

The 'Stepping Stones' Project

Spiritual Formation Map



First Baptist Church
1808 N. 19th St.
Allentown, PA 18104
610-432-3414

Rev. David Zimmerman
Pastor of Family Ministries

Preschool and Kindergarten

To Exalt

- Understands prayer as time speaking to God.
- Recognizes the Bible as a special book, God's Word to us.
- Expresses thank-you to God for His love through words and song.

To Express

- Understands obedience to parents and teachers as pleasing to God.
- Begins to understand that God's Word tells us how to please Him.

To Exhort

- Experiences church as a safe and caring place.
- Understands church as a place where we come to learn about God and His Son, Jesus.

To Equip

- Begins to understand Jesus as Son of God.
- Has simple understanding of the love of Jesus for us.
- Develops a positive attitude about learning from the Bible.

Ways for parents to get started:

Take time to pray with your child each day; use your Bible at home; ask your child to teach you the songs they are learning at church; model excitement about being at church; remind your child constantly of your love and God's love for them.

Ways for teachers to get started:

Make your prayer time in class special; encourage children to bring their Bibles; treat the Bible with special respect in the classroom; make sure the children see you with your Bible in class; help children to recognize that Bible stories are about real people; help the children understand the meaning of the songs they sing.

1st and 2nd Grades

To Exalt

- Begins to understand who God is and what He does.
- Is able to quiet their hearts for worship activities.
- Develops a desire to speak with God, both individually and corporately.
- Understands the structure and layout of Scripture.
- Develops an awe and respect for the Word of God.

To Express

- Develop a desire to help others as a service to God.
- Enthusiastically participate in teacher-led service projects.
- Understand that God commands us to share Jesus with others.
- Be able to describe what a missionary is and does.
- Be able to confidently invite friends to a children's outreach.

To Exhort

- Understand that those who place their trust in Jesus are part of the Church.
- Develop an enthusiasm for regular attendance and participation.
- Display care for classmates and assist them with their needs.

To Equip

- Have an age-appropriate understanding of sin, God's holiness, separation from God, Jesus' atonement for sin, and the need to trust in Christ to receive the gift of salvation.
- Be able to simply explain the gospel using a practiced gospel visual.
- Understand that we are to be 'doers of the Word, and not hearers only'.

Ways for parents to get started:

Have your children pray aloud with you; learn the books of the Bible with them; encourage your child to bring their Bible to church; include them in service for others with you; be available to transport friends if they invite them; develop relationships with missionaries and pray together for them; work through a gospel visual with them (e.g. wordless book); help them recognize the results of sin in the world around them.

Ways for teachers to get started:

Find ways to encourage easy sentence prayers from your students; have children use their Bibles in class each week; hold them accountable for treating their Bibles well; do projects as a class for others; find a class missionary family; display and review gospel visuals often; help them identify and pray for friends who don't know Jesus; have students fill out and send 'missed you' cards for those who are absent.

3rd and 4th Graders

To Exalt

- Identify characteristics of God and ways to praise Him for them.
- Understand and be able to pray through ACTS prayer.
- Confidently pray within a group setting.
- Given a devotional resource, be able to carry out a daily quiet time.

To Express

- Understand that others around the world hold other beliefs.
- Develop an awareness of the spiritual and physical needs around the world.
- Understand that all believers are given spiritual gifts to build up the body of Christ.
- Be able to identify the missionaries of the church and their location of service.
- Develop an appreciation that they have something to offer in service to God.

To Exhort

- Be able to identify key leaders and roles within FBC.
- Understand that church is necessary for our spiritual growth.
- Begin to take on responsibility for encouraging missing students to attend.

To Equip

- Develop a desire to grow in relationship with Christ.
- Understand that Jesus is the only way of salvation.
- Memorize key supporting verses to share the gospel.
- Begin to understand the overall story of Scripture.
- View the Bible as authoritative for life and doctrine.

Ways for parents to get started:

Find a simple devotional book for your child to work through; help them understand and practice prayers of adoration, confession, thanksgiving, and supplication; watch world news with your child and incorporate items into prayer time and discussion; memorize key verses with your children; help them identify ways to use what they do well for God,

Ways for teachers to get started:

Expose children to stories of children in other parts of the world; help them meet and get to know leaders in the church; observe baptisms and communion as a class; keep a class prayer journal to see answered prayer; identify your students talents and create opportunities for them to be used.

5th Graders

To Exalt

- Be able to understand and participate in church service worship activities.
- Desire to live in a way honoring to God as an act of worship.
- Identify and remove things that hinder our prayers.
- Be able to do personal devotions from a Bible rather than a devotional book.

To Express

- Display servant's heart by helping those in younger classes.
- Identify various types of ministry done to fulfill the Great Commission.
- Target three people and persistently pray for their salvation.
- Understand that even in the Old Testament, God has sought to bring people to Himself.

To Exhort

- Be able to identify and describe the ministries of FBC.
- Understand that accountability is a responsibility of every believer.
- Participate in multi-age activities within the church and develop relationships with others outside of immediate peers.

To Equip

- Understand that spiritual growth requires a choice and a commitment.
- Be able to identify and carry out application of Bible truth.
- Be able to share their experience of trusting in Christ with others.

Ways for parents to get started:

Hold children accountable for and review the FBI sheets; model commitment to meeting together as the body of Christ; take on a volunteer commitment as a family; introduce them to Bible study tools such as simple commentaries and Bible handbooks; ask tougher spiritual questions and research the answers together.

Ways for teachers to get started:

Based on their strengths, give them opportunity to lead in various ways; take time to draw out and answer their spiritual questions; take a field trip to youth group as a class; give the children pre-class Scripture readings to prepare themselves; ask lots of 'why' questions.

Middle Schoolers

To Exalt

- Understand and appreciate the variety of worship they are exposed to in this church and others.
- Use study resources to enhance Bible reading.
- Seek answers from God's Word to their own questions.
- Develop others-focused personal prayer life.
- Able to find and practice personal expressions of worship.

To Express

- Exercise gifts and talents in service to benefit greater church body.
- Develop independence in approach to serving.
- Take advantage of opportunities to express their faith.

To Exhort

- Willingly accept accountability for spiritual growth.
- Develop peer relationships where accountability is happening.
- Participate in church fellowship broader than the youth group.

To Equip

- Understand the key doctrines of the Christian faith..
- Apply Biblical teaching concerning Christian living.
- Able to share their testimony with others.
- Given Biblical references, able to carry out self-directed study in Scripture and identify the Bible truth.

Ways for parents to get started:

Visit other services different from what they are used to; use them in aiding in the spiritual growth of younger siblings; encourage them to take the initiative for 'Helping Hands' involvement; pray with them for their unsaved friends and help them identify ways to reach out to them; give enough room for them to fail at times; allow consequences to be experienced.

Ways for teachers to get started:

Allow them to discover the answers in Scripture; work toward small group prayer and accountability; be available and honest, help them get to know others in the church by bringing in others to give testimonies; find ways for them to serve and serve and serve some more together as a group.

High Schoolers

To Exalt

- Contributes to the corporate worship and prayer life of FBC.
- Beginning to grasp concept of being a living sacrifice as worship.
- Takes ownership for active devotional life.

To Express

- Continues to develop spiritual gifts through exercise of them.
- Develops discipling relationships with younger students.
- Draws from personal experience to teach others.
- Seeks opportunities to be stretched.
- Develops plan to reach peers.

To Exhort

- Personally own a pattern of consistent fellowship in church.
- Are committed to the church as home church and actively moving toward membership.
- Seeking out personal accountability of own initiative.

To Equip

- Prepared to give an answer for the hope found in them.
- Beginning to integrate truth into a framework for living.

Ways for parents to get started:

Allow room for independent expression of their faith; notice and encourage independent positive spiritual steps; help them find other adult mentors; help them to identify the 'future' questions that they need to be asking; do whatever you can to make growth possible.

Ways for teachers to get started:

Identify and equip student leaders; hold students accountable for attendance and participation; take the learning outside of the classroom whenever possible; challenge for commitment and holiness; encourage initiative in planning and carrying out ministry.

College Students

To Exalt

- Able to maintain devotional life without parental oversight.
- Develops worldview where worship is integrated into all aspects of life.

To Express

- Understands own spiritual gifts and seeks opportunities to use them to build up the body.
- Begins to explore new avenues of service, in the church and outside.

To Exhort

- Develops a personal accountability partner to keep on track, even while away at school.
- Desires and understands how to seek out a quality fellowship while away at college.

To Equip

- Has developed the framework for a biblical world life view to integrate new situations and teaching.
- Able to study Scripture to find answers for own questions.
- Seeking opportunities to build into the lives of others.

Ways for parents to get started:

Pray often; be available; be patient; love them; don't panic because God is still in control.

Ways for teachers to get started:

Be a facilitator; pray; hold them accountable for church involvement while away at school; find ways to show they are still remembered and cared about.