



# FAMILIES & KIDS NEWSLETTER

Offering practical, spiritual, and fun resources for families following Jesus together.  
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## OUR LEARNING COMMUNITY

As we settle down into the school year in Kids Church and Youth Group we're digging into the Old Testament stories that are the bedrock of the Bible. We're also working to build relationships within our groups; we can know God better when we share in community. Read on for more information and our October calendar.

### PRESCHOOL AND KINDERGARTEN

So far this fall, our line-up of Godly Play stories has included Creation, The Garden of Eden, The Fall, and The Great Family. We'll continue tracking the People of God as they discover new ways to come close to God through the stories of the Exodus, The Ten Best Ways (aka the Ten Commandments), the preparation of the Tabernacle in the wilderness, and the building of the Temple in Jerusalem. You can check signs posted outside the classrooms for a synopsis of the day's story. To see what a Godly Play session looks like, you can check out this YouTube video: "[The Sower](#)" [Full Godly Play Session](#) or contact Kim Messenger to schedule a time to visit a class.

In addition, to hearing and wondering about these Bible stories together, we also practice routines that help sustain our community of children and grown-ups. We practice playing together, cleaning up, worshipping, forming a story circle, choosing our work, gathering for a feast, listening to each other, sharing thank you prayers, receiving a blessing, and saying goodbye.

### ELEMENTARY

In Elementary Kids Church we've been talking about the beginning of the story: the parts of the Bible that explain people's very first thoughts about a God powerful enough to create the whole world—who also cares about the life of each individual. We're tracing the story of how people's relationship with God changed over time, from Adam and Eve walking and talking with God, to Abraham following God's personal message, to Moses meeting a God he didn't know and then learning from God a way of life that would keep people connected to a Godly way of living.

At the same time, we're working on getting to know our own community, and figuring out how we can best work and play together on Sunday mornings. We have a bigger group this year, and the energy in the room is wonderful!

### YOUTH GROUP

This fall has been full of events for the middle and high school youth groups. Several young people ran a 5k to raise money for the Samaritans, an organization that works to prevent suicide. Other teams faced off at a BodaBorg rematch; each group of three faced rigorous physical and intellectual challenges. The middle schoolers spent a night at church, playing sardines, flashlight tag, and other games, before waking up and cooking breakfast for each other.

Middle school folks have embarked on a big youth group project: stop motion animations of Old Testament stories. Each group chose a story, ranging from Noah's ark to the battle of Jericho to Daniel and the lions. They've created storyboards, backgrounds, and characters for their films. The next steps include photographing their work and animating it using Scratch. A high school student has even volunteered her time to create a model animation, teach the middle schoolers how to use the tool, and answer any technical questions that arise.

The high school folks have spent some time this fall thinking and talking about how different spiritual and reflection tools help identify ways we interact with what God is doing in the world. This has included different ways of praying. One week high schoolers baked cookies and prepared care packages for youth group alumni in their first year of college. Stay tuned for more information about the upcoming high school retreat on Martha's Vineyard!



*Youth group community-building!*

### CONTACT US

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# WORKING WITH FRIENDS

Playing with the stories in preschool; drawing and finger-knitting in the elementary classes; running together to fund-raise for Samaritans in youth group: the kids and youth of our community are building relationships on Sunday morning and beyond!



## CREATING COMMUNITY IN KIDS CHURCH

by Dan Archibald

In Elementary Kids Church we talk a lot about the Bible. Most weeks our morning is built around hearing a Bible story together; then we gather in smaller groups to share thoughts and questions about it. Sometimes there are kids who don't have a lot to say, and that's fine. But when I'm leading the discussion, I always try and make sure to let those kids know I'm really interested in what they think about the story, if and when they want to share. Because, I tell them, the stories have different messages for us each time we hear them; and when we're together, each of us brings something to our collective understanding of the story that day.

That means that our community is important. Not for nothing is community one of our three strands in Kids Church, along with the Bible and faith practices. In September the elementary kids spent the first two weeks of the school year focusing a little more explicitly on building community. We had a chance to talk about our own stories, and I got to hear a little from each kid about what they're like—their family, what they're proud of, what makes them happy or sad. We also thought about how we'll be working together this year to create: creating relationships, creating art, and creating that shared understanding of God's story.

To make that visible this year, I asked every kid to be creative on a square piece of paper. Some of them illustrated things that were important to them; others chose just to be decorative. Then we put them all together to make a paper quilt. It may not be the most beautiful thing there is, but I love it! It's a tangible sign of our creating community—a community I'm looking forward to growing in over the year to come.

## FAMILIES CALENDAR

October 20-21	<b>Reservoir Church Fall Retreat.</b>
Sunday, October 29	<b>Child Dedication Class.</b> 11:15 AM - 12:30 PM.
November 10-12	<b>High School Retreat to Martha's Vineyard.</b> [Tentative date.]
Saturday, November 18	<b>Parents Night Out, 5-8 PM.</b> [Tentative date.]
Sunday, November 12	<b>Child Dedication.</b> 9:30 AM in main service.

## TIME FOR ADULT CONNECTIONS

It's not just the kids who enjoy building community! You may have noticed that services have been finishing a bit earlier than usual. Whatever time first service wraps up, our programs for kids and youth will happily keep your children till 11. So feel free to grab a cuppa and enjoy a short conversation with another grown-up. As long as you arrive by 11 AM to collect them from Kids Church, your children and the Kids Church team will be quite content.



42 squares of creativity