

January 2019



## Children's Ministry News

*This will continue until we all come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature in the Lord..." Ephesians 4:13*



As we begin a new year, our ministry will be focusing on relationships. Sunday morning worship will be focused on how God has made us for relationships with one another—with our families, our friends, and our church. During Sunday School, children will continue learning about how we have broken our relationship with God through stories of Moses and the Israelites—and how God has mended that relationship with the promise of a Savior. On Wednesdays, our kids will be growing their own personal relationships with God and with each other as they learn about and plug into the power of prayer. And, of course, we will have a number of other special opportunities for fellowship and faith building.

Maybe you wonder about whether relationships really matter to your faith or the faith of your children. Maybe you don't feel like coming and participating in our ministry has much impact on your kids. If so, consider this familiar passage from the Gospel of Luke...and Pastor Stephen Smallman's response to it.

***One day some parents brought their little children to Jesus so he could touch and bless them. But when the disciples saw this, they scolded the parents for bothering them. Then Jesus called for the children and said to the disciples, "Let the little children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these children. I tell you the truth, anyone who doesn't receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it." Luke 18:15-17***

**The children in the gospel passage received that blessed touch of Jesus because it is what the parents wanted for their children and they took necessary measures to make it happen. They were determined even when the disciples mistakenly tried to turn them away. It was not the children who exercised faith; it was those bringing them to Jesus...When we begin to consider our part in our children's coming to faith, this is the first thing we are to do—we bring them to Jesus. (Stephen Smallman, How Our Children Come to Faith, P&R Publishing, 2006)**

Pastor Smallman reminds us that what parents do matters in the faith life of their children. And, thankfully, the first thing scripture tells us to do is also the easiest—to simply give them the opportunity to be with Jesus, together with other children and other adults. Jesus will take it from there. He will provide them with playmates and teachers to help them grow. He will hear their prayers and answer their questions. And, he will strengthen your faith as he works in your children. He has done it and continues to do it for me and my family, and I know he will do the same for yours.

## Save the Dates for Special Events in 2019!

Family Movie Nights—Jan 18, March 8

Family Fun Night at LPC with Inflatables—Feb 8

Easter Eggstravaganza—April 6

VBS—June 3-7

Engage Summer Camp—June 17-21

LPC Parents—Jan 27, Feb 24, March 31, April 28, May 26

### Family Movie Night

Friday, January 18

Pizza & Popcorn at 6:30

Cost is just \$7 per family

### LPC Parents

Sunday, January 27

10:00

LPC Student Center



## PRIORITIES

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.



This month, we will begin exploring priorities and schedules. What do our schedules tell us about our priorities? Are we prioritizing the things we feel are most important, or are things that are urgent but not important getting in the way of what we really want and need to do? How can we create AND following schedules that fit with our priorities?

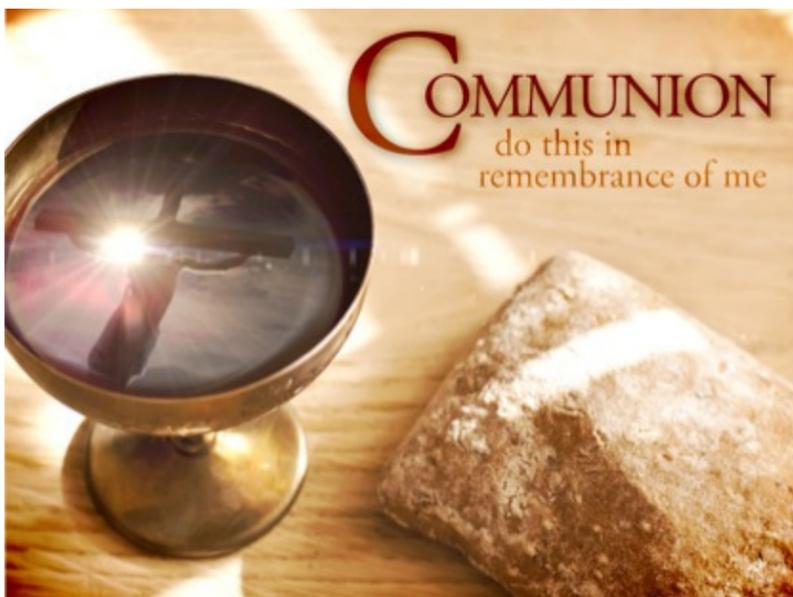


## Celebrating the Sacraments



Children's Ministry wants to grow and enhance the ways children learn about and receive the sacraments: Holy Baptism and Holy Communion. We want to help you and your kids understand and talk about the significance and meaning of these important elements of our faith.

For many years, we have offered a Communion Class for children in second grade and older. We continue to evaluate both the content and the approach to engaging kids and their parents in this learning opportunity, and we are excited for what awaits this year's class. In the fall of 2019, we are planning to offer a similar class on baptism. This will offer parents an opportunity to learn more about why we baptize infants and children and provide them with helpful resources to use at home to honor the promises they make at the baptismal font. Also, we want to help remind children of their baptism and learn about baptism as they grow. One of the ways we will do this is by sending celebration postcards to children not only on their birthdays but also on their baptismal birthdays—the days they were baptized into the family of God. If your child has been baptized at a church other than LPC, please let us know the date of their baptism so we can send a card!



## Communion Class

If you have a child in second grade or older, please join us for Communion Class this February. Parents and children learn together about the meaning and practice of Holy Communion through class discussions and at home activities. The class concludes with a special service of worship on the first Sunday in March.

Class Dates: Sundays in February (2/3, 2/10, 2/17, 2/24)

Class Location: Fellowship Hall (Room 101)

To register: [ann@lebanonpresbyterian.org](mailto:ann@lebanonpresbyterian.org)



Remember your baptism this month. Remember it whenever you see water, knowing that God has washed away all your sins. Remember it whenever you see a cross, knowing that Jesus died for you. Remember it whenever you come to church, knowing that you are part of God's family.

## Operation Christmas Child—Follow Your Boxes

This past fall, many of you and your kids contributed toys, school supplies, toiletries and more to pack shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child. We have received word that our boxes shipped out in mid-December, and they have been sent to...

Ghana (West Africa)

Columbia (South America)

South Sudan (East Africa)

Botswana (Southern Africa)

Two “Hard to Reach” Areas



The fact that some of our boxes were sent to these “hard to reach” areas is very special. Here is what OCC has to share with donors about these locations...

***Many children who live in nations that are difficult to reach with the Gospel are able to hear about Jesus Christ through specially packed shoebox gifts designated for hard-to-reach areas. In restricted areas, these shoeboxes provide a platform for local believers to share Christ in a safe and culturally sensitive way, and allow ease of entry through customs.***

And here is one story of how one of these special shoeboxes made a big difference...

***When a pastor and his wife came to their village with Operation Christmas Child shoebox gifts, Khalid did not want to go and receive one, but his mother insisted. Before giving out the boxes, the pastor told the children, “God loves you.” This was the first time Khalid heard that he was loved by anyone. He was surprised that children far away had packed a shoebox just for him to show him God’s love.***

***“On that night, I was very happy. Even though my father doesn’t like me, God [does],” Khalid said. Khalid began participating in our follow-up discipleship program offered to many shoebox recipients. “In one of the classes, I gave my life to the Lord because He died for me,” Khalid said.***

***Khalid began learning Bible stories from the pastor, and today he teaches Sunday school....Seeing the change in Khalid, his mother and sister have become believers and now attend church.***

Please share this story with your kids, and let them know their shoebox gifts could make the same difference to another child. For with God, nothing is impossible!