



Milestones Project

Loving Kids
Equipping Families
Creating Disciples

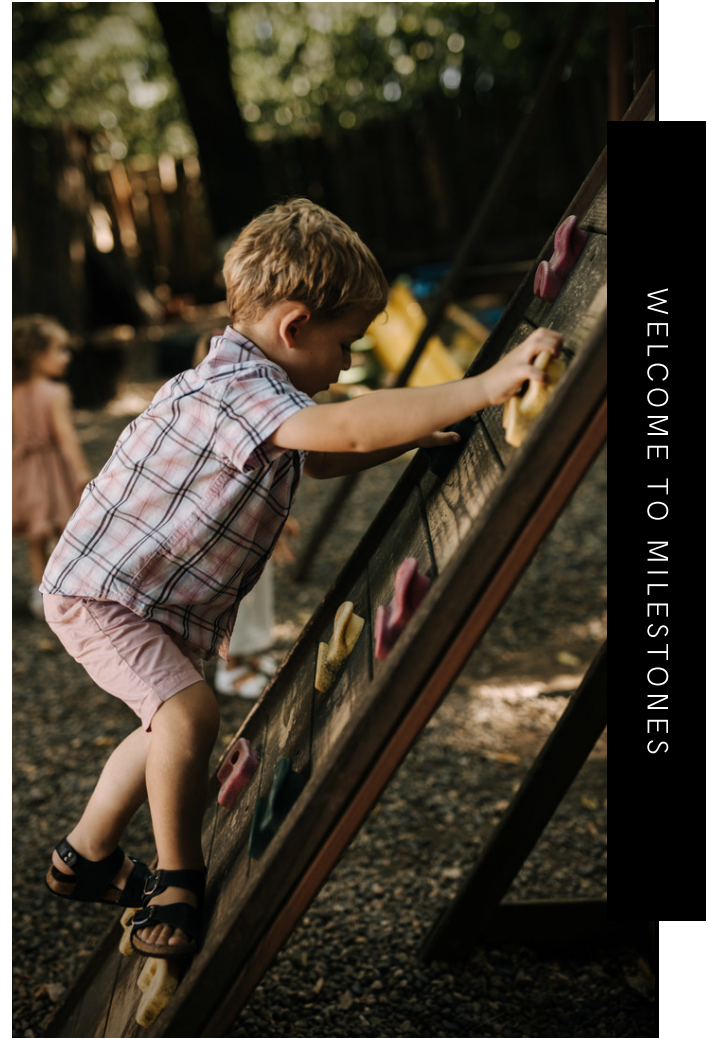
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*"Point your kids in the right direction -
when they're old they won't be lost."*

PROVERBS 22:6

From the very beginning, God marked and invited his people to recognize important moments. He marvelously carved out creation in sections, using what was created one day to support the next. At the end of each day, he looked back at his creation and declared it “good”. During the journey of following Him, God regularly calls his people to a place of remembrance after a significant event. When the nation of Israel crossed the Jordan on dry ground, God called his people to place 12 stones in the spot they had crossed as a sign and a memorial for future generations of God’s faithfulness.

Our spiritual lives can be encouraged through a similar lense. God wants to keep growing us and developing our love and knowledge of Him. Milestones are markers of important moments in a disciple’s life. They are specific events or processes that serve as markers of a step in the faith formation of a disciple of Jesus.



WELCOME TO MILESTONES

Purpose



The purpose of marking milestones is to encourage parents and young people to look at and celebrate God's faithfulness in their lives. The act of remembering will honor the journey of faith formation and encourage those involved to worship God for His faithfulness.


Fuller Youth Institute describes faith milestones “as a concrete map of hoped-for faith development that fuels parents’ and the church community’s involvement in the lives of kids.” Wellspring Milestones are a suggested course for the faith formation journey. Not everyone enters the spiritual journey at the same place or time of life. But God is in all of this and there is no right or wrong way to grow and develop in the love and faith of Jesus! God is the Good Shepherd who is always pursuing us and loving us wherever we are.

Some milestones will be initiated by the family, some by the individual, some by the church. Is there one right path? No. Is there a perfect timeline? No. Is this a path to become a good Christian? No. We hope these suggestions will be a tool to help parents and young people mark the progression of their faith and serve as a guide to what may be coming up on the horizon.



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MILESTONES

Birth or Adoption of a Child



Welcoming a child into the family of Wellspring is a privilege and honor! The Children and Family Department will set up a home visit to the newborn or newly adopted child within the first six months of arrival. Parents will be encouraged to raise the child up in the knowledge and love of the Lord. A short introduction to baptism will be given, but the intention of the visit will be to welcome this child as a gift from God to the Wellspring Family!



Baptism/Communion

Baptism is an outward expression of an inward reality of a new life in Christ. Baptism includes a cleansing from sin, being born again and faith in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Savior. Many children are baptized as infants but not always. Baptism can also occur following a person's dedication of their life to Christ. Wellspring offers communion to all who have been baptized. If your child is baptized as an infant, it then becomes a family decision as to when s/he receives communion. We intend for parents to instruct their children in the meaning of communion and how to humbly receive this gift. Through communion the body is nourished and the soul is strengthened. We receive forgiveness and we are renewed in the love and unity of the body of Christ, the Church.

Nursery Graduation



At age 4, children will go together from the nursery to the Sunday School (also known as The Spring). This will typically happen at the end of a school year so they can transition over the summer and are ready for the fall. We intend to acknowledge and affirm the growth and development of our children as they are ready to accept the challenge of increased responsibility, independence and faith formation. Older children will greet the newest students and introduce them to the program and space!

8 The Lord sends a message against
And it falls on Israel.
9 And all the people know it,
That is, Ephraim and the inhabitants of
Samaria,
Asserting in pride and in arrogance of
heart.
10 The bricks have fallen down,
But we will rebuild with smooth stones;
The sycamores have been cut down,
But we will replace them with cedars."

No man spares his brother.
20 They slice off what is on the right hand
but still are hungry,
And they eat what is on the left hand
but they are not satisfied;
Each of them eats the flesh of his own
arm.
21 Manasseh devours Ephraim, and
Ephraim Manasseh,
And together they are against Judah.

as I have done to Samaria and her
doers?"
12 So it will be that when the Lord has com-
pleted all His work on Mount Zion and on Je-
rusalem, He will say, "I will punish the fruit of
the arrogant heart of the king of Assyria and
the pomp of his haughtiness." 13 For he has
said,

son, to the mighty God.
22 For though your people, O Israel, may
be like the sand of the sea,
Only a remnant within them will
return;
A destruction is determined,
overflowing with righteousness.
23 For a complete destruction, one that is de-
creed, the Lord God of hosts will execute in
the midst of the whole land.

Reciting The
Lord's Prayer

Our PreK and Kindergarten class will memorize the Lord's Prayer and learn why Jesus taught us to pray this way. From the beginning we want to encourage their prayer lives and personal relationship with Jesus. To mark this important milestone, our children will lead us during a worship service in the Lord's Prayer. Our desire is for the body of Christ to support the children in their faith formation and acknowledge them as leaders of today.



**Confession and
Anointing**

The 1st and 2nd Grade class will memorize and learn the four aspects of the Confession. They will be introduced to how sin keeps us from God and how we are reconciled back to God through humble confession and repentance. Our children will lead the Confession during the liturgy, be anointed with oil and set apart by the grace of God.

Apostles' Creed and Stole



The 3rd and 4th Grade class will learn the importance and purpose of our Creeds based upon the Catechism curriculum. They will memorize the Apostles' Creed and share it with the congregation. We do this to support the faith formation of children and to uphold the promises made at baptism. This class will also make a stole in their classroom time and receive it during a service. This stole is a sign that they are yoked with Christ and wear the armor of God to stand firm in this world but not of it.



Receiving a First Bible

We believe in the importance of burying the word of God from the Old and New Testaments in our hearts to call on in times of thanksgiving, praise, need or trouble. As children move through their years in Sunday School they memorize scripture each month. At the end of 4th Grade, children will recite a bible verse that is meaningful to them and receive a bible as they transition into our 5th-6th grade program.

Coming of Age Celebration



It is incredibly formative for a young person to mark the transition from childhood into adolescence. We encourage parents to plan a special celebration designed to usher a young person into becoming an adult and taking ownership of their own faith formation. The primary process is to invite a group of mature believers who host a spiritual formation ceremony where there is a formal invitation into becoming an adult that can include, but not be limited to: words of affirmation, prayer, celebration or symbolic gifts. The target age to hold a coming of age ceremony is 12 or 13 years old, it can happen at another age, but middle adolescence is the primary target demographic.



Foundations and
Form Year

FOUNDATIONS

Every other Spring semester, Foundations discipleship course is offered to 7th and 8th grade students. The curriculum is based on the ACNA Catechism, and adapted to meet middle school developmental needs and capabilities. Students will engage the process of catechesis to understand the foundational beliefs of the Christian Faith. This will allow a student to operate from a place of stability in their faith as they journey through adolescence. Foundations culminates in the opportunity to participate in Confirmation, as well as a Capstone trip experience to celebrate the effort and engagement of the cohort.

FORM YEAR

Every other school year, Form Year discipleship cohort is offered to 10th through 12th grade students. The curriculum is driven by the ACNA Catechism, as well as student's toughest questions about faith. Students will have the opportunity to interact with the core beliefs of historical Christianity and the Anglican tradition in an environment that invites questions and facilitates a disruption phase in spiritual formation. This will allow students to begin to solidify their theological framework and personal belief positions, while still being shaped and formed by the leadership and curriculum of the year. It culminates in the opportunity to participate in Confirmation, as well a Capstone trip experience to celebrate the effort and engagement of the cohort.



Confirmation

Confirmation is “the ordination of the people.” It marks an outward confession of faith, as well as a commissioning into service in the name of Christ. Confirmation happens through a service led by clergy and the Bishop to celebrate the affirmation of the baptismal vows made by you or on your behalf. After learning the foundational aspects of the faith through Anglican catechism, individuals can choose to participate in the service where the Bishop confirms, anoints, and prays over each Confirmand.

Missions Experience



It is important for all young people to tangibly engage with short term mission experiences to form a core understanding for the role of missional living as a part of discipleship in the Christian tradition. There are several avenues for students to experience missions. The church will facilitate various short term trips to local, regional, national, and international locations where students will work with local leaders for the spreading of the Kingdom.

Students can also experience missions through another organization alongside a family member or by themselves. Students will experience a healthy framework of mission work that will become a catalyst of missional outlook and daily living in their own context.

Commissioning Banquet



Each May, Wellspring holds a celebratory banquet for graduating High School Seniors. The goal is to surround graduating students with adults that care about them and have been a part of their spiritual development. This will include Wellspring staff, families, and those identified as a part of a young person's formation by their parents. We will share encouragement and prayers over graduating seniors, and commission them into the next phase of adulthood.



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