



**Parent resource for St. Mark's Kidz Church
Curriculum and Faith Development
Nursery – Grade 5**

2025-26

ST. MARK'S IS A
COMMUNITY OF
FOLLOWERS OF
JESUS CHRIST
THAT STRIVES TO

WELCOME
ALL PEOPLE,

GROW
IN KNOWLEDGE
AND GRACE, AND

SERVE
OUR NEIGHBORS,
LOCALLY AND
GLOBALLY.



Our church motto (left) is **Welcome, Grow, Serve**. Kidz Church falls under the **Grow** category as it relates to St. Mark's as a whole. However, it is important that our vision for leading children encompasses all three parts of our motto as kids grow in their own relationships with Jesus and learn what it means to be a disciple.

With this in mind, Children's Ministries has chosen **Grow Kids** as our Kidz Church curriculum.





Grow Kids encourages churches to focus on growing in a way that's healthy— not just growing for the sake of numbers. A healthy ministry will create the conditions for kids (and our ministry) to grow.

To do that, Grow pursues health in six key areas: **Discipleship, Teaching, Environments, Events, Families, & Volunteers.**

When training Kidz Church leaders, we focus on **Discipleship & Teaching**, however, we will be pursuing all 6 areas throughout the year in Children's Ministries. These key areas are all a part of our Kidz Church programming and they also connect to **Welcome, Grow, & Serve.**





DISCIPLESHIP: Discipleship isn't about learning more stuff about faith, it's about putting faith into practice. There are four spiritual habits that help people of all ages grow spiritually and everything we do is structured around these four key spiritual habits. These habits are the backbone of the entire Grow Kids strategy!

- ❖ **SPEND TIME WITH GOD:** Spending time with God is about helping kids develop personal spiritual disciplines. It can look like opening the Bible, talking with God through prayer, discovering how they best connect with God through worship, and whatever else helps them connect with God personally. When they spend time with God, their faith grows!
- ❖ **SPEND TIME WITH OTHERS:** This spiritual habit is about helping kids grow in godly relationships with others. We can do this within our churches through small groups and mentoring relationships. But we can also do this by encouraging kids to develop healthy relationships with others in their families, schools, and communities. Through godly relationships, their faith can grow!



- ❖ **USE YOUR GIFTS:** It's so important for kids to discover how God made them and who God made them to be. As they begin to discover how God uniquely created them, we get to help them use their unique gifts to love God and serve others. When they use their gifts, their faith grows!
- ❖ **SHARE YOUR STORY:** Kids need to learn how to have conversations about who God is and what God is doing in their lives. Sharing their stories of faith isn't just something they should do when speaking into a microphone or sharing a testimony. Faith should become a regular, ongoing, go-to topic of conversation for kids. When they share their stories, their faith grows.





TEACHING: We teach with kids in mind. We have a strategy to teach them in the ways they learn best based on their stage of development and needs. Focus on helping kids learn to verbalize their stories of faith and challenge them to share those stories with others.

Every week, our teaching time is designed to answer three questions:

- ❖ **WHAT?** What are we talking about?
- ❖ **SO WHAT?** Why does it matter to God and to us?
- ❖ **NOW WHAT?** What should we do about what we just learned?

Sometimes, when we hear "teaching," we think "lessons" with a teacher talking at the front of the room. Sure, lesson plans are part of it, but they can't be the primary way we teach kids. Kids need so much more than a formal lecture to help them learn about Jesus!

There are more effective ways for kids to learn, so we're committed to making those teaching techniques part of every week of our teaching...



Teaching Techniques:

- ❖ **QUESTIONS AND POLLS** give kids the chance to share their thoughts, which keeps them engaged and helps us better understand their perspectives.
- ❖ **PERSONAL STORIES** give them real-life examples of faith, following Jesus, and difficulties to learn from and remind them they're not alone
- ❖ **IMAGES, VIDEOS, AND MUSIC** engage their eyes and ears and help us recapture their attention when it wanders.
- ❖ **OBJECT LESSONS** give concrete experiences to help them understand or remember abstract ideas.
- ❖ **ACTIVITIES** get them moving and interacting in ways that will help them better remember what they learned because they didn't just hear it—they experienced it.





- **ENVIRONMENTS:** We have a plan to create a weekly environment for kids that is fun, safe, and welcoming because the environment we create sets the stage for them to learn and grow.
- **EVENTS:** We won't do random events just to fill the calendar this year. Instead, we'll do events strategically for kids' relationships with others and God.
- **FAMILIES:** We don't just care about kids—we care about their families, too. We have a strategy for connecting with and supporting parents and caregivers.
- **VOLUNTEERS:** If we're going to have a healthy ministry, it starts with our Kidz Church Leader team. We have a plan to invest in our leaders so that they can better invest in kids and families.



How *Grow* kids fits into our church model...

Below is the St. Mark's Discipleship Pathway and the model for Connecting with others, Connecting with God, and Helping others connect. The Four Spiritual Habits of Grow Kids (Spend Time with God, Spend Time with Others, Use your Gifts, & Share your Story) correlate quite well with our own Discipleship Pathway!

Discipleship Pathway

What does it look like to be a disciple at St. Mark's?



What does it look like to be a disciple at St. Mark's?

Worship

WELCOME

Hospitality

A Life
Opening to
God

GROW

A Daily Life
Embodying
Jesus

Service

SERVE

Generosity

As we connect with each other, connect with God, and help others connect in six key areas of discipleship (Worship, Hospitality, a Life Opening to God, a Daily Life Embodying Jesus, Service, and Generosity), we fulfill our mission to Welcome, Grow, and Serve:

- Through a life of hospitality and a life of worship, we **Welcome** all people and the presence of God into our lives.
- To **Grow** in our knowledge and grace, we open our lives to God and seek to embody Jesus's example in our actions, attitudes, and responses to others.
- With our gifts and our time, we **Serve** our neighbors locally and globally by continuing to build a life of generosity and a life of service.

Connecting with others | Connecting with God | Helping others connect

Other Resources:



DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRIES
The United Methodist Church

In addition to our Grow Kids curriculum, Children's Ministry leaders strive to follow the Faith Development Guidelines offered by Discipleship Ministries, an agency of the United Methodist Church. These guidelines provide comprehensive charts with the following categories for each age level of a child's faith journey:

- **God**
- **Worship**
- **The Bible**
- **Home & Family**
- **Relating Faith to Daily Life**
- **Community & the World**
- **Significant Terms & Images**
- **Methodist Heritage**
- **What teachers & Parents Provide**
- **Resource:** www.umcdiscipleship.org/equipping-leaders/children

We are honored to be on this journey with you, and we encourage you to refer to these [faith guidelines](#) at each stage of your child's growth. Children's Ministry Leaders want to partner with parents, as together, we encourage, lead, and guide children into a life of faith and love in Jesus Christ. Reach out to us at any time for more resources, ideas, or just to chat about both the challenges and rewards of being a Christian parent. We are here for you!

Children's Ministries Team

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Kidz Church Leaders:

Please reach out to one of the directors if you would like to contact one of your child's Kidz Church Leaders. We are happy to connect you!

