

Good News Presbyterian Church
Christian Education Policies and Procedures

*This is work in progress, to be further developed
by the Christian Education Committee.*

Revised 12/24/07

I. The purposes of the Christian education ministry

- A. To develop fruitful servants of Christ by helping people grow in their understanding of Scripture and how it applies to their lives and to our world.
- B. To help unbelievers understand the gospel and bring them to saving faith in Jesus Christ.
- C. To build greater community among those who attend our church.

II. The Christian Education Committee

- A. Composition: 3-5 highly motivated church members, including one elder.
 - 1. 3-year terms.
 - 2. Chairperson and secretary.
 - 3. The pastor is an *ex officio* member.
- B. Responsibilities
 - 1. Devise ways to strengthen the Christian education ministry.
 - 2. Work with the Sunday school director to recruit teachers.
 - 3. Annually evaluate the Sunday school program and the children's Sunday school curriculum.
 - 4. Plan adult Sunday school topics and teachers.
 - 5. All significant actions should be approved by the session.

III. Sunday School

Sunday school classes should seek to teach God's Word in such a way that lives are changed for His glory. Sunday School is divided into various departments from Nursery to Adults.

A. Children's Sunday School

Children are introduced to Sunday school classes when they reach 2 years of age. Children's classes typically include a Bible lesson and recitation of the Westminster Children's or Shorter Catechisms.

1. Goals

- a. To help students more fully understand the gospel, the unfolding story of redemption from Genesis to Revelation, and the various means that God has provided for our growth in grace.
- b. To supplement the Christian instruction that children receive in their homes.
- c. To be a community where children from non-Christian homes may experience Christian love, be introduced to Christ, and be nurtured in the faith.

2. The responsibilities of the children's Sunday school director include the following:

- a. Pray for and encourage the Sunday school teachers.
- b. Train an assistant director who will assume the director's responsibilities on Sundays he or she is absent and who may in the future become the director.
- c. Work with the appointed ruling elder liaison to implement the session's decisions.
- d. Promote attendance at quality teacher training seminars that are offered by like-minded churches.
- e. Maintain an attendance roster.
- f. Plan and publicize a yearly Sunday school promotion and teacher recognition Sunday at the beginning of the school year. The director may want to give out certificates to children being promoted.
- g. Order curriculum.
- h. Seek ways to make the Sunday school program more effective, better organized, and better attended.

3. The responsibilities of the children's Sunday school teachers include the following:

- a. Arrive 10-minutes before class begins to lay out materials, cue audio-visual equipment, and warmly welcome arriving students. A teacher standing at his or her class space as students arrive conveys that they are important and that the teacher has been expecting them. Arriving late communicates the opposite message to students.
- b. Pray for students daily. Teachers may want to keep a list of prayer requests that students share.
- c. When a student misses 2 or 3 Sundays in a row, the teacher should consider calling the student or sending a postcard expressing that he or she has been missed.
- d. Make sure that new students are introduced to the class and warmly welcomed.
- e. Consider having an understudy to be trained as a future teacher. This person should often attend class and may serve as an assistant.
- f. Teachers who purchase supplies may turn in their receipts to the church treasurer to receive a reimbursement or credit on their contribution statement.
- g. An adult assistant should accompany children to the rest room and stand outside the restroom door while the student is inside.
- h. Teachers should consider sending students birthday cards and “we missed you” postcards.

B. Adult Sunday School

1. Goals

- a. To teach the content and application of Scripture to the students.
- b. To build friendships and community among the students.

2. Course Structure

- a. Work toward offering quarterly elective classes, with at least one introductory level class and one intermediate class offered each quarter.
- b. Strive to offer both consecutive Bible studies and topical classes.

3. The responsibilities of the adult Sunday school teachers include:

- a. Arrive 10-minutes before class begins to lay out materials, arrange the classroom, and be able to concentrate on warmly welcoming students.
- b. Pray for your students daily.
- c. Warmly welcome newcomers and introduce them to the class.
- d. Secure a substitute teacher when necessary.

IV. Equipping Families

- A. Since the surest way to lead children to Christ is through their parents' discipling, Good News Presbyterian Church seeks to equip parents to raise their children in the "nurture and admonition of the Lord" (Eph 6:4; cf. Deut 6:6-7).
- B. The church endeavors to introduce families to the practice of family worship and catechization of their children. It also encourages families to make Sabbath observance and Sunday worship attendance a priority.
- C. The church points interested parents to others who can mentor them in the art of parenting. It will also point couples with marital struggles to mentor couples.
- D. The church offers classes on topics such as parenting, marriage, and household finances.

V. Youth Ministry

- A. Recognizing that the primary means of transmitting the Christian faith to the next generation is by Christian parents discipling their children, the youth group is secondary and supplemental to the work of the family and church. Yet it is a useful tool for nurturing Christian youth in Christ and introducing unbelieving youth to Christ.
- B. The church's youth should be integrated into the life of the entire congregation and view youth group involvement as an appendix to their general church membership.
- C. The church should seek godly and wise adult leaders for its youth.
- D. Parents should be encouraged to be heavily involved with the youth group.
- E. The youth group should actively reach out to unchurched children and invite them to its meetings and activities.
- F. The weekly youth meeting should include Bible teaching as well as ample time for students to fellowship with one another.

G. The church encourages a monthly fellowship activity and summer youth camp or mission trip. To prevent youth activities from being a financial burden on families, the church should typically offer inexpensive events and provide financial assistance to those in need.

VI. Communicants Class

On a regular basis, the pastor teaches this 5-week class to prepare children who profess faith in Christ for church membership.

VII. Soccer and Bible Camp

This annual summer outreach is a 5-day camp for churched and unchurched children ages 6-12.

VIII. Qualifications for Bible teachers

A. Regular teachers should be church members.

B. The session or a sub-committee of elders or should examine new teachers. The examination questions include the following:

1. Do you believe in the inerrancy of Scripture?
2. As far as you understand, are there any areas where you disagree with our understanding of the Bible as summarized by the Westminster Standards?
3. Will you honor the commitment of this church to teach the historic doctrines and principles of the Associate Reformed Presbyterian Church?
4. Will you strive to be a Christian model for your students?
5. Will be diligent in the preparation of your lessons and in your personal prayer and Scripture study?
6. Will you endeavor to arrive on Sundays ten-minutes before class begins?
7. Will you make a reasonable effort to attend any teacher meetings or training programs offered during the course of the year?

C. Current teachers should communicate to the session or Sunday school director any changes in doctrine or practice that would preclude them from continuing to give affirmative answers to the above questions.