

## Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church Children's Ministry Mission Statement

The biggest challenge in creating a mission statement for the children's ministry was deciding where to begin. I felt the need to create a statement that would be easily understood, easily enacted, and concise. It was also important to connect the Children's Ministry mission statement with the church mission statement. Our church mission statement is the following: "It is the mission of **Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church** to be a worshiping, witnessing and welcoming congregation committed to a spirit of excellence in the praise of the Almighty God through Jesus Christ; the Christian Education of children, youth and adults for the maturation in the faith; and worldwide ministry for the promotion of peace and justice in every aspect of life. To this end, all people will be touched and transformed by the liberating power of God's Holy Spirit." From this statement, it is evident the Children's Ministry statement should include an emphasis on educating children about Christ in a manner that promotes a lifelong relationship with Him.

In order to construct a mission statement, I looked to the Frankena Model detailed in *Children Matter: Celebrating Their Place in the Church, Family and Community* by May, Posterski, Stonehouse and Cannell. I chose Questions A, C and E to help focus our mission and purpose. I first sought to establish the purpose of the ministry and create core goals relating to the Christian life of children.

- What is the purpose of our Children's Ministry?
  - Our ministry will Christ-centered in approach, Holy Spirit led in action, and Mission Bound in direction
  - We seek to assist children in growing in their faith as they grow in their stature
  - We seek to guide children in the freedom to worship and praise the Lord
  - We will provide a Biblical foundation that helps children know God and His Word
    - We will help children grow in their knowledge of God by guiding them through His Word.

Overall, our purpose is to create an environment that is driven by a desire to share with children God's love by sharing His Word. We should seek to inspire children to develop their relationship with God.

- What virtues and qualities do we want to develop within the learner? (May, 2005, p. 287)
  - We seek to help children develop a love of God
  - We seek to help children enhance their knowledge with the Word of God so they will begin to consider God's way in their everyday choices
  - We seek to build children's desire to learn about God on their own

- We seek to create a relaxed, fun environment in which children feel safe to inquire about God with their adult leaders.

Overall, the virtues we strive to instill must include a desire to learn about God and develop a personal relationship.

- What experiences do children need to have to reach our goals? (May, 2005, p. 287)
  - Sunday and Wednesday experiences will include engaging lessons
  - Sunday experience will include an opportunity for individual worship and connection with the Holy Spirit
  - Sunday experience will not just be adult led but inclusive of children's participation
    - The worship experience will include children leading prayer, child greeters, children leading offering, children learning to run the soundboard
  - Sunday and Wednesday experiences will include opportunities for relationship building
    - There will be consistency in adult staff so relationships can be built
  - There will be monthly opportunities for socialization and bonding outside of the classroom setting
    - We will seek to consistently conduct activities that have a purpose of building relationship.
    - We seek to provide a family atmosphere among children and volunteers
  - We will strive to create an environment that does not duplicate the secular classroom
  - We desire to work hand-in-hand with parents and guardians in the Christian Education of their children
    - Biblical Foundations- Family Connections Program
      - The main purpose of the BFFC Class is to assist parents in guiding their children to commit to a lifelong journey with Christ (Anthony, 2012, p. 77). Observing their parent's or guardian's faithfulness to the gospel can be a positive influence in making that commitment. When "the young learn to live the gospel by the examples of their Christian "family" and the Christian community embodies the faith," then children will be forming lifelong memories that will impact their Christian walk (Richards and O'Brien, 2012, p. 106).
  - A fundamental intention of the Wheeler Avenue Children's Ministry will be to aid parents in the spiritual formation of their children. "God's plan seen

in Deuteronomy 6, is that the faith community support the family and together they nurture the children (May, 2005, p. 34).

Based on the conclusions drawn while considering the purpose of the ministry, the qualities desired for our children, and the intended experiences for the children of Wheeler Avenue, the following mission statement will be offered for consideration by the leadership of Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church:

**It is the Wheeler Avenue Baptist Church Children's Ministry's mission to be a scripturally sound promoter of Jesus Christ and His teachings. In partnership with parents, we will work to prepare children to be lifelong worshipers and workers for Jesus by equipping them with a Biblical foundation that leads them to a love of Christ, the joy of His forgiveness and the comfort of His salvation.**

References:

May, et al. (2005). *Children Matter: Celebrating Their Place in the Church, Family, and Community*.

Anthony, M. (2012). *Dreaming of More for the Next Generation*.

Richards, E & O'Brien, B. (2012). *Misreading Scripture with Western Eyes: Removing Cultural Blinders to Better Understand the Bible*.