

All Souls Parents' News



Christian Education Starts at Baptism

Teaching your children the important virtues of their Christian faith is not a “Solo” task for their teachers in the Sunday School. It is a family affair that begins at Baptism.

It is so good to see your children on Sunday mornings. The Meetinghouse is definitely quieter in the summer and we miss the enthusiasm and the energy our children bring to our whole life here. We have just completed another class of “Race Through



the Bible” with our current third graders. Their eagerness to have their own Bibles and to find the stories they are

hearing in class is so encouraging.

In recent months I have again read several articles emphasizing the critical importance of the home as the center of spiritual growth and training. I am not sure how many of you are aware the tiny amount of time we spend in teaching your son or daughter some basics of the Christian story. If your child had perfect attendance from September through May, we would spend just about 24 hours in instruction. In that time we hope to invite them to think about the ways God has reached out to the world as told in the Bible. We introduce them to the great stories in the Bible. We encourage them to use their Bibles at home, to learn some Scripture by heart. We are not

able to spend much time exploring the important ways Christians have made an impact on the world. Western Civilization is a direct result of Jewish and Christian influences over millennia, yet few of our young have any idea this is so. Recently I asked the current class of confirmation students if they could name 3 famous Christians in the last 2000 years. They could not. There is no place they are being taught the wider influence of faithful minds. They knew Martin Luther King, Jr., but they had no idea he was a Baptist minister whose impetus for his involvement and leadership in the civil rights movement came directly from a biblical understanding of justice. Teaching children to pray, to serve others as part of the vision of the mission Jesus Christ, inviting all followers to be engaged in the community life of Christians here at All Souls, is something we strive to do, but realistically the time we have hampers us terribly. I can assure you that it can't be done without your active encouragement at home.

Early Christians worshipped in homes. Family groups gathered as the larger Family of Christ. They shared the Lord's Supper together after first sharing a meal with fellow members of the house church. Children learned by being actively a part of their parents' worship lives in their own homes. We need to reclaim this home “church”. For our children to have the advantage of parental leadership in their spiritual lives as they do in so (con't on back)



(continued from pg.1)

many other areas you parents need to be encouraged to lead by example. Let your children hear you speak of God's help in your life. Let them hear you pray out loud. Let them see you read your Bible and other devotional material. There are ways to begin this journey as a family if this is still new to you. Here's a simple suggestion: if story time is part of your evening routine, be sure to include reading Bible stories as a part of the wonderful variety of stories out there. There are a wealth of children's Bible story books available in most bookstores. Reading together,

discussing how God helped in times of trouble in those 'Bible days' lays a foundation for continued conversations at home and in the church school classroom. Together we can nurture the lives of these precious gifts from God. As they grow they will discover their faith in God to be a rock on which they can stand all the days of their lives. With your help, it will be a family affair of the heart and soul.

Baptism Promises

(Every time I hear these words I think how great is the responsibility we have all assumed as we pledge to help parents fulfill these promises. It might be useful from time to time to remind ourselves of the obligations we have all assumed for the well-being of each of God's own.)

Do you desire to have your child baptized into the faith and family of Jesus Christ?

[Parents: We do]

Will you encourage this child to renounce the powers of evil and to receive the freedom of new life in Christ?

[Parents & Sponsors: We will, with the help of God]

Will you teach this child by word and example that he/she may be led to know and to profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?

[Parents & Sponsors: We will, with the help of God]

Do you promise, by the grace of God, to follow in the way of our Savior, to resist evil, to show Christ's love, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ as best you are able?

[Parents & Sponsors: We will, with the help of God]

Do you promise, by the grace given you, to grow with this child in Christian faith, and to help her be a faithful member of Christ's church, by offering the nurture of the church so that she may affirm her baptism?

Stewardship Training-Juvenile Version

Envelopes are available to children for their church school offering

Just as children need to learn to tie their shoes, empty the trash, make their beds, say, "Please," and "Thank You", learning generosity is also part of the training in the virtues that make up the life of a Christian. To encourage stewardship of their own resources, we now have 'coloring' envelopes in which they can bring their offering. Whether they bring a dime or a dollar is not as important as developing the habit of giving some of what they have for the benefit of others. We invite your child to pick up his or her envelope box at church.