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| 2017-2018 Life Learning Parent Handbook |
| **Alliance Missionary Church**  **Planting Seeds-Nurturing Growth**  MC900437615[1] |
| In Mountain Lake Alliance Church Children’s Ministry, we will be a forming, and family-empowered ministry that offer a vibrant weekend curriculum, as well as other family resources that meet the specific needs of generation. Our Kids will be given a strong foundation of biblical knowledge in an environment where they can encounter the living God. Children will open their hearts to God, learn to discern His voice, have a desire to obey Him, and do so in the power of the Holy Spirit (Phil. 2:13). |
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ALLIANCE MISSIONARY CHURCH CHILDREN’S MINISTRY

Parent Handbook

**Mission Statement**

In our Children’s Ministry at Alliance Missionary Church, we will be a dynamic, spiritually forming, and family-empowered ministry that offer a vibrant weekend curriculum, as well as other family resources that meet the specific needs of today's generation. Our kids will be given a strong foundation of biblical knowledge in an environment where they can encounter the living God. Children will open their hearts to God, learn to discern His voice, have a desire to obey Him, and do so in the power of the Holy Spirit (Phil. 2:13).

**The Importance of Life Learning for Children**

We believe parents are responsible for their children’s growth in their faith. God’s Design for faith replication is through the context of the family (Deut. 6; Ps. 78) while the church plays a supportive/equipping role to this endeavor (Eph. 4:12).

*“Fix these words of mine in your hearts and minds; tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Teach them to your children, talking about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates, so that your days and the days of your children may be many in the land that the LORD swore to give your forefathers, as many as the days that the heavens are above the earth.” --- Deuteronomy 11:18-21*

Alliance Missionary Church’s Children’s Ministry would like to partner with you to assure that your child lives their Christian faith. As a parent you are in a unique position of influence. By bringing your children to Life Learning and attending the Sunday morning worship services, you will be modeling to your children the importance of studying and hearing the teachings of our Triune God. Following Christ requires more than just knowledge of the Scripture. It means serving Christ with our entire lives. That is why we, as a Church Ministry, are committed to partner with your family to teach and enable you to live out your faith in everyday life. In working together, we hope to not only bring the Good News of Jesus Christ to our children’s hearts, but we also hope that they become disciples of Jesus Christ their whole lives.

*“Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us.” ---Ephesians 5:1-2a*

**Life Learning Staff**

The staff for Life Learning consists of:

* Children’s Ministry Director: Candice Bartel
* Classroom Storytellers
* Classroom Helpers
* Substitute Volunteers
* Music Director

**Class and Room Assignments**

* We offer the following classes:
* 2-3 year old class meeting in room 109 in Preschool area
* 4-5 year old class meeting in room 108 in Preschool area
* Kindergarten class meeting in room 114 in Children’s Wing
* 1st -2nd grade class meeting in room 113 in Children’s Wing
* 3rd -4th grade class meeting in room 115 in Children’s Wing
* 5th -6th grade Girls class meeting in room 118 in Children’s Wing
* 5th -6th grade Boys class meeting in room 117 in Children’s Wing

**Hours/Schedule**

Life Learning is held from 9:30 to 10:30. Students should be on time. Parents are to pick their children up on time.

* 9:30-9:40 **Connect:** Children develop relationships with leaders and one another through use of simple supplies and conversation starters
* 9:40-10:00 **Gather:** Children experience and learn about God through prayer, storytelling from Big God Story, an investigation into God’s Word, and creative ways to memorize Scripture
* 10:00-10:10 **Respond/Engage**: Children process what the Holy Spirit has been teaching them and respond to God through individual time or children participate in various forms of play to engage more with the story.
* 10:10-10:15 **Bless**: Children are blessed through a prayer of commission, a portion of Scripture, or words of encouragement and guidance
* 10:15-10:30 **Worship/Program Practice:** Children gather together for a time of corporate worship and may also be practicing for upcoming event (Christmas, VBS)

**Drop Offs/ Pick Ups**

**Preschoolers** are checked in directly in their classrooms. Make sure staff knows if someone other than you is picking up your child/children.

**Elementary** are checked in at the Children’s Wing. Make sure to note who is picking up your child that day on check in slip.

The classrooms are usually opened about 5-10 minutes before class begins. Staff is requested to be there at that time. Students must not be dropped off unless the staff is there. **Preschool** parents are to wait outside the classroom until the students are finished with class to be picked up. **Elementary** parents are to wait by check in area to pick up their children. Children under the age of 10 will not be allowed to leave the Classroom/or Ministry area until their parents or approved guardian arrive to pick them up. Please make sure the little ones have used the bathroom before they enter the classroom. Parents are encouraged to speak to the staff with any questions or comments after class.

It is very important the staff be able to locate the parent on church premises during the Life Learning hour should the child become ill, injured, or in the case of discipline. Please indicate this on Check in sheets.

**Registration**

A registration form needs to be completed for each student attending Life Learning.

The parent and/or guardian must fill this out. The registration form will be available by the Children’s Ministry bulletin board or in the Check in areas.

**Curriculum**

Tru is a dynamic, spiritually forming, and family-empowered ministry philosophy that offers a vibrant weekend curriculum, as well as other family resources that meet the specific needs of today's generation. The following are highlights of this curriculum.

1. Kids need a strong foundation of biblical knowledge in an environment where they can encounter the living God. Children open their hearts to God, learn to discern His voice, have a desire to obey Him, and do so in the power of the Holy Spirit (Phil. 2:13).
2. Parents and leaders have the opportunity to create "environments" where the Holy Spirit is free to move, teach, and lead (Jn. 14:26). (See attached page for more information on these environments.
3. The Bible is God's truth for daily living. God's Word holds instructions and inspiration that guides children to know God and interpret their lives through the lens of His will (2 Tim. 3:16-17).
4. "The Big God Story" is God's ENTIRE story. It incorporates all of history, stretching from Genesis to Revelation and beyond. Kids understand that they not only play a part in this incredible story, but are also part of a much larger faith community of past, present, and future believers.
5. Because it is one story with the emphasis on God's love and redemption through Jesus (Col. 1:20), not the supporting cast in any given storyline (eg. "God Is Victorious" vs "David and Goliath").
6. Tru provides families with materials to help them connect as a family and grow together spiritually. Each week, a “take home” page provides parents with the information on next week lessons with ways you can introduce it to them before they come on Sunday.
7. Home Front, a spiritual parenting resource, provides opportunities for families to come together and experience storytelling, God’s Word, new family traditions, fun games, recipes, family blessings, prayer, and more. Home Front is also available as a FREE app in the App Store or Android Market. Learn more at www.homefrontmag.com.

**Use of Bibles**

Children are encouraged to bring their Bibles to Life Learning each week. The lessons all have a Biblical foundation, so the Bible may be used as the most important reference. To encourage children to have Bibles, Alliance Missionary Church will provide any child who does not have a Bible with one at parent’s request.

**Memory Work**

One of the most important parts of our Life Learning is the teaching of God's Word and encouraging children to gain an understanding of how this Living Word may be applied to daily life.

Why memorize the Living Word?

The goal is to have these words permanently fixed in our hearts. The words we learn will be with us, in our minds and in our hearts. They will be God's gift for you and your child’s Christian life... a well of understanding for our walk of faith.

**Bring a Friend**

The goal of our Life Learning is not only to teach God’s Word to our children, but also to encourage them to be witnesses to the world. As part of this challenge from God’s Word, the students along with the staff are encouraged to bring friends or neighbors to Church with them.

**Visiting Life Learning**

Parents, guardians, and other special adults are always welcome to visit classes at any time. We encourage parents to volunteer to assist in their child’s class. An extra pair of hands is always welcome, especially on days where a special craft is made. What a wonderful way to model the importance of faith education to your child.

Approximately every 6 weeks we have a Remember and Celebrate Sunday. During these times, we will tell and proclaim how we have seen God at work in our lives and offer joyful worship in celebration. We will also be highlighting a Biblical Feast. We welcome parents to join us on these Sundays.

These are the feasts we will be celebrating throughout the curriculum.

* The Feast of the Sabbath: (Leviticus 23:1–3)
* The Feasts of Passover and Unleavened Bread: (Leviticus 23:4–8) A
* The Feast of First Fruits: (Leviticus 23:9–14)
* The Feast of Weeks and Pentecost: (Leviticus 23:15–22)
* The Feast of Trumpets: (Leviticus 23:23–25)
* The Day of Atonement: (Leviticus 23—32
* The Feast of Tabernacles: (Leviticus33—44)

**Food and Drink**

Preschool children are given a snack during the Life Learning hour. Elementary children will be provided a snack as they enter the ministry area and can take it with them to their classroom. No outside food or drink is allowed in the ministry areas. Teachers need to be made aware of food allergies your child may have. (This information is gathered on the registration form.)

**Offering**

Money collected during Life Learning is given to a few missions projects throughout the Life Learning year. These mission projects will be made available to all on the Children’s ministry bulletin board and in print as periodic handouts. We encourage any and all ideas for special mission projects to be shared with the Leadership Staff for implementation.

**Music Time**

Each Sunday, the students participate in music time. They learn age-appropriate music consisting of fun, action and praise songs. This time is also used to practice for the upcoming Christmas program or VBS. The students may sing their praises during a church service.

**Christmas Program**

One of the joys for children and our church family is the Life Learning Christmas Program. Extra Christmas Program practices outside the normal Sunday morning will be provided as a handout so be looking for it. The program will be December 10th, so look for more details as the time comes.

**Discipline**

Students are expected to be on their best behavior at all times while in the classroom and during music time. If a student becomes disruptive, the teacher will give him/her a warning. If the student disrupts the class and the teacher is unable to teach, the student will be removed from the classroom and taken to the Ministry Director to wait while a parent is located to discuss the issue that occurred.

**Notices and Information**

Upcoming events and reminders for students will be made available on the Children’s Ministry bulletin boards, printed in the church bulletin and sent home with the child and / or emailed to parents directly.

**2017-2018 Life Learning Teaching Team Opportunities**

* 2-3 year olds:
* 5-6 year olds:
* Kindergarten classroom:
* First and second grade classroom:
* Third and Fourth grade classroom:
* Fifth and Sixth grade Girls classroom:
* Fifth and Sixth grade Boys classroom:
* Music Director: Candice Bartel

**Other Events**

During the year there are other activities that are not directly related to Life Learning but are designed for children and their families:

**AWANA** Wednesday programming for K-6 students starts Sept. 6th 6:30-8 pm

**Fall Festival** A Halloween Alternative for Family with October 31st 4:30-7p.m. Preschool and Elementary Children

**Christmas Program** Every year at Christmas time the Life Learning December 10th 6:00 p.m. students present a Christmas Musical and Drama. More details concerning this program will be coming.

**Easter Event** A special Easter event for Families of Preschool and Elementary Students that takes them on a hands-on experience.

**VBS**  Every summer our church hosts a week long June 4-8, 2018 VBS that is Monday through Friday and runs from 5:45 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. each day, with a Sunday morning program at 10:00 a.m. VBS is open to all children age 4 to grade 6. Please feel free to bring friends, relatives, and neighbors. There is no charge for VBS.

NOTE: Flyers with additional information will be available for each event a few weeks prior.