



WITH QUESTIONS, PLEASE CONTACT:

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Confirmation Class and Senior High.....Associate Pastor TBD
 Contact kfinley@firstchurchlf.org in the interim

Family Faith Formation Support.....Sarah Seccombe
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Children's Choirs.....Jill Hunt jhunt@firstchurchlf.org
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We can all be reached at the church.....847-234-6250

Dear Families,

Join us! We warmly welcome you to First Church and invite you to be a part of the adventure of raising children who love God and their neighbors. Whether your children are taking their first steps or learning to drive, we offer the worship, mission, and faith development opportunities they need. This brochure provides a high level look at our programs; more details are available on-line at firstchurchlf.org, along with registration forms.

We also welcome parents! We offer education and fellowship opportunities for adults, including parenting education. All parents of Sunday School-age children are asked to volunteer in some way, either in the classroom or in a supporting role. Please speak with one of us to find the best way to share your gifts with these wonderful children!

Thank you for trusting us to minister to your children.

Faithfully,

Liz Gescheidle, Elder/Children

Amy Pagliarella, Associate Pastor
 for Children's Faith Formation

Susan Milanek, Elder/Middle School

Kristie Finley, Director for Youth
 and Parent Faith Formation

Linda Martinet, Elder/Youth

Sunday Mornings

Nursery Care

8:15-12:15

Professional, loving childcare is available in *The Ark* for infants and toddlers up to 36 months old. *The Ark* is a nurturing and developmentally appropriate space for children to feel God's love.

Worship

9:00-10:00

We welcome children of all ages into our worshipping community in the Sanctuary. The beginning portion of the service encourages families to worship together; children may remain or leave with their teachers for Sunday school. Children's bulletins with worship activity sheets are available to help keep them engaged.

Acolytes

8:45-9:00

Fifth through seventh graders may serve as Acolytes who light the chancel candles at the beginning of worship, then leave for Sunday school and return to extinguish the candles at the end of the service.

Opening Doors Ministry

9:30-10:15

We provide an inclusive and meaningful Sunday school experience for children with special needs. *Special Friends* provide one-on-one encouragement within the classroom environment.

Sunday School

9:15-10:15

Pre School

Children age 3-4 enjoy play, activities, snacks, and Bible stories. The morning ends with faith building time that includes prayer, singing and children's stewardship.

Grade School

In *Faith Adventure*, grades K-4 become explorers! We begin with a time of singing, prayer, and stewardship before learning Bible stories and applying them to our lives.

Middle School/Junior High

Grades 5 - 7 leave for Youth Chapel at the Word for Children before moving to their classrooms for activities to reinforce the day's Bible passages. Youth Chapel is an opportunity for the youth to actively participate in and learn about worship.

Confirmation

At the Word for Children, Confirmands move to their classrooms for lessons in preparation for church membership.

Sunday Nights

Youth Music Ministry

6:00 - 7:00

Youth in grades 9 to 12 who play an instrument, sing, or who simply love music are welcome to jam on Sundays and participate in worship monthly. Contact Lesley Byers at LesleyPByers@aol.com

Youth Group

Senior High Youth Group

7:00 - 8:15

Grades 9 to 12 meet most Sunday evenings for fellowship, worship, study and mission activities.



Middle School Youth Group

4:00 - 5:00

Grades 6, 7 and 8 meet most weeks for fellowship, worship, study and mission activities. The youth group also participates in twice yearly retreats with youth from around the Presbytery.

5th grade youth group will meet once a month for a mission activity at a time that aligns with our mission partners.

First @ Five (light supper follows)

5:00

This family-friendly worship service is casual and contemporary.



Weekday Ministries

Preschool

First Presbyterian Preschool is nationally accredited and allows children to grow in a nurturing, Christian environment. Experienced teachers offer individual guidance and curriculum focuses on the whole child - developing physically, emotionally, intellectually, spiritually and socially. Contact Ruth Luke at ext. 244.

Children's Music

Praise God in song! Children learn music skills, build relationships, and serve as worship leaders. Choirs participate in worship once a month, on Christmas Eve, and in an annual musical play.

Rehearsals, Wednesday, 4:00-4:40 p.m.

Cherub Choir - 5 yrs old thru 1st grade

Carol Choir - 2nd thru 5th grade

Women's Choir - child care provided

Wednesday, 4:45-5:30 p.m.

Jr. High Choir - 6th thru 8th grades

Special Worship Events

Baptisms

Please call the church to share with us the news of the birth of your children - we are eager to welcome them! Baptisms are scheduled once a month during regular Sunday worship, and you will meet with a pastor for pre-baptism counseling. Where possible, contact the church at least two months prior to your desired date.

Christmas Pageant

In December, our children lead worship by presenting the Christmas Story in a traditional and heart-warming pageant. Children age 3-4 are invited to be sheep; age 5+ participate as angels or shepherds. Older children and youth play the holy family and other characters.

Blessing of the Animals Worship Service

Furry friends (real and stuffed) are invited to join us for a family-friendly worship service under the rummage tent. Middle School students lead music and liturgy during this favorite annual event.

Kindergarten Bible Sunday

Every fall, we present Bible storybooks to kindergarteners during a worship service and celebrate with them in Sunday School. Because parents are the primary influence on a child's faith development, the church hopes to support parents as they nurture this most precious gift.

Lent and Holy Week

Family worship and activities will occur on Ash Wednesday and Maundy Thursday. A self-guided tour of the Good Friday prayer stations is available for families. Palm and Easter Sunday services are family-friendly and particularly powerful.

"Fly-Up" Sunday, with Fourth Grade Bibles



At the end of the school year, we recognize our fourth graders in worship as they "graduate" from grade school Sunday School. To support them as they enter Middle School Sunday School, the church presents them with "adult" Bibles. From 1868-2008, the Christian Education Committee presented a Bible to third graders; this service replaces Third Grade Bible Sunday.

Special Activities

Vacation Bible School

One of the most memorable, educational and exciting events for children is our 4-day Vacation Bible School each summer. Children age 4 through 4th grade enjoy arts and crafts, Bible adventures, songs, mission, and tasty treats to reinforce Biblical stories and teachings. Those entering fifth grade enjoy local mission projects on "VBS Work-Trip."

Family Faith in Action events

Children of all ages join to learn about God's vision of justice and help our neighbors. Past events included digging a turtle pond at Elawa Farms and a "Stone Soup" supper to support food pantries.

5th Grade Special Events



5th graders participate in a monthly mission activity such as Soup Kitchen, cooking for PADS, assisting with Rummage, working with nursing home residents or helping at a local food pantry. Events are scheduled to align with each mission organization's needs.

Middle School Retreats

Chicago Presbytery offers 6th, 7th and 8th graders the opportunity to get together for fun, fellowship, study and outreach with kids from other churches. The January retreat is a 3-day event and the May AWOL event is an overnight outreach and mission opportunity.

Senior High Work Trip

This week-long trip provides youth with an opportunity to leave their comfort zone and help other communities in need. We have traveled to Iowa to help with flood relief, Camp Wonderland in Missouri to work in the community and with campers with special needs and in Mississippi to help with the Hurricane Katrina recovery.

Family Faith Formation Gatherings



Parents explore their own faith and their family's needs in a nurturing community. On Sunday, October 25, Dr. Elizabeth Caldwell from McCormick Seminary presents; we will read her book *Making a Home for Faith: Nurturing the Spiritual Life of your Children* for continued discussion on November 22. In the spring we explore transitions and change through Lent and beyond.

Faith Adventure



In Sunday School, children in K-4 begin with a community time of singing, prayer, and stewardship. The journey continues as children become "explorers" and travel to the recently refurbished *Faith Adventure* space on the top floor to learn the stories of our faith.

Faith Adventure is a "Workshop Rotation" model in which the children experience the same Bible story in multiple ways (drawing on children's different learning intelligences). A "tour guide" leads the children to a different room each week over the course of a four-week "journey."

Kindergarteners learn the same stories in age-appropriate ways. They remain in one room (219) with a consistent team of teachers.

Over the course of five years, children learn the major Bible stories - and more importantly, they learn them *well*. Each story is taught with a key theme that shows how it can be applied to their lives. Children make the stories their own because they experience them through music, storytelling, art, drama, movies and mission activities.



2009-2010 <i>Encountering Jesus</i>	2010-2011 <i>Called by God</i>	2011-2012 <i>Receiving God's Promise (the covenant)</i>	2012-2013 <i>Living with God</i>	2013-2014 <i>Responding to God</i>
Jesus	The Disciples	Abraham and Sarah	Creation	Widow's Mite
Jesus' miracles	Moses	The Prodigal Son	Joseph	Daniel
Jesus heals	Parable of the Sower	Isaiah	Magnificat/prophets	Beatitudes
Jesus feeds the 5000	King David	Kingdom Parables	Golden Rule	Apostles' Creed
Jesus in Gethsemane	Esther, Purim	Ten Commandments	Parables of Jesus	Jonah
Paul on Road to Damascus	Pentecost/Holy Spirit	The Good Samaritan	23 rd Psalm	Doubting Thomas

Faith Adventure: 2009-2010

We encounter Jesus in the Bible, at the Lord's Supper, in the waters of baptism and our daily lives. This year, we begin to respond to children's many challenging questions: Who is Jesus? How is Jesus God? How did Jesus get to be Jesus? Did he know he was the Son of God? How could Jesus die?

We will tackle these big topics in age-appropriate ways that allow children to get to know Jesus and build a relationship with him, as well as with one another. Sunday morning journeys are reinforced through periodic Family Faith in Action events, as well as special worship and fellowship opportunities.

Rally Day **September 13**
 Come celebrate our 150th year!
 Sunday School begins, Parent Orientation follows worship

Faith Adventure Journeys:

Jesus Becoming Jesus	September 20-October 11
Jesus, the Miracle Worker	October 18-November 8
Jesus, the Healer	November 15- December 6
Jesus, feeding the 5000	January 24-February 14
Jesus Betrayed	February 21, March 7-21
Jesus on the Road with Paul	April 11-18, May 9-16

Sunday School Special Events:

Christmas Pageant	December 13
Christmas Lesson and Party	December 20
Epiphany Special Event	January 3
Renewal of Baptism	January 10
Children's Musical in worship	February 28
Palm Sunday	March 28
Easter Sunday	April 4
Blessing of the Animals	April 25
High School Senior Worship	May 2
Pentecost Birthday Party	May 23

Summer Sunday School May 30-September 5