

Mission Statement

Our mission is to partner with families to build strong foundations of faith in the lives of boys and girls as they grow into lifelong followers of Jesus Christ.

The Vine Kids Team is Committed to:

1. Focusing on the Next Generation
2. Remaining Missions Minded
3. Reaching the Lost
4. Telling Meaningful Stories
5. Intentionally Investing in Families

Ministry Commitments

1. Next Generation Focused

- **Equip Parents to be Primary Spiritual Leaders of their Children**
 - Partner with Parents/Grandparents Along their Parenting Journey
 - Parent Child Dedication
 - 1st Grade Bible Presentation
 - Parenting Seminar
 - Bible Skills and Scripture Memory Focus in all Programming
- **Celebrate Milestones**
 - New Births
 - Professions of Faith/Baptism
 - New Christians Class
 - Baptism Testimony Videos
 - Promotion Milestones
 - Transition from Preschool to Children & Children to Student Ministries
 - Child and Leader Birthdays

2. Missions Minded

- **Intentional Missions Focus Each Quarter**
 - Prayer Emphasis
 - Family Service Project
 - Giving Emphasis
 - Thankful Emphasis

3. Reach the Lost

- **Seize Outreach Opportunities for the Purpose of Sharing the Gospel**
 - Palm Sunday/Easter
 - VBS/Kids Camp
 - Fall Fest
 - Christmas

4. Tell Meaningful Stories

- **Know the Story of Every Child and Guest in our Ministry**
 - Every guest will be personally contacted by Children's Minister or Vine Kids Staff
 - Every member will personally be contacted by Life Group Leader on regular basis
 - 2 Week Absentee Reports; all absentees contacted by Vine Kids Staff
- **Look for Stories of God's Faithfulness throughout our Ministry**
- **Celebrate Team Wins**

5. Intentional Investment

- **Investment in Vine Kids Staff**
 - Personal Spiritual Growth
 - Leadership Growth
- **Investment in Leaders**
 - Leadership Huddles
 - Time of Training and Appreciation
 - Leader Party
 - Time of Celebration for what God has done in our church and ministry
 - Specific Childcare Staff Training
- **Investment in Families**
 - Family events throughout year (Parents Night Out/Summer Playdays)
 - Ministry Needs (Celebrations, Hardships, Sickness, Milestones, etc.)
- **Investment in Children**
 - Intentionally and Consistently Teaching Biblical Truth
 - Developmentally Appropriate Curriculum & Activities
 - Excellent Facilities & Resources
 - Preschool Focus: Laying Foundations of Faith
 - Elementary Focus: Building Lifelong Followers of Jesus
- **Investment in Ministry Growth**
 - Intentional Leader Recruitment
 - Intentional Numerical Growth & Retention

Statement of Faith

The Bible: We believe that the Bible is the Word of God, divinely inspired. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. It is inerrant in the original manuscripts and preserved by God for us; it is authoritative for this church and each of us individually.

God: We believe that God exists eternally in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These three are one God. We believe God created the universe by His power and Word. We believe that God is all knowing, all-powerful and ever present.

Jesus: We believe Jesus Christ was sent by God the Father into the world to save sinners. We believe that Jesus Christ was virgin born, sinless in life and mighty in words and deeds. We believe Jesus was both God and man; that He was crucified for our sins and was bodily raised from the dead. He then ascended to His Father's side where He is head of the church and intercedes for believers. We believe Jesus Christ is coming again personally, visibly and bodily to reign as Lord over all.

Holy Spirit: The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He indwells all believers, baptizes and seals them at the moment of salvation. He fills believers in response to confession of sin and surrender to Him. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers and bestows the spiritual gifts by which they serve God through His church.

Salvation: We believe that Jesus, through His death on the cross, provided salvation for all. However, to receive salvation one must repent of sin and trust in Jesus Christ alone. The true believer is eternally secure and cannot lose his salvation. He may, however, lose his joy by sin and bring the loving discipline of the Father upon himself. All who have received Christ will at death depart to be with Christ in their spirit and at Christ's return receive a new body which will be like His glorious body.

Church: We believe a New Testament Church is a local body of baptized believers who have agreed together to worship Jesus Christ, edify the believers, evangelize the lost and minister to others. The church has two ordinances: baptism and the Lord's Supper. Baptism symbolizes the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the new life we have in Him. The Lord's Supper is a reminder of Christ's death and anticipates His second coming.

Children, Marriage and Family: Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. The husband and wife are of equal worth before God since both are created in God's image. Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. God created each child, in His image, as male and female. All policies, practices, and use of facilities, programs, and roles within the organization will reflect this biblical conviction. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth.

Philosophy of Care and Education of Children

*"And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man."
- Luke 2:52*

*"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates."
- Deuteronomy 6:5-9*

"Start children off on the way they should go, and even when they are old, they will not turn from it." – Proverbs 22:6

*I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord!"
-Psalm 122:1*

Grapevine's First Vine Kids demonstrates a philosophy of Childhood Christian Education that is above all built upon the strong foundation of Jesus Christ and His Word. As a ministry, we are committed to nurture and support the growth of preschoolers and children physically, intellectually, emotionally, socially, and spiritually.

Physically: Our Vine Kids Ministry provides a controlled-access environment, as well as safety within and outside of the classroom. Classrooms provide activity space appropriate for gross and fine motor skill development, and active learning. Learning Centers are provided in each Preschool - 1st Grade classroom, and our outdoor playground is available for use during all programming, weather permitting. Our gym is accessible as well for recreation as our schedule allows.

Intellectually: Our curriculum provides developmentally appropriate, hands-on, sensory filled and play-based learning experiences for all children Infant – 5th Grade. Our focus is process-oriented, not product-oriented. Children learn foundational skills to support a lifetime of learning.

Emotionally: Our classrooms provide emotional stability by providing consistent, intentional, and loving leaders in every class. Consistent routines and schedules within the context of the classroom and the encouragement of strong parental involvement are also a priority, resulting in the partnership between home and church.

Socially: We believe all children learn through play. Play-based sensory filled learning activities that are developmentally appropriate are provided to develop and nurture the interaction between each child, his leader, and his friends. Children enjoy a small group class within their age designation as well as a large group time with other aged children to facilitate social development.

Spiritually: We believe spiritual foundations of faith can be formed in the early childhood years that will provide a basis from which children will draw from throughout their life. Young children can learn foundational spiritual concepts that build upon each other - precept upon precept. Bible Stories and biblical truths are the primary part of the curriculum we teach each time children are in our care. It is never just babysitting. As we build foundations of faith in the lives of boys and girls, it is our prayer they would grow to a saving knowledge of and faith in Jesus Christ personally as Savior and become a lifelong follower of Him. For more information about Spiritual development in children and our key concept areas, please consult *Lifeway Christian Resources, Ages and Stages: Levels of Biblical Learning*.

Developmentally appropriate Bible-based curriculum and Bible Learning Activities will be used in every session, for children of every age – Infant through 5th Grade; whether during a recurring ministry program, childcare, or special event. It is never just babysitting. We teach from Scripture – using curriculum as our guide. For more information about the nature of our curriculum and activities chosen, please set a meeting with the Children's Minister.

Characteristics of Preschoolers and Children

Lifeway Christian Resources

Preschool Children

BABIES–2s

Active

- Plan activities that allow kids to use all five senses.
- Provide a lot of time and space for exploring.
- Remember kids are constantly active, moving from one interest to another.

Curious

- Provide opportunities for hands-on experiences.
- Plan activities that allow kids to feel, pound, pat, and manipulate objects.
- Allow children to reason and think through physical manipulation.
- Be aware that younger preschoolers imitate the activities of the adults around them.

Self-focused

- Be ready to hear the word *no* frequently.
- Be flexible. Children this age want everything now and cannot wait.
- Provide opportunities for individual play. At this age children are interested in themselves and have little interest in cooperative play.

Have Short Attention Spans

- Teach simple Bible truths, songs, stories, and pictures.
- Use repetition. Younger preschoolers learn by doing and hearing something over and over.

Need Security

- Provide preschoolers security by setting simple but clear limits.
- Hold preschoolers securely but not tightly. They respond to loving care and sense love from the way they are treated.

Sensitive

- Treat all children fairly. Younger preschoolers are developing attitudes about church.
- Remember younger preschoolers are learning to trust. Treat them with respect.

3s–KINDERGARTEN

Active

- Plan activities that allow kids to be up and moving.
- Help kids focus their energy into a learning experience.
- Use varied methods of teaching, even during group time.

Literal-minded

- Use simple, concrete language.
- Don't use phrases such as "give your heart to Jesus," "open your ears," or "zip your lips."
- Use pictures to boost understanding.

Curious

- Provide opportunities for hands-on experiences.
- Encourage preschoolers to discover answers on their own.
- Be ready for a lot of questions, but understand it's okay to say, "I don't know."

Self-focused

- Provide opportunities for success.
- Help a child focus on strengths—not weaknesses.
- Encourage development of social skills through play and interaction among preschoolers.

Have Short Attention Spans

- Provide several short activities that encompass different learning styles.
- Be flexible.
- Keep instructions short and simple.

Creative

- Encourage imagination through free-play activities.
- Provide resources to encourage self-expression.
- When making crafts, allow opportunities for creativity on the finished project.

Need Limits

- Provide preschoolers security by setting simple but clear limits.
- State expectations positively. Instead of saying, "Don't run," say, "Walk."
- State consequences of actions, but redirect behavior when possible.

Sensitive

- Treat all children fairly.
- Show respect.
- Don't make comparisons between preschoolers.

Elementary Children

PHYSICALLY

- Change activities and offer balanced times of play and rest.
- Plan activities that utilize children's senses.
- Remember children develop at different rates. They do not all have the same skills and abilities.
- Plan activities that use gross motor skills, such as games, and fine motor skills, such as crafts.

INTELLECTUALLY

- Keep activities challenging and relevant to their lives. Children are concrete thinkers.
- Implement multiple learning styles in your session. Children are naturally curious and becoming independent thinkers. They enjoy a variety of learning activities.
- Form groups and let children discuss ideas presented in the Bible study. Children enjoy group decision-making.

SOCIALLY

- Model appropriate ways to apply the concepts of right and wrong through your actions. Children are sensitive to fairness and honesty.
- Be specific in your praise and encouragement. Children are becoming more aware of their peers and what others think. They crave genuine affirmation.
- Be firm and loving as you address behaviors. Children understand rules and consequences. They desire appropriate guidelines for behavior.

EMOTIONALLY

- Children seek love and affirmation. They need you to love them for who they are.
- Keep in mind children are anxious in large groups of unknown people. They express feelings openly and are embarrassed easily.
- Allow children to make choices and do tasks independently as they are growing aware of their strengths and weaknesses.

SPIRITUALLY

- Model Christian attitudes and actions. Children model the worship, prayers, and attitudes of others.
- Allow children to respond and participate actively in Bible study. They are acquiring biblical knowledge, skills, and principles and are relating this knowledge to their daily lives.
- Listen to their questions and encourage them to read the Bible for answers.
- Be a Christian mentor. Children are increasingly capable of making commitments. They are learning to trust Christ and talk to God about their feelings.