

## **Welcome !!**

At Cornerstone we believe as scripture says that “children are a heritage of the LORD” (Psalm 127:3). We have a responsibility to care for and teach the children entrusted to us. People who volunteer to teach any children’s program are very special. We are so grateful that you have chosen this ministry to serve in. We want you to know that we are here to help you become the best teacher you can be. This handbook was created to better instruct you about the procedures that make up our Children’s Ministry, and it all starts with you, the teacher.

### What is Our Goal for Our Teachers:

Our main focus is to bring the teachings of Jesus to “life” in the lives of our children; to teach them the Ten Commandments, Bible lessons, Parables, Bible verses and the principles of the Catechism which will equip them for a lifetime as a Christian. We want our children to understand that they are cared for and loved and that they are an important part of our covenantal family. We want our children to experience the power of praying for one another and being in Christian fellowship with one another. Learning in a Christian environment should also be fun. Games, music, snacks, crazy hat/sock day, celebrating birthdays once a month, taking photos, rewards, and constant praise are all ways in which we can enhance the classroom and learning techniques. Most of all, YOU must realize the special opportunity God has placed before you. You may never be fully aware of the difference you’ve made in a child’s life, but God will know. Open yourself to the call and allow the Holy Spirit to work through you according to His will and the purpose of His plan.

### Teaching Qualifications:

There are a few simple qualifications every teacher must have. First, you must be a member or regular attendee here at Cornerstone EPC. Secondly, you must enjoy working with children. Thirdly, you must go through an effortless and painless criminal background check. Most importantly, you must have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and trust Him as your Lord and Savior.

### Teaching Term:

Each area has its own length of service. For example, if you choose to teach VBS, that requires hours of preparation but the actual length of service is one week each year. You may teach VBS for as many years as you like. On the other hand, if you teach Sunday school you will be given options of teaching through the summer to give regular teachers a break, or you may be the regular teacher and choose to teach September through May each year.

### Arrival Time:

We ask our teachers to do their best to arrive 10 minutes before a program begins. This will allow the teacher to prepare and pray for their students.

### Absences:

If you must be absent due to illness or vacation, please do your best to cover your class with your designated Sub. If you cannot find someone then call the Children's Director ASAP.

### Departure Time:

Please keep students in your classroom until parents come to get them. Children should only be released to their parents.

### Attendance:

Keeping attendance records is very important for two reasons. It allows you, the teacher, to know who has arrived for your care so you can assure their safe return to their family at the end of an event. It also helps us track growth in the ministry. We like to contact all visitors during the week to invite them back. Some teachers may prefer attendance charts for the wall and allowing their students to mark their own attendance with a sticker.

### Classroom Appearance:

The building is cleaned several times during the week, but not every day. Therefore, when you are finished teaching we ask that you restore your area to its proper order for the next program. This is to ensure that all the different ministries that use the classroom will arrive to a clean room.

### Supplies:

If at any time you are in need of something special that you cannot find amongst the church's supplies please let the Children's Director know. (It helps if you plan ahead to allow for shopping time.) If you notice certain supplies getting low or you take the last of something please let the Children's Director know so we do not run out.

### Safety of Our Children:

The safety of our children is one of the most important things that we are all responsible for. Because of this we have several safety rules in place as well as first aid supplies, should they be needed.

- All volunteers should complete the orientation on the church's Policies and Procedures for the Prevention of Child Abuse. This includes filling out an application and other paperwork needed for background checks.
- All exit doors and gates must be closed when children are present. **NO CHILD LEAVES THE ROOM FOR ANY REASON WITHOUT AN ADULT RESPONSIBLE FOR HIM/HER.**
- There must be 2 unrelated teachers in the classrooms at all times when children are present.
- There is a number system in place for the infants and toddlers. A number is placed on the back of the child and one is given to the parent to claim the child at pick-up time. It is for safety reasons that we use this system **EVEN IF YOU KNOW THE PARENTS.**
- Please be aware at all times of possible choking hazards. At the same time, if a toy has broken please let the Children's Director know and then throw it away.
- There is a first aid kit in each room for minor injuries. There is also a sheet of first aid instructions. However, if there is ever a true emergency then call 911.
- There is security in the building during some of our programs to keep "strangers" out of the building. Please do not distract this person by asking them to watch your class or get you something.

- There is an emergency fire exit route posted in each classroom. Please make sure you know your exit should there be a fire.
- In the event of severe weather we need to get all the children into the hallway, away from windows, sitting hunched over with their arms and hands protecting their heads.
- Fire extinguishers are available in several locations in the building. Flashlights are available in each room in the event of a power outage.
- A bleach solution is used to wash any toys the infants or toddlers have played with. This is a 10:1 ration water to bleach. Please spray the toys, tables and chairs after the children are gone.
- All volunteers and paid staff should wear their name badges. It is important for visitors know with whom they are leaving their children. At some point in the future, we hope to provide t-shirts with the church's logo. These shirts should be worn any time you are volunteering in a classroom or nursery.

### Health Information:

- We ask that children who are sick remain at home. The same goes for our teachers. If you are too ill to teach your class please contact your designated Sub or the Children's Director ASAP.
- We do not administer any medications to the children.
- When changing diapers please use the diaper changing stations – **DO NOT** – lay a child on the floor where other

misbehavior immediately. Speak to the child firmly but kindly. If behavior problem continues, send for the Children's Director or security person.

- Remember that our main objective is to discipline consistently and lovingly. Even the most challenging child needs our love and understanding.

## If I am A Teacher...

Let me give children the healing knowledge  
That there is a better way, a more beautiful way  
To live each day of their lives.  
A physician I am not, but healing is part of my profession.

Let me give some child hope for eternity,  
Peace in this life, confidence in what will come.  
I am not a member of the clergy, but faith is part of my profession.

Let me give children a feeling of justice;  
A sensitivity for right and wrong;  
A love of truth and an abhorrence of evil.  
A legal advisor I am not, but justice is part of my profession.

Let me bring children relief from pain of disappointment and  
disillusionment;  
A remedy for dissolving personality;  
An escape from the ravages of self-pity.  
A psychologist I am not, but the healthy mind is part of my profession.

Let me give children a balance between an appreciation of their cultural  
heritage,  
And an enthusiastic participation in the human family,  
And anticipation for the world of tomorrow.  
For I am a teacher.

Beth Nelson

## **Teaching Bible Stories: How does a good teacher do it?**

How should you teach Bible stories? The best way to learn is by seeing how an excellent teacher does it. One such teacher is S.G. DeGraf, the Dutch theologian who authored *Promise and Deliverance*. He wrote this book specifically for Sunday school and Christian school teachers. It is a masterpiece, and yet it is written in a simple, easy-to-understand manner.

"Our aim in telling Bible history," DeGraf writes in his introduction, "ought to be the same as God's purpose in recording it for us in his word. God had the stories recorded 'in order that we might believe.' Accordingly, even in grade school, this aim must be kept in mind when imparting knowledge. It makes no difference at all that the children in your classroom already believe. In their case, too, the story is told to evoke faith, to deepen and broaden it."

We should keep three things in mind whenever we tell Bible stories, DeGraf says. First, "we are to view the entire Holy Scripture as nothing more or less than the self-revelation of God." This means that when we tell the story of Joseph, for instance, we must not focus on Joseph himself as the main figure in the story. The story is, instead, God's revelation to and preservation of his people. "Such an emphasis," says DeGraf, "teaches children to fear the Lord instead of looking to Joseph as a moral example."

Second, God reveals himself as the Mediator. "We will always have a great deal of trouble explaining the history in Scripture if we do not proceed from the Mediator's eager efforts to reveal himself," writes DeGraf. The point is not that we should disregard the various individuals in

the stories. It is that we are to see these people in their proper context: their stories are told in God's word, and God's word is *God's* word--not man's--in which God reveals *Christ*.

Third, too often the emphasis in our teaching falls on God saving this or that individual, rather than on God's relationship to his people as a whole. As DeGraf says about the story of Joseph, "The main point of that story is not what God meant to Joseph but what he meant to his people through Joseph; a people whose development was just beginning in the tents of Jacob. God always draws near to his *people* as a whole--never just to individuals."

Now we can use the basic perspectives given here to flesh out the particulars of the stories we are teaching. I do not want to imply that we should treat our teaching of Bible stories as lectures in theology. If anything, lectures in biblical theology ought to resemble a story time!

For as the Dutch storyteller reminds us, "As we tell a story, it should come alive; it should draw the children in and get them involved. The children should get wrapped up not just in the adventures of certain people but especially in the historical unfolding of God's self-revelation and man's response to it. We must tell the children of God's great deeds."

-- David Chilton