



# A Journey through Children's Formation

Fall 2024





# Today's Forum

Guiding Principles

Our team and a few numbers

Descriptions of each Sunday School class – the what and why

Other formation opportunities

Questions and answers and table discussion

**BUT FIRST, let's take a [quick look](#) at what we do.**

# Guiding Principles

**Our children are filled with the light of Christ.** We walk beside them on their faith journeys, nurturing their spiritual growth and in turn learning from them.

**Our children are valuable and beloved members of our community** who enrich and support our shared ministry right now, where they are. At the same time, they are the future of our faith.

**We joyfully share our faith stories and traditions with our students.** We encourage them to make those traditions their own.

**We respect our children and our teachers** – our intelligence, our wonderings, our emotions. We listen to our kids. We do not tell them what to think.

**Christian formation addresses our hearts as well as our minds.** We encourage and inspire our kids to join in our mission to show God's presence in the world.

**Formation is more than Sunday School.** Our program includes rich and growing opportunities for inclusive worship, service to God's people, and community-building.

**We depend on the community** to support our children and their families.



# Our Team

Steve Coute

Amberly Fix

Dennis Hanzlik

Emily Harris

Stephanie McLarty

Joanne Menke

Karalyn Mildorf

Amanda Rayborn

Patrick Richardson

Cheryl Roberts

Jessica Sereno

Allison Shimooka

Beth Strand

Lori Welsh

Roy Wheat

Susan McGuire, Director of Children's Formation & Family Ministries

**PLUS many other volunteers and mentors that make the program possible!**



# Sunday School: an Overview

## **Catechesis of the Good Shepherd**

4-year olds (pre-K) and kindergartners

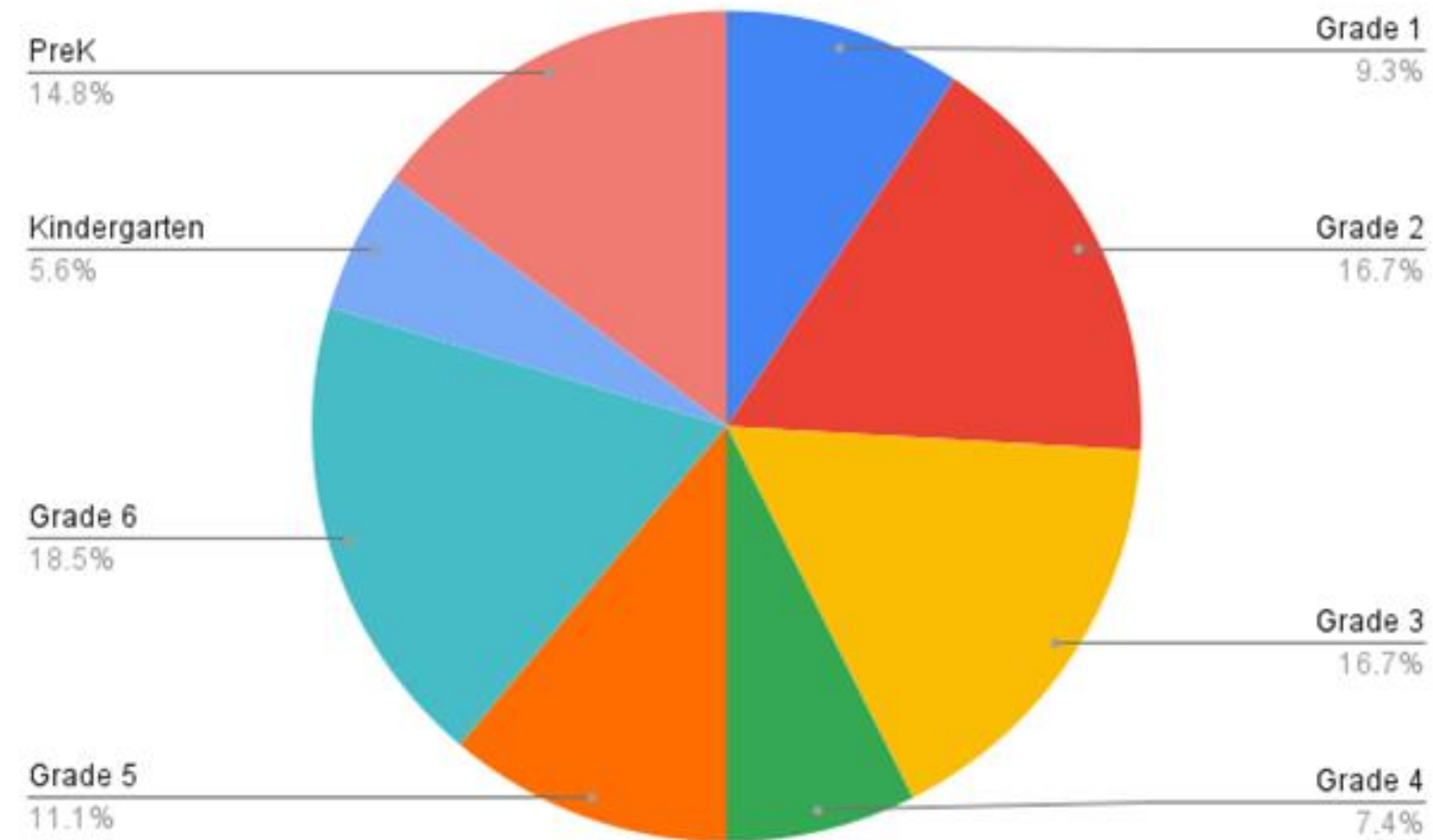
## **Godly Play**

1st through 4th graders

## **Faith in Action**

5th and 6th graders

# Our Classes



We have about 55 children registered for Sunday School (PK through 6th grade). Anywhere from 40 - 80 percent attend weekly.

# Catechesis of the Good Shepherd

Pre-K (4 year olds) and kindergarteners



**Nurturing the young child's innate sense of God and God's love for them. We learn together:**

- We are God's children, created by God to love.
- God knows us, loves us, and calls each of us by name.
- Church is a lively, secure place where people care for one another
- We share stories about Jesus, focusing especially on the Parable of the Good Shepherd.
- We work with beautiful models of basic liturgical elements
- We explore the church year
- We enjoy class traditions of prayer and song





# Godly Play

1st through 4th graders (two classes)



## Creating a welcoming culture around our Bible and sacred traditions

- We share stories from the Old and New Testaments that invite us to wonder and learn about God.
- Our children are invited to own these stories. They become comfortable asking questions and engaging with them.
- Our beautiful materials demonstrate respect for our children as beloved and important to our faith community.
- Our 1st grade students participate in an interactive 6-week study of the Holy Eucharist (February and March).
- In our 3rd & 4th grade class, children are increasingly encouraged to use their gifts and talents in service of our community and God's people.



# Faith in Action

5th & 6th graders



**Helping preteens connect their faith to their lives, serve others, and learn together in active and engaging ways. In our class we:**

- **Review core stories and traditions of our shared faith** and how they relate to our lives and relationships with God and others.
- **Empower students to live into their baptismal covenant to seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbors as ourselves.** We pack sandwiches for our houseless neighbors every month and sponsor a Market Day for Five Talents.
- **Build a supportive community of peers.** We make time for fun!
- **Nurture students' relationships with our wider parish family.** We welcome guest teachers and mentors who share ministry opportunities with us.

We've practiced being lectors, manned the AV console, served as ushers, sponsored coffee hour, flown the Dove Kite (just for fun), walked the labyrinth, done yoga, pulled invasive plants, learned how to cook and more.





# Worship

**Our liturgies are sacred gifts of our tradition and are lifelong formation opportunities. We help children grow in understanding and love for worship.**

## Second Saturday Church

Once a month on Saturday evenings in the Chapel (5 pm)

Short Eucharist (about 45 minutes) followed by dinner

Lively music - guitar, banjo, violin

Prayers, sermons and readings are shorter and often interactive

Children can serve as ushers, greeters or acolytes

Families, couples, singles, kids - all are welcome!

*Remaining 2024-2025 program year dates: November 9, December 14, January 11, February 8 & March 8*



# Worship

## Sundays in the big church

Look for children's prayer and story books, crayons and coloring books in the back of the church.

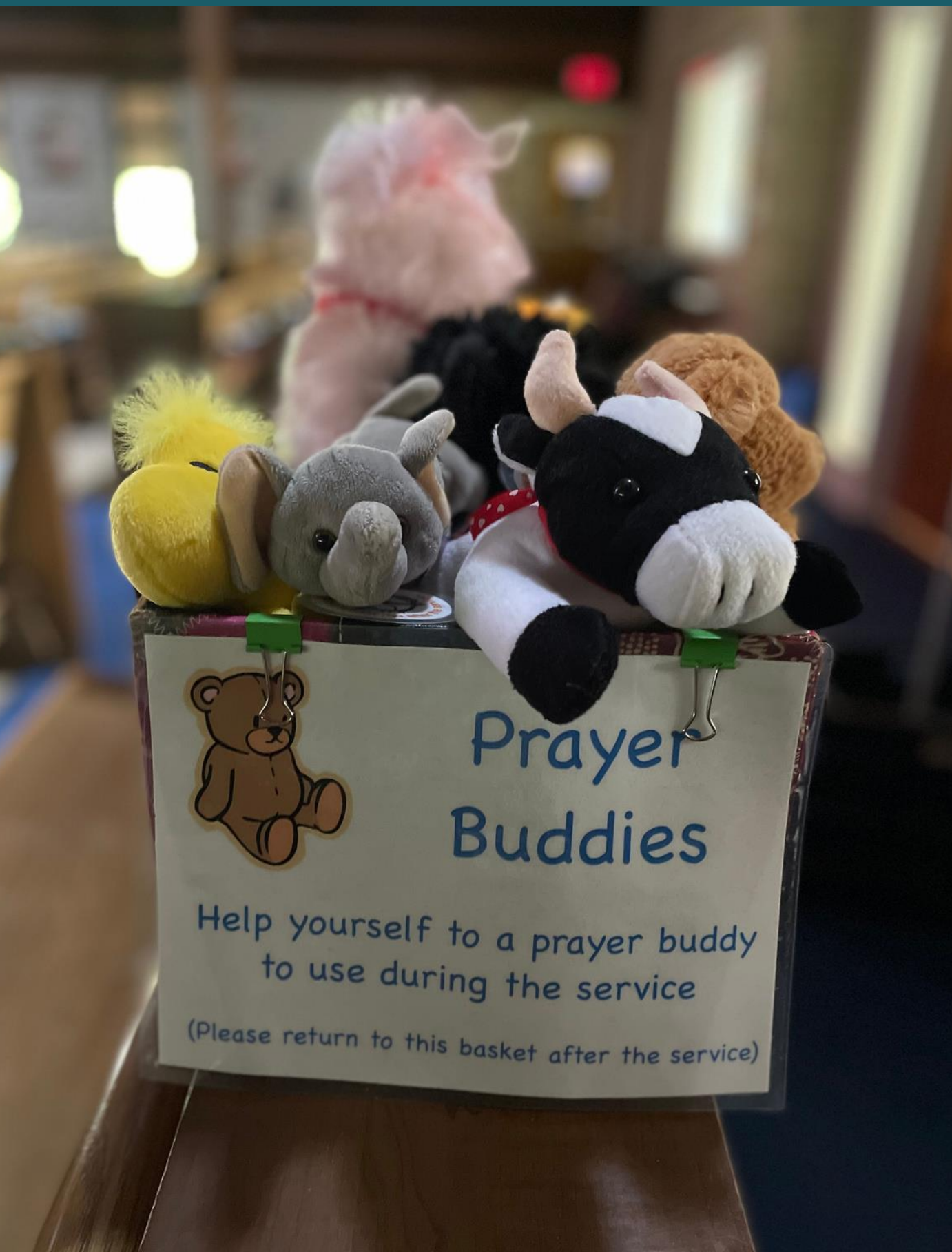
Ask an usher for a Children's Bulletin

Children's Chapel is offered every Sunday during the program year, during the Gospel and sermon

We are good with kid noise! Sit up front if you want.

Look for more worship aids and opportunities as the year progresses. Watch this space!

Talk to Ms. Lolly about the Chorister program (2nd grade and older), and Andrew Eastman about the acolyte program (6th or 7th grade and older)





# Worship

## Learning More

Our Study of the Holy Eucharist program for 1st graders is designed to deepen their understanding of our liturgy and the Holy Eucharist. It concludes with an instructed Eucharist.

All classes, from the youngest, are introduced to the Altar and liturgies around baptism and Holy Communion.

In our Faith in Action class, students try out different liturgical ministries – ushering, acolyting, lectoring, the AV ministry.

A family Eucharist is planned for our Faith in Action class for this spring.



# Service and Outreach

## BACK TO SCHOOL

FUNDRAISER



**THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS! WE RAISED \$1,780 FOR BRITEPATHS**

**We are called as Christians to show God's love and presence in the world.**

All classes from 1st grade on up participate in service and outreach as part of the regular curriculum.

Family Ministries sponsors at least one outreach project per quarter. We've

- Assembled baskets of supplies for new parents in need
- Collected non-perishable food for Thanksgiving and blessed our collection at Second Saturday
- Held school supply drives
- Helped with the care around our beautiful campus
- Adopted a family for Christmas
- Collected supplies for shelter pets



# Community & Fellowship



**We support one another and enjoy being together!**

All are invited to our many **parish-wide events**. Check the Narthex table or the weekly eNews for the latest info.

Relax in our **3rd floor parent lounge** after church – meet other parents and grab a cup of coffee too.

We have a new **Open Circles group for families with young children**. Interested in this group or forming another? Contact Susan.

We have **adult education topics** during our education hour throughout the year.

We are here to support you and your family. Let us know how we can help or if you have ideas for family and parish-wide events.



# Ways to Help

**Formation of our young people is the work of our entire community.**

Parents, thanks for making the effort to get to Sunday School or worship or whatever you can do that is meaningful for you and your family. We appreciate you!

Can you cut construction paper? We would love help in prepping art materials or other craft supplies. Many hands can make light work.

Be a guest star in one of our classes! We often need last-minute substitutes. If you can help, please let me know. It might be the highlight of your Sunday.

Join our joyous Second Saturday worship and our other events, which are for ALL ages.

If you are a member of a parish ministry and you'd like our kids to learn about it or - even better - help with it, I'd love to talk to you! Kids love being empowered to make a difference.

# Thank you!

Join us on November 24 for **Healthy Through the Holidays**

In January we will be presenting **The Sunday Struggle: How Busy Families Make Time for Faith.**

*How have you dealt with the struggle? Let us know here:*

