



AMBROSE
UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

FACULTY OF
THEOLOGY

ED 645 Families Nurturing Children: The Church Nurturing Families and Children
Three Credit Hours
Dates: May 7-11, 2012
Professor: Catherine Stonehouse

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Course Description

This course will explore the partnership of the family and the church in the spiritual nurture of children. Through examining biblical perspectives, understandings from faith traditions, insights from human development research, and practices of faith communities, students will develop a plan to lead families and the faith community to partner in the spiritual nurture of children.

Course Objectives

Having completed this course with competence, the student will be able to:

1. Articulate key biblical perspectives on the spirituality of children and the church/home partnership in nurturing the faith of children.
2. Explain the role of God's Story in the spiritual formation of children and families
3. Identify family and faith community characteristics and practices that create environments healthy for the spiritual formation of children, youth, and adults.
4. Describe the role of the faith community in nurturing, equipping, and supporting families.
5. Assess the effectiveness of a faith community in nurturing children and their families and develop a plan for increasing the congregation's effectiveness in partnering with families in the Christian formation of children, youth, and adults.

Required Texts

- Beckwith, Ivy, *Formational Children's Ministry: Shaping Children Using Story, Ritual and Relationships*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2010), ISBN 978-0-8010-7187-4, (154 pages)
- Stonehouse, Catherine and Scottie May, *Listening to Children on the Spiritual Journey: Guidance for Those Who Teach and Nurture*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010), ISBN 978-0-8010-3236-3, (138 pages)

Thompson, Marjorie J., *Family the Forming Center: A Vision of the Role of Family in Spiritual Formation*, (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 1996), ISBN 0-8358-0798-3, (144 pages)
 Westerhoff, John H, III *Will Our Children Have Faith? Revised Edition*, (New York: Morehouse Publishing, 1976, 2000), ISBN 0-8192-1836-7, (141 pages)
 Yust, Karen Marie, *Real Kids, Real Faith: Practices for Nurturing Children's Spiritual Lives*, (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004), ISBN 0-7879-6407-7, (179 pages)

Course Outline

Dates	Topics	Assignments Due
Monday May 7	1. Getting Started: Reflections on Church and Family 2. Biblical Perspectives on Children and the Church/Home Partnership	Begin Reading: Beckwith chs. 2-3, 5-7 Yust chs 2, 5 Develop worksheets
Tuesday May 8	1. Creation Design and Formation During Childhood 2. The Formative Power of God's Story	
Wednesday May 9	1. Family Practices for Nurturing Faith and Wholeness 2. The Formative Potential of the Faith Community	Reading Completed: Beckwith chs. 2-3, 5-7 Yust chs 2, 5 Bring worksheets
Thursday May 10	1. Nurturing, Equipping, and Supporting Families 2. Supporting Children and Families in Crisis	Reading Completed: Stonehouse and May chs 6-8 Bring worksheets
	1. Incorporating Children into the Faith Community 2. Wrap Up	

Course Assignments

All assignments are to be submitted to the professor as email attached files, by midnight on the due date.

All papers are to be typed in 12 point font and double-spaced.

Sources are to be documented using an approved form.

Inclusive language is to be used when speaking of human beings.

A. Reading and Notes (15 points)

1. Complete the reading of required texts listed above

2. Submit brief reading notes on each of the required texts (2 pages for each book). Include a ½ page summary of the book and 1½ pages of key insights from the book, implications of those insights, or questions raised in your mind.

(10 points)

Grading Criteria

- Breadth and significance of Insights
- Significance of implications or questions

3. Complete an additional 250 pages of reading. You may choose from the attached bibliography or check with the professor for approval of other choices.

Keep a log of your additional reading listing book or article titles, authors, and number of pages read, and record the total number of pages.

Submit this log with your final paper. **(5 points)**

All reading and notes are due July 15.

B. Spiritual Journey Reflections (5 points)

During the week of classes, spend at least two hours (20-30 minutes a day) reflecting on your childhood memories. Focus on your first awareness and encounters with God, thoughts and questions about God, even if you did not grow up in a Christian home. What relationships and experiences, in your family and with the church, both positive and negative, have been spiritually formative? What evidence do you see of prevenient grace at work in your life? How do your experiences compare with what is being discussed in class?

Write a 3-4 page summary of those childhood memories, experiences, and their influence on your journey with God.

I will be looking for:

1. Quality of the reflections
2. Insights regarding the formative influences from the family and the church.

Due: May 11 or 14

C. Research and Report (40 points)

Through this project you will have opportunity to learn from children, parents, and pastors about the church and family partnership in nurturing children. You will invest a minimum of 10 hours doing research with children, parents, and pastors. During class sessions we will develop instruments to be used in the research.

Write a 5-7 paged paper reporting and discussing the findings of your research in light of insights from this course and your experience. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses your findings reveal and identify areas of need and potential for enhancing the church and home partnership to nurture the faith of families.

Keep a record of the time you invest in the research (not including the time spent writing the paper) and report the number of research hours at the end of your paper. (Grading Criteria, next page)

Grading Criteria

1. Quality of the research
2. Insightfulness in discussion of findings
3. Significance of needs and potentials identified
4. Evidence of course content influencing assessment of findings
5. Time invested

Due: June 15

D. A Plan for Family/Faith Community Partnership (40 points)

Based on the content of this course, additional reading, your research, and experience, develop a plan that a faith community could use for enhancing the church and home partnership in nurturing children and whole families. Drawing from biblical perspectives and insights from the human sciences, articulate your rationale for the elements you include in your plan.

Write a 7-8 paged paper laying out your plan. Be sure that the paper contains a discussion of all the grading criteria listed below.

Grading Criteria:

The quality of:

1. The rationale for the plan
2. The plan for equipping and supporting parents
3. The plan for incorporating children in the life of the faith community
4. The direct nurturing of children in the faith community
5. The workability of the plans and quality of writing.

Due: July 15

Grading

Potential Points	Course Grade Scale
Reading and Notes 15	95-100 A 80-82.4 B-
Spiritual Journey 5	90-94.9 A- 77.5-19.9 C+
Research and Report 40	85-89.9 B+ 75-77.4 C
Plan for Partnership <u>40</u>	82.5-84.9 B 72.5-74.9 C-
Total 100	

Expectations and Policies

Attendance

Students are expected to be present for all sessions of this one-week intensive. If an absence is unavoidable, inform the professor and negotiate a way of making up the session that is missed.

Electronic Etiquette

Students are expected to treat their instructor, guest speakers, and fellow students with respect. It is disruptive to the learning goals of a course or seminar and disrespectful to fellow students and the instructor to engage in electronically-enabled activities unrelated to the class during a class session. Please turn off all cell phones and other electronic devices during class. Laptops should be used for class-related purposes only. Please do not use iPods, MP3 players, or headphones. Do not text, read or send personal emails, go on Facebook or other social networks, search the internet, or play computer games during class. The professor has the right to disallow the student to use a laptop in future lectures and/or to ask a student to withdraw from the session if s/he does not comply with this policy. Repeat offenders will be directed to the Dean. If you are expecting communication due to an emergency, please speak with the professor before the class begins.

Academic Policies

It is the responsibility of all students to become familiar with and adhere to academic policies as stated in the Student Handbook and Academic Calendar. Personal information, that is information about an individual that may be used to identify that individual, may be collected as a requirement as part of taking this class. Any information collected will only be used and disclosed for the purpose for which the collection was intended. For further information contact the Privacy Compliance Officer at privacy@ambrose.edu.

Extensions

Although extensions to coursework in the semester are at the discretion of the instructor, students may not turn in coursework for evaluation after the last day of the scheduled final examination period unless they have received permission for a “Course Extension” from the Registrar’s Office. Requests for course extensions or alternative examination time must be submitted to the Registrar’s Office by the appropriate deadline (as listed in the Academic Calendar <http://www.ambrose.edu/publications/academiccalendar>). Course extensions are only granted for serious issues that arise “due to circumstances beyond the student’s control.”

Academic Integrity

We are committed to fostering personal integrity and will not overlook breaches of integrity such as plagiarism and cheating. Academic dishonesty is taken seriously at Ambrose University College as it undermines our academic standards and affects the integrity of each member of our learning community. Any attempt to obtain credit for academic work through fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest means is academic dishonesty. Plagiarism involves presenting someone else’s ideas, words, or work as one’s own. Plagiarism is fraud and theft, but plagiarism can also occur by accident when a student fails or forgets to give credit to another person’s ideas or words. Plagiarism and cheating can result in a failing grade for an assignment, for the course, or immediate dismissal from the university college. Students are expected to be familiar with the policies in the current Academic Calendar and the Student Handbook that deal with

plagiarism, cheating, and the penalties and procedures for dealing with these matters. All cases of academic dishonesty are reported to the Academic Dean and become part of the student's permanent record.

Students are advised to retain this syllabus for their records.

Bibliography

- Formational Children's Ministry: Shaping Children Using Story, Ritual, and Relationship*, Ivy Beckwith, ISBN 978-0-8010-7187-4
- The Drama of Scripture: Finding Our Place in the Biblical Story*, Craig G. Bartholomew, Michael W. Goheen, isbn 0-8010-2726-2
- The Child in Christian Thought*, Marcia J. Bunge, editor, ISBN 0-8028-4693-9
- The Child in the Bible*, Marcia J. Bunge, editor, ISBN 978-0-8028-4835-2
- The Religious Potential of the Child*, Sofia Cavalletti, ISBN: 978-0929650678
- Families at the Crossroads: Beyond Traditional & Modern Options*, Rodney Clapp, ISBN 0-8308-1655-0
- The Moral Life of Children*, Robert Coles, ISBN 0-395-59921-0
- Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers Is Telling the American Church*, Kenda Creasy Dean, ISBN 978-0-19-531484-7
- The Switching Hour: Kids of Divorce Say Good-bye Again*, Evon O. Flesberg, ISBN 978-0-687-64976-1
- The Family Friendly Church*, Ben Freudenburg, Rick Lawrence, ISBN 0-7644-2048-8
- Family Ministry: a Comprehensive Guide*, Diana R. Garland, ISBN 0-8308-1585-6
- Flawed Families of the Bible: How God's Grace Works through Imperfect Relationships*, Dave E. Garland and Diana R. Garland (2007), ISBN 978-1-58743-155-5
- Inside Out Families: Living the Faith Together*, Diana R. Garland (2010), ISBN 978-1-60258-245-3
- The Story of God, the Story of Us: Getting Lost and Found in the Bible*, Sean Gladding, ISBN 978-0-8308-3632-1
- The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Gospel of Luke*, Joel B. Green, ISBN 0-8028-2315-7
- "Tell Me a Story": Perspectives on children from the Acts of the Apostles," Joel B. Green, in *The Child in the Bible*, Marcia J. Bunge, editor (215-232), ISBN 978-0-8028-4835-2

Death by Suburb: Ho to Keep the Suburbs from Killing Your Soul, David L. Goetz, ISBN 978-0-06-085968-8

Side by Side: Families Learning & Living the Faith Together, Delia Halverson, ISBN 0-687-04911-3

Faith Begins at Home: The Family Makeover with Christ at the Center, Mark Holemen, ISBN 0-8307-3813-4

Children in Crisis: A New Commitment, Phyllis Kilbourn, editor, ISBN 0-912552-97-2

Growing Strong Daughters: Encouraging Girls to Become All They're Meant to Be, Lisa Graham McMinn, ISBN 0-8010-6324-8

Children in the Worshiping Community, David Ng, Virginia Thomas, ISBN 0-8042-1688-6

Trouble Don't Last Always: Emancipatory Hope Among African American Adolescents, Evelyn L Parker (2003), ISBN 978-0829815405

Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey, Catherine Stonehouse, ISBN: 0-8010-5807-4

Listening to Children on the Spiritual Journey: Guidance for Those Who Teach and Nurture, Catherine Stonehouse, Scottie May, ISBN 978-0-8010-3236-3

The Church of All Ages: Generations Worshiping Together, Howard Vanderwell, ed., ISBN 978-1-56699-358-6

Little Lamb Who Made Thee? Walter Wangerin, Jr., ISBN 0-310-40550-5

The Orphean Passages, Walter Wangerin, Jr., ISBN: 978-0310205685

Will Our Children Have Faith? (Revised Edition) John H. Westerhoff, II, ISBN: 978-0819218360

Offering the Gospel to Children, Gretchen Wolff Pritchard, ISBN: 978-1561010653

Real Kids Real Faith, Karen Marie Yust, ISBN: 0-7879-6407-7