

Registration Form

Child's Name:

Parent(s) Name:

Contact Information:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Date of Birth:

Age as of September, 2009

Church or Faith Community:

Special Information we should know (reading ability, allergies, special needs or fears):

Please mail to:

Christ Episcopal Church Catechesis
409 E. High St.
Springfield, OH 45505

Contact Information

For more information, contact
The Rev. Jane Gerdsen at
jane.standrews@sbcglobal.net
or call 937.275.8091.



"Help me to come closer to God by myself."

Christ Episcopal Church
409 E. High St.
Springfield, OH 45505
937.323.8651

**An innovative approach to
developing a child's
spiritual potential that uses
Montessori's hands on
learning and respect for
the child.**



*Catechesis of the
Good Shepherd
at
Christ Church
Springfield*



Catechesis of the Good Shepherd is an approach to religious education that honors the “spiritual potential” of the child. Based on the synthesis of principles articulated by Maria Montessori, an educator and pioneer in the field of child development, and biblical scholar, Sofia Cavalletti. Catechesis of the Good Shepherd offers the essentials of the Christian faith in a way that engages and delights children.

Catechesis Includes:

A Prepared Environment—The atrium, a beautiful room that is the sacred space where the children can talk and listen to God and create community as followers of Jesus. The atrium was the place in early Christian communities where those about to be baptized were taught about the faith. It can be compared to a retreat house where both spiritual learning and prayer can occur.

Presentations—tell Bible stories and explore worship using three dimensional materials. During the presentation children watch and listen as scripture is read and materials are presented. Children are then given the opportunity to “work with” the materials individually to encourage a deeper connection with the story.

Worship—a model altar, miniature chalice and paten, the colors of the church year shown in model vestments, with many other materials prepare children for worship in a community setting.

Wondering—the young child’s natural tendency to wonder is honored as a unique gift. Wondering is the basis of the spiritual life in the Atrium.



Presentations are followed with wondering questions that are open ended and invite the child to reflect and integrate Bible and worship and their own experience.

Prayer and Silence—Young children have the capacity to experience God’s presence when taught to quiet their bodies and listen for God’s still, small voice. The capacity is valued and encouraged with prayer circle time and presentations that teach control of movement and centering.

Catechists—(Greek for “teachers of faith”) adults who learn the Catechesis of the Good Shepherd approach. They learn the stages of a child’s spiritual development, see and practice each presentation, and listen and reflect on the central mysteries of the Christian faith as they demonstrate the presentations. They consider themselves not teachers but “co-wonderers” with the child.

We Believe:

- That God and the child have a unique relationship with one another, particularly before the age of six.
- That the growth of this relationship should be assisted by the adult but is directed by the spirit of God within the child.
- That children need a special place to foster the growth of that relationship.
- That the child’s spiritual growth is best served through tangible but indirect means using a prepared environment and hands-on materials.



Community Session:

We are offering a **Thursday afternoon session** for children 3 – 8 years old. This session is open to members of the Springfield community from **3:30 – 5:00 p.m.** (snack served at 3:15). We will meet for an initial six week trial session from **Sept. 10th – Oct. 15th**. Please fill out a registration form and return it to Christ Church by September 5th. Space is limited, and registrations will be accepted in the order in which they are received. **Children in the program do not need to be members of an Episcopal church.** However, the support of the family is critical for the child to receive the greatest benefit, to this end it will be important for the child and parent to participate in an orientation session before the beginning of the program. An orientation and tour of the atrium will be scheduled after the registration form is received.

Schedule and Levels: Christ Church offers Catechesis of the Good Shepherd on Sunday mornings at 11 am, following the 10 am worship service. We offer two levels of Catechesis at Christ Church:

Level I in the **Good Shepherd Atrium** for children 3-6 years old , where children are invited to fall in love with Jesus, our Good Shepherd. The children hear stories of Jesus’ life, parables of the kingdom, and learn about worship through hands-on materials.

Level II in the **True Vine Atrium** for children 6-10 years old, where children discover the vast history of God’s plan and our place in it through beautiful timelines and other materials. Children also look at Jesus’ maxims and the moral parables as we learn to live as followers of Jesus. Further meditation on the sacraments, especially Baptism and Eucharist, are also part of the Level II curriculum.