

Southminster Presbyterian Church, Beaverton, OR.

# Joyful Path

*Our Curriculum for Elementary aged children*

## **What is *A Joyful Path*?**

*A Joyful Path* is a curriculum for elementary-aged children developed by the Center for Progressive Christianity. It uses Christian, interfaith, and secular language and stories to teach children about spiritual experiences and social ethics.

## **How does *A Joyful Path* compare to traditional Christian Education approaches?**

*A Joyful Path* follows a fairly traditional Sunday School format; it involves storytelling, arts and crafts, group projects, and discussions. However, the content is different from a traditional Christian education approach. Christian stories and language are common, but the focus of the curriculum is on ethics and individual spirituality rather than on the traditional Christian salvific approach.

## **What will my child learn in *A Joyful Path*?**

Children in *A Joyful Path* will learn that the Christian language, spiritual, and ethical systems can serve as the foundation for their lives. Diverse and concrete stories, projects and discussions help guide children toward a way of living rooted in both spiritual and practical understanding.

## **How will *A Joyful Path* prepare my child for spiritual growth in the future?**

*A Joyful Path* is designed to help children ask broader questions about themselves and about the meaning of life. ‘Who am I?’ ‘Why am I?’ ‘Is there a God?’ ‘How should I relate to God?’ ‘Who are other people?’ ‘How should I relate to others?’ These kinds of questions insist that the child develop a spiritual idea of themselves in order to relate to others. As Godly Play emphasizes the development of a personal language of spiritual experience, *A Joyful Path* challenges children to broaden that individual understanding toward awareness of their communities. Although the curriculum provides certain tools and opens certain approaches, its primary foci are openness, inclusivity, and exploration.

## **What can I expect from my child in *A Joyful Path*?**

Children in *A Joyful Path* are commonly more verbal than young children in Godly Play. Expectations may follow this developmental difference. You may find that your child wants to discuss spiritual, ethical, or other issues raised in Sunday School more deeply with you, and may or may not have definite opinions of his/her own.