. In these cases the morning worship begins to stretch becoming longer with no regard given to children and those working with them.
- Workers tend to burn out faster when attempting to fill more than an hour and a half in children's church.
- Children's Pastor has no exposure with youth and adult congregation on Sunday mornings. This inhibits ability to recruit for all areas of children's department

### **Option 2 – Children dismissed to children's church after worship (approx. 50 mins.)**

#### **Pros**

- Children can worship with their family
- Jr. High & Sr. High youth model worship for the children
- Makes transition into adult service easier for Jr. High kids
- Children's Pastor in adult service: more visible to congregation, able to participate in service features, available to meet new families, etc.
- Children's Pastor available for altar prayer times during service
- Children experience Body building events such as water baptisms & baby dedications
- Dismissing from adult service may yield a higher percentage of children going to children's service
- Adult worship sets the tone for children's service
- Adults become more aware of the children and their worship needs

#### **Cons**

- Not as much time for kids to use Kids Church Store
- Check-in and visitor welcome more difficult
- Difficult to do some time-consuming activities in Children's Church
- Not as much prayer time available for children to respond to God's Word through altar services
- Patience is sometimes required of pastoral staff and other adults as children are inclined to do the unexpected at any time
- With large attendance, sanctuary space could be limited due to kids in sanctuary