
Holy Hacks: November 22, 2019

By the Rev. Julia Mitchener

When I was a child growing up in the Presbyterian Church, Sunday School classes—even those for adults—were divided according to age. My parents attended the “Young Couples Class,” which was still active when most participants were in their 60s! Baptist churches in my hometown separated their classes not only by age group but often by gender and marital status as well.

Episcopal churches traditionally have encouraged adults to choose a Sunday School class based on their interests rather than on their demographics. For developmental reasons, of course, we do group children by age and/or grade. Signs are, though, this may be changing in some congregations. Multigenerational Christian formation programs, where adults and children come together to learn and grow—are becoming more popular. Frequently, this is the result of dwindling participation in traditional Sunday School (happily not a problem here at the cathedral). Other times, though, it is an intentional decision to bring together a diverse group of people. The very young and the very old have a lot to offer one another.

In addition, studies show that parents are typically the greatest spiritual “influencers” of their children. The best predictor of whether a young person will grow up to have faith is not the curriculum used in Sunday School classes, the size of the youth program, or the “wow” factor of the worship services at a church; rather, it is the extent to which that child’s parent or parents attend to their own spiritual life. Multigenerational Christian formation events let kids see their parents practicing their beliefs.

The Cathedral of St. Philip offers many opportunities for families to come together to worship, learn, serve, and play. The month of December will feature our annual Advent wreath making; a redesigned St. Nicholas Celebration; a Living Nativity featuring lots of cuddly animals to pet; and, of course, our Christmas Eve services, including the much anticipated pageant.

In the meantime, don’t miss a special offering this Sunday, November 24. Building Faith: A Celebration in Legos on Christ the King Sunday will take place in Room 316 during the Sunday School hour. We’ll hear stories about kings told with Legos, then build some brick creations of our own, plus do a craft, enjoy sensory play, and eat a special treat. *Please note that children must be accompanied by a parent, grandparent, or other caregiver.* I hope to see you there!