

ORCHARD KIDS

Helping kids learn the basic contours of the Biblical story, how to engage God through prayer and worship, and how to interact with each other with love and respect.

PreK (age 0-5)

From birth to about age 6, children are in a relationship of love with God. This begins with life. This is a time of joy! For the young child, Christianity is not about doing good, but being in LOVE with Jesus.

Primary Focus: Helping each child understand, “God made me and God loves me no matter what.”

K-5th grade

From about age 6-12, kids become ready to connect their relationships with others to their relationships with God. They are understanding good versus bad and right versus wrong. Their gift to us is their open-hearted sense of communion with God, creation, and all people. They are peacemakers and steadfast visionaries in bringing shalom to the world.

Primary Focus: Fostering the mystery and wonder in kids in building upon the foundation of who God is, and discovering who God has created them to be.



What we do

In Orchard Kids, we work hard to create meaningful environments for our kids that help them experience God and know God personally. We believe kids have a natural tendency towards spirituality and are not empty vessels that we need to fill up. We desire to create authentic space for them to develop their sense of wonder and curiosity in encountering God.

We realize that all children learn and experience God differently, so by providing activities for multiple learning styles, such as visual, verbal, kinesthetic, musical, and artistic, we are providing a sensory rich environment for each child to connect meaning from what they're learning to their individual lives.

In Orchard Kids, we want everything we do to point back to the truth that each child is uniquely made and loved by God. We strive to do everything possible to help them become who God has created them to be!



What to expect

Check-In and Check-Out

Each classroom is equipped with a check-in station. The Lead Teacher will meet you at the classroom door to get your family checked in.

At the check-in station, your child will be given a sticker with their name and security number. You may print all your children's tags at one classroom check-in.

The Lead Teacher will confirm "Text Message Paging" is enabled. Should we need to reach you during the service, our computer system will text message you.

You will be given a sticker with a matching security number. You must have this sticker to pick up your child after service from their worship space.

Following service, please show your child's teacher your security tag. They will match your security tag and release your child to you.

Our curriculum

All of our environments use the *Spark: Activate Faith* curriculum following the rotation model. (Spark House: www.activatefaith.org)

In the rotation model we spend six weeks in one Bible story with a different rotation workshop focus each week. The different rotation workshops include art, creative drama, science, music, games, and video.

We explore 48 Bible stories in a linear format through the Old and New Testaments. We use the Spark Story Bible to navigate the text in age appropriate ways. To pick up a copy of the scope and sequence of our rotation stories, please visit the New Family Check-in booth in the lobby.

Our spaces

Nursery (age 0-1)

Child psychologist Lev Vygotsky and James Fowler (Stages of Faith Development) recognize that children have inner/private speech from infancy. Development starts with experience, moves to understanding, and then a child develops language for it. So thought occurs BEFORE language!

With this in mind, our under 2's are being held and loved because we recognize the importance of physical touch in development. They are read a Bible story and they see and touch the Bible to connect multi-sensory experience with language development. Each week our leaders speak a blessing over each child. These relational experiences are essential to the structure of self in relation to God and humans- this is how children begin to understand God as loving, nurturing, and personal.

Please bring a diaper bag with everything your child may need (bottle, diapers, pacifier, change of clothes, etc.) labeled with your child's name.

PreK (age 2-3 and age 4-5)

Our preschoolers are becoming familiar with Bible stories and understand the very basic meaning. When they arrive to their space, they begin their time in open-ended play. We have **Gather** activities that include *Imaginative Play Centers* that introduce the story, *Circle Time* where kids interact with each other and their leaders, and *Prayer Time* where kids spend time connecting with God through prayer.

Transitioning to our **Open the Bible** time, children sit with each other and their leader and see and hear the Bible story. This relational interaction, rather than just watching a video, is important to faith development. At the end of the story time, the children are given a chance to respond with their thoughts and questions.

After the story, we move into our **Activate Faith** time. The children will participate in multi-sensory activities through art, music, or movement that reinforce the story. Children are given a snack and have a chance to sit and talk with their leaders and classmates.

Finally, we move into a time of **Send and Bless** where leaders do *Good-Bye Time* activities and *Prayer Time* with the children. They speak a blessing over the children before their departure.

Kindergarten through 5th Grade

Our elementary students are beginning to comprehend Bible stories, identify with the characters, and apply faith based actions to their own lives. As they get into the upper elementary grades they begin to understand the structure of the Bible and are able to interpret stories and discover ways to apply the story to their own lives.

We open our gathering with a time of **Welcome** where leaders and kids are able to connect with one another on a personal level. We then move into a time of **Singing and Reflection**. During this time, two worship songs are played and kids are invited to participate in a way that is meaningful to them and how they best connect with God. This could be through singing, dancing, visiting the Giving Tree and giving back to God, visiting the Prayer Tree and writing/drawing a prayer request to God or praying for others, or simply sitting quietly with their eyes closed thinking about God.

Leaders then move the children into a time to **Introduce the Story** and **Open the Bible** to explore the current Bible story rotation. Following the story, we provide Activate Faith activity workshops that include art, creative drama, science, games, video, or music. The workshops reinforce the story, and introduce open ended discussions. The lead teacher closes the large group time with **Send and Bless**, a time of prayer and blessing over all the kids.

Our policies

Well Child

To do our best to maintain a healthy environment for all families, **please do not bring your children when illness is present.** Please do not bring children until they are fever free for 24 hours.

Separation Anxiety

Some children may shed tears when they're dropped off. This can be difficult for the children as well as you! Say a quick goodbye, assure your child you'll return soon, and then **leave rather than linger.** We will put your security code on the screens if your child doesn't calm down within a reasonable timeframe.

Gentle Discipline

We value helping kids learn to interact with one another with love and respect, as well as helping kids to respond well to authority. We want to always point the kids back to three overall expectations: **listen, participate, and show respect.** Our volunteers will be proactive in maintaining a peaceful environment through redirection and positive reinforcement.

Safety

Two **screened and trained** volunteers are present whenever children are present. Adults may help children in the restroom as long as the door remains open with another adult in the area. If the fire alarm goes off, the building will be evacuated with leaders guiding children out of the building. Parents may pick up their children with their security sticker from the designated safe spot.

Finally, we close our time with **Small Group Discussion.** We have three small groups (K-1st, 2nd-3rd, and 4th-5th) that meet together with their leader. They share a snack together, do an ice breaker activity, and spend time discussing some open ended questions about the topics they explored during the service. This is such an important time of relationship building between the kids and with the leader. God designed faith to be communal and relational, and kids need a faith community as much as adults do! For healthy spiritual development, kids ultimately need time, attention, and tender guidance.

Our values

Goodness & Beauty

Learning to look for goodness and beauty in all things.

Renewal

Turning broken into beautiful.

Grace

Loving people just as they are, not as they should be.

Story

Discovering my story, and how it fits into God's story.

Wholeness

All of me becoming who God created me to be.

Generosity

Celebrating God's goodness to me, by being a blessing to you.

Who we are



Jenni Zielke :: Orchard Kids Experience Coordinator ::
jenni@theorchardcommunity.com



Kari Glenn :: K-5 Team Leader ::
k5@theorchardcommunity.com



Grace Prince :: PreK Team Leader ::
prek@theorchardcommunity.com



Sue Bowden :: Orchard Kids Scheduling Team Leader ::
orchardkids@theorchardcommunity.com