

Hope's Mission

To bring glory to God by proclaiming what Jesus has done for us and by becoming a community of people characterized by authentic relationships, heartfelt worship, and selfless service **as God's Spirit applies Christ's work to us and our children**, the people of South Central Charlotte, and our neighbors in urban centers around the globe.

Children's Ministry Focus: To bring glory to God by proclaiming what Jesus has done for us to our children and our neighbors' children, by making the Gospel visible to them in our authentic relationships, heartfelt worship, selfless service, and dependence on God's Spirit, and by integrating them into this community of faith.

Ministry Priorities

Prayer

We know that the most important thing we can do for the Children we seek to minister to is pray for them. "Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, its watchmen watch in vain."¹ We want our ministry to produce children with hearts for Christ so we are going to focus our primary energies as children's ministers in asking the Lord to come and spiritually transform the children God brings us.

Relationship

Our children's ministry will be characterized as relational as opposed to programmatic. We want parents to relate to their kids, adults to relate to younger generations, families to relate to families, kids to experience community with one another, and ultimately, our children to relate to Jesus.

Equipping Parents and Other Adults to Impact Children for Christ

Parents

God grants parents the unique privilege and responsibility of being the primary human influencers of their children's spiritual well-being.

Exodus 20:4-6 explains this central role in explaining the second commandment:

⁴ "You shall not make for yourself an idol in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. ⁵ You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I, the Lord your God, am a jealous God, punishing the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation of those who hate me, ⁶ but showing love to a thousand generations of those who love me and keep my commandments."

Out of love for our children, Hope will encourage the spiritual maturity of the adults in the congregation and facilitate their ministry to their children. The Children's Ministry at Hope will provide childcare and classes for children during corporate worship, offer classes on Biblical parenting, and encourage parental involvement in every aspect of the ministry.

¹ Psalm 127:1



Other Adults

God's Word commands that one generation tell the next of His wonderful works. In an effort to maximize the next generation's exposure to the current one, Hope will recruit, train, and equip people with a heart for children's ministry to share the Gospel with our kids. We will also encourage and equip parents to include their children in corporate worship as soon as they are ready to attentively "listen in" on adult spiritual topics, so that their children can see people being captured and transformed by the love of Christ even before they personally comprehend what a relationship with Christ really means.

Helping Children Internalize the Gospel

Helping

The Good News of the Gospel is that in Christ God has provided a way for sinful human being to experience relationship with him and enjoy his love forever. This relationship with God is not based on our behavior but on the grace of God given to us in the perfect life, atoning death, and resurrection of Jesus for us. It's the Holy Spirit who changes the hearts of people and brings them into relationship with God. As a church we'll develop a ministry that is more relational than programmatic which teaches children through both word and deed that they are saved by the grace of God in Christ and not by being good.

Including

God's made it clear that we're to make disciples of all nations. Because of Hope's commitment to reaching the unchurched with the news of what Christ has done for us we expect non-Christian families to be regular participants in our Children's Ministry activities. We will seek to be sensitive to those children and parents among us who are unfamiliar with the Bible. The Children's Ministry team will diligently use our financial, staff, and volunteer resources to communicate to children, their parents, and other adults, that God loves them by providing a safe environment where they can grow in the knowledge of the Lord and experience the joy of being in His presence. The Children's Ministry will not only care for our members and regular attenders but also be a form of outreach with the goal of having the children of visitors ask their parents to bring them back to Hope.

Leading

One of the chief ways we impact others is by allowing the Gospel to run in our own lives. As we are captured by Christ ourselves the presence of the Holy Spirit makes us shine like stars in a crooked and depraved generation.² We will encourage and equip parents to include their children in corporate worship as soon as they are ready to attentively listen in on adult spiritual topics so that their children can see people being captured and transformed by the love of Christ even before they personally comprehend what a relationship with Christ really means.

Proclaiming

We must proclaim the truths of God's word both verbally and non-verbally to our children in a manner that is consistent with their developmental readiness. The Children's Ministry will facilitate age appropriate worship and teaching through and including fifth grade, and formation of community among – not just programs for -- the children in grades 4 and above.

² Php. 2:15

