



St. Paul's Episcopal Church

Where Tradition Meets Today

ST. PAUL'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH
DELRAY BEACH

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION STANDARDS

STATEMENT OF LEARNING OBJECTIVES AND GOALS FOR ALL AGE GROUPS

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this *Statement of Learning Objectives and Goals for All Age Groups* is to provide the members of St. Paul's with an outline of basic standards of Christian knowledge appropriate to each age level from the pre-school child to the mature adult. The establishment of these standards serves several purposes:

- ★ It provides our members with criteria by which they may measure the degree to which they have learned and assimilated the Christian story and foundations of the Christian faith at a level appropriate to their age.
- ★ It provides parents and guardians with guidelines that will assist them in raising their children in the Christian faith and life.
- ★ It provides the Clergy, staff and church school teachers of St. Paul's basic standards to include in the curricula of St. Paul's and an objective "plumb line" by which program and courses may be evaluated and assessed.
- ★ It underscores that Christian education is important and serious and that there is a definite body of material to be mastered.

We acknowledge with gratitude the hard work done by the Department of Christian Education of the Diocese of Arkansas which created a document titled *Nurturing the Body of Christ: A Manual of Standards for Christian Education*. We have used this work as a template in devising guidelines that are specific to St. Paul's Church in Delray Beach. The work in the Diocese of Arkansas meant that we did not have to "reinvent the wheel." Susan Stokes and the Reverend Kathleen Gannon spent considerable time on this endeavor and their work is also acknowledged with gratitude.

Undergirding our development of this statement is our ongoing commitment to the Baptismal Covenant of the Episcopal Church (see pp. 304-305 of *The Book of Common Prayer*) and the work we have done over the years in cooperation with the Youth and Family Institute in Bloomington, Minnesota. We continue to recognize the profundity of the *Five Themes* established by the Youth and Family Institute. These *Five Themes* are:

1. *Faith is formed by the power of the Holy Spirit through personal, trusted relationships, often in our own homes.*
2. *The Church is a living partnership between the ministry of the congregation and the ministry of the home.*
3. *Where Christ is present in faith, the home is church, too.*
4. *Faith is caught more than it is taught.*
5. *If we want spiritual children and youth, we need spiritual adults/parents.*

In each of the age groupings, we have followed the framework of Arkansas' *Nurturing the Body of Christ: A Manual of Standards for Christian Education* and listed the learning objectives under the category headings of "Jesus," "Bible" and "Church."

CHILDREN 2 – 5 YEARS OLD (Pre-Kindergarten — Kindergarten)

Note: Reading from a reputable Children’s Bible story book should be a regular part of the Christian family’s overall reading plan and routine. Parents have primary responsibility for introducing their children to the foundational stories of the Bible.

— JESUS —

2 - 5 year old children should be able to:

- ▲ Relate the Christmas story from the announcement of Jesus’ birth to Mary through the visit of the Wise Men and the Holy Family’s flight into Egypt. Identify Joseph and Mary as Jesus’ parents.
- ▲ Relate the story of Holy Week including Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, his overturning the tables of the money changers, the story of his Last Supper with the disciples, including his washing their feet as a sign of servanthood and love, his arrest in Gethsemane, Crucifixion and burial.
- ▲ Relate the story of Easter morning as well as other of the popular Easter stories (e.g. the road to Emmaus, the appearance to Thomas). Children should be able to state that because of Easter we believe “Jesus is alive.”
- ▲ State that Jesus is the Son of God and that Jesus loves us.
- ▲ Know of Jesus as a story-teller and they should be able to relate some of his favorite parables: the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son, the Mustard Seed, the Lost Sheep and the Good Shepherd.

— BIBLE —

2 - 5 year old students should:

- ▲ Know that the Bible contains the story of their church family and of God’s ways with that family.
- ▲ Know the following Old Testament stories/characters
 - Creation
 - Adam and Eve, the Garden of Eden and why they had to leave
 - Cain and Abel
 - Noah and the Ark
 - The Tower of Babel
 - God calls Abraham
 - Sarah laughs at God
 - Isaac and Rebecca
 - Jacob and Esau
 - Jacob’s Ladder
 - Joseph and the Coat of Many Colors
 - Joseph and Pharaoh’s Dreams
 - Joseph forgives his brothers

- Moses and Miriam in the bullrushes
- The Burning Bush
- Moses leads Israel out of Egypt
- Israel, the Wilderness and the Ten Commandments
- The Golden Calf
- Joshua and the Promised Land
- The Battle of Jericho
- Deborah leads her people
- God calls Samuel
- The boy David and Goliath
- David the King
- Solomon, David's son
- The Prophet Elijah
- Namaan and the servant of Yahweh
- Esther the Queen
- The story of Ruth
- Samson and Delilah
- Jonah and the Great Fish
- Daniel in the Lion's Den

▲ Know the following New Testament Stories in addition to the material covered in "Jesus" above:

- The birth of John the Baptist
- The ministry of John the Baptist
- Jesus calls the Disciples by the Sea of Galilee
- Jesus is Baptized by John
- Jesus is tempted by Satan
- The Wedding at Cana in Galilee
- Jesus heals the sick and lame
- Jesus calms a storm
- Jesus feeds 5,000
- Jesus visits Martha and Mary
- The healing of Jairus' daughter
- The Transfiguration
- Lazarus raised from the dead
- Jesus cleanses the Temple
- The story of Pentecost
- Paul on the Road to Damascus
- Lydia is a leader of the church

— CHURCH —

2 - 5 year old children should:

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| ▲ | Know that Baptism is the way one becomes a member of the Church Family |
| ▲ | That Baptism makes them part of a church family that has members all around the world |
| ▲ | Be able to tell the story of their own baptism and know its anniversary date |
| ▲ | Know the name of their church |

- ▲ Be able to identify basic parts and furnishings in the church
 - altar
 - baptismal font
 - organ
 - lectern
 - paschal candle
 - pulpit
 - bishop's chair
- ▲ Be able to identify the clergy and understand that they serve the church by teaching about Jesus, preaching, leading worship and visiting the sick
- ▲ Be able to distinguish between a bishop, priest and deacon by knowing the distinctive vestments of each
- ▲ Be able to recite the Lord's Prayer by heart
- ▲ Have a basic understanding of communion and the "body and blood" of Christ
- ▲ Be regular in their communion
- ▲ Be able to connect the Church's celebration of communion with the Lord's Last Supper
- ▲ Know that the word "Church" refers to a people more than a building
- ▲ Know that they are part of the Church
- ▲ Know that Jesus' Spirit lives in the Church - the people
- ▲ Know that prayers and worship at home are important

CHILDREN 6 – 8 YEARS OLD (Grades 1 and 2)

Children 6 - 8 years old should be familiar with all of the material specified for children ages 2 -5 listed above as well as the following:

— JESUS —

6 - 8 year old children should be able to:

- ▲ Understand that Jesus cared for the poor and the sick
- ▲ Understand that Jesus taught about the kingdom of heaven
- ▲ Understand that Jesus commands us to care for the poor and the sick

BIBLE

6 - 8 year old students should:

- ▲ Know that there are two parts to the Bible - the Old Testament and the New Testament
- ▲ Know that the story of the people Israel is found in the Old Testament
- ▲ Know that the story of Jesus and his followers is found in the New Testament
- ▲ Know the following Old Testament themes
 - God created the heavens and the earth
 - God loves and sustains his creation - The Creation Covenant
 - God created human kind
 - Human kind turned away from God

- God always invites human kind into a relationship of love - The Covenant of Abraham
- God saves a people from slavery and calls them to follow God
- God calls a people to live in a right way - The Mosaic Covenant of the Law
- God's providence is at work even when God seems far away or absent
- ▲ Know the following New Testament themes
 - People turn away from God - this is called sin
 - God calls people to turn away from sin and toward him in Jesus
 - Jesus saves people from sin and leads them into a relationship with God
 - Jesus' Spirit lives in the Church, the people of God, which is also the Body of Christ
 - Living in Christ transforms the members of the Church into holy people
 - People who live in Jesus are promised eternal life
 - The story of Pentecost and its importance to the Church
 - The story of St. Paul and his role in helping the early church grow

— Church —

6 - 8 year old children should:

- ▲ Know that the Church is a community of all baptized people
- ▲ That they are members of a part of the Church family called Episcopalians
- ▲ That "Episcopal" means "Bishop" - the Episcopal Church is a church with bishops who oversee the Church
- ▲ Be familiar with the importance of baptism in the life of the church and have a basic understanding of what happens during a service of Holy Baptism in the church
- ▲ Be familiar with the importance of Holy Communion or Eucharist in the life of the church and have a basic understanding of what happens during the Holy Eucharist in the church.
- ▲ Know the six seasons of the Church year and the colors associated with the seasons
- ▲ Know the difference between a "feast" and a "fast" and be able to identify the two fast days of Ash Wednesday and Good Friday
- ▲ Have memorized the Nicene Creed and be able to state that "We believe in God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit" which we call the Trinity
- ▲ Have memorized Jesus' "Summary of the Law"
- ▲ Be able to participate appropriately in regular worship

CHILDREN 9 - 12 YEARS OLD (Grades 3 - 5)

Children 9 - 12 years old should be familiar with all of the material specified above as well as the following:

— Jesus —

9 - 12 year old children should be able to:

- ▲ Offer a coherent account of Jesus', birth, ministry, death and resurrection
- ▲ Recognize Jesus' roots in Judaism

- ▲ State that Jesus is the Christ or Messiah and understand what Christians mean by this
- ▲ Understand that Jesus is “God become flesh” referred to as the “Incarnation”
- ▲ Understand that Jesus’ coming was foretold by the prophets of the Old Testament
- ▲ State that Jesus is both “fully human and fully divine” and give some explanation of the meaning and implications of this
- ▲ Describe some of the ways in which Jesus was in conflict with the world in which he lived
- ▲ Understand why many people in Jesus’ own Jewish faith did not believe he was Messiah

— BIBLE —

9 - 12 year old students should:

- ▲ Be able to locate parts of the Bible by book, chapter and verse
- ▲ Give an outline account of the rise and fall of the kingdoms of Israel and Judah including significant dates
- ▲ Be able to identify the following Old Testament prophets and know some of their basic story/themes
 - Elijah
 - Elisha
 - Nathan
 - Isaiah (1st, 2nd and 3rd)
 - Amos
 - Hosea
 - Jeremiah
 - Micah
 - Ezekiel
- ▲ Memorize the 23rd Psalm
- ▲ Memorize the Ten Commandments
- ▲ State the five basic covenants of the Old Testament along with their biblical support
- ▲ Identify:
 - The Apostles
 - The Romans
 - The Scribes
 - The Sadducees
 - The Pharisees
 - The Herodians

— CHURCH —

9 - 12 year old children should:

- ▲ Be regular participants in worship including assisting as acolytes
- ▲ Be familiar with The Book of Common Prayer and able to use it as a resource for their own prayers and worship

- ▲ Be able to identify ways in which God reveals himself to the Church
- ▲ Have a basic understanding of what prayer is and of the principal kinds of prayer:
 - Adoration
 - Praise
 - Thanksgiving
 - Oblation
 - Intercession
 - Petition
- ▲ Be able to identify and know the meaning of the seven sacraments of the Church
- ▲ Be able to identify Baptism and Eucharist as the two primary sacraments ordained by Christ
- ▲ Be able to offer a coherent statement of the Old and New Covenants
- ▲ Have memorized the Ten Commandments and be able to state what they mean
- ▲ Be able to identify the “ministers of the church” and describe the function of each
- ▲ Understand that by virtue of their baptism they are ministers of the church
- ▲ Begin to develop an understanding of how their ministry is lived out in daily living

YOUTH 13 – 15 YEARS OLD

(Grades 6 - 9)

Youth 13- 15 years old should be familiar with all of the material specified above as well as the following:

— JESUS —

13 - 15 year old youth should be able to:

- ▲ Offer a coherent explanation of the importance of the Incarnation
- ▲ Offer a coherent explanation of the importance of Jesus’ suffering and death
- ▲ State why Jesus’ Resurrection is a central proclamation of the Christian faith
- ▲ Discuss the Church’s understanding of heaven and hell
- ▲ Discuss different images of Jesus found in the New Testament
- ▲ Discuss what it is to have a “personal” relationship with Jesus and be able to share how they live out their relationship with him
- ▲ Define the uniqueness of the claim the Church makes about Jesus and how this is distinct from claims made by other world religions about their central figures while also having an appreciation of those other world religions and their principle figures and texts

— Bible —

13 - 15 year old youth should:

- ▲ Have memorized the books of the Old Testament and the New Testament in order
- ▲ Be able to offer a coherent time line of the Old Testament story
- ▲ Be able to state why the Old Testament is important to Israel

- ▲ Be able to state why the Old Testament is important to the Church
- ▲ Memorize the 121st Psalm
- ▲ Memorize Deuteronomy 6:4-9
- ▲ Memorize John 1:1-14
- ▲ Memorize Matthew 28:16-20
- ▲ Be able to state why the New Testament is important to the Church
- ▲ Be familiar with the growth of the early church especially through the journeys of St. Paul
- ▲ Be familiar with Paul's description of the Body of Christ and the fruits of the Spirit

— CHURCH —

13 - 15 year old youth should:

- ▲ Begin to understand the concept of Stewardship and tithing time, talent and treasure
- ▲ Understand the importance of being good stewards of their bodies including the development of healthy sexuality and sexual behaviors as a part of Christian holiness
- ▲ Understand the dynamic of peer groups and peer pressure and when to ask for adult help
- ▲ Engage in regular service activities as a part of their Christian life
- ▲ Be able to discuss the problem of evil and the concept of "theodicy"
- ▲ Develop a rule of life
- ▲ Develop a working definition of justice and injustice and relate these to Christian living
- ▲ Memorize the five "lifestyle questions" of the Baptismal Covenant and relate these to their own daily living
- ▲ Understand the use of the term "Saint"
- ▲ Be familiar with 10 of the Saints of the Church beyond the circle of the original apostles

YOUTH 16 – 18 YEARS OLD (Grades 10- 12)

Youth 16 - 18 years old should be familiar with all of the material specified above as well as the following:

— JESUS —

16 - 18 year old youth should be able to:

- ▲ Discuss how Jesus is viewed by each of the four Gospel writers and by St. Paul
- ▲ Discuss "christology"
- ▲ Discuss the "Jewishness" of Jesus
- ▲ Relate Jesus' preaching of the kingdom of God to their every day world and lives
- ▲ Understand the relationship of the "earthly Jesus" to the "resurrected Christ"

— BIBLE —

16 - 18 year old youth should:

- ▲ Have an understanding of the events of the “intertestamental” period
- ▲ Be familiar with “Source Theory” as it applies to the Pentateuch and the Four Gospels
- ▲ Have an understanding of the social conditions of Israel that underlie the formation of both the Old Testament and the New Testament
- ▲ Be able to critically approach the birth narratives in Matthew and Luke and the resurrection narratives in all four Gospels
- ▲ Be aware of the existence and import of “extracanonical” books of the Bible
- ▲ Have memorized “The Beatitudes” of The Sermon on the Mount, Jesus’ “missionary statement” in Luke 4:18-19 and the “little Gospel” of John 3:16
- ▲ Understand the doctrine of “justification by faith” and its importance to the Church and their life of faith
- ▲ Be able to distinguish between the Pauline and pseudo-Pauline epistles

— CHURCH —

16 - 18 year old youth should:

- ▲ Be active in serving the Church and the world and be able to connect this service to their baptismal promises
- ▲ Have a working understanding of the Christian virtues and be able to apply these in life
- ▲ Have a basic understanding of the history of the Church with particular attention to their Anglican heritage
- ▲ Be familiar with some basic knowledge of the Protestant Reformation and the relationship of Anglicanism to this
- ▲ Have an understanding of how the Episcopal Church in the United States is a distinctly American branch of the worldwide Anglican Communion
- ▲ Be familiar with the governing structure of the Episcopal Church and conversant in relevant issues affecting it
- ▲ Be familiar with the so-called “Instruments of Unity” of the Anglican Communion and how these affect the Episcopal Church
- ▲ Have a working knowledge of the Mission of the Church and the imperative of a worldwide view of mission activity
- ▲ Be able to identify the four primary ministries of the Church and be familiar with the distinct roles of each
- ▲ Be familiar with the “three-legged stool” of Anglicanism - scripture, tradition and reason - and able to apply this in their own theological thinking
- ▲ Have some understanding of how the Episcopal Church relates to other denominational churches (e.g. Roman Catholic, Evangelical Lutheran, Methodist, etc.)
- ▲ Have a basic understanding of what defines “Christian spirituality” with particular emphasis on Anglican spirituality and its Benedictine roots and ethos
- ▲ Live within an intentional and disciplined “rule of life” that includes active components of worship, study and service

- ▲ Understand some of the dynamics of faith development theory and the lifelong process of “conversion”
- ▲ Have a mature understanding of Jesus as “Savior” and a working understanding of what it means to live in a “saved/saving” relationship with Jesus

ADULTS 19 YEARS OLD AND ABOVE

Adults should be familiar with all of the material specified above as well as the following:

— JESUS —

- ▲ Be thoroughly familiar with the life and times of Jesus and the details of his ministry as these are presented in the New Testament
- ▲ Understand the unique Christian claims about Jesus and how these relate to other world religions
- ▲ Understand how the prayer and life patterns of Jesus relate to their own prayer and life patterns and what it means to live in “imitation of Christ”

— BIBLE —

Adults should:

- ▲ Be able to offer a brief synopsis of each book of the Bible
- ▲ Have developed a working “biblical theology” including an understanding of “the inspiration of Scripture,” sin, grace, redemption, sanctification and holiness
- ▲ Be able to outline a history of Israel with key dates
- ▲ Be able to outline a history of the ministry of Jesus, Paul and the growth of the New Testament Church with key dates
- ▲ Have a working knowledge of the formation of the Old Testament and the New Testament

— CHURCH —

Adults should:

- ▲ Have an understanding of God’s saving grace and belief in the humanity and divinity of Jesus
- ▲ Have a working knowledge of the history of the first five centuries of the Church’s history and the influence of this period on the development of Christian doctrine with particular attention to the doctrine of the Trinity and the person of Christ
- ▲ Have integrated their beliefs in such way that these inform their daily life and routines including family, social relationships, service activities and political choices

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- ▲ Be an active participant in a small group in which members nurture one another in spiritual growth and development and through a process of biblical and theological reflection
- ▲ Understand and apply the concept of Christian stewardship to their faith and life practices
- ▲ Be familiar with the basic tenets of the world's other great religions, understanding similarities and differences with Christian beliefs and practices



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