

FAMILY PASTOR REPORT

Family Ministry Overview

Family Ministry follows the vision and commitments of LSCC. LSCC strives to partner with families as we take steps to know and become like Jesus. We help families realize this win in three ways:

Partnership

Two influences working in tandem are much greater than two influences working independently from each other. Psalm 78:1-8 shows the power of the influence of a group of people striving together for the same goal. God designed the church to **inspire, equip and support** the family to spiritually lead our children to know and become like Jesus. When the church partners with the family the two are able to become the effective influence they were designed to be.

Factors in partnership

The family must see the need for two things:

1. Christianity isn't a Sunday ritual but an all-inclusive lifestyle.
2. The church is God's designed resource to help parents spiritually lead their family.

The church must see its role in two ways:

1. Partnership with the family isn't calling them to do our thing but finding ways we can join them in their journey.
2. Develop resources that equip parents to spiritually lead their family within the everyday rhythm of life.

Rhythm

Every family has its unique pattern. Deuteronomy 6:4-9 express the importance of understanding and using everyday rhythm to spiritually lead our children. The flow of everyday life is as different as our fingerprints. The church's responsibility to help families discover their rhythm is two-fold:

1. **Uphold the calling and identity we've been given in Christ.** Our culture would have us look at life in a segmented way. We hire the specialists to take care of the training our kids need: the soccer coach, piano teacher, school tutor, etc. Our tendency is to treat the church the same way; take the kids to church so they get what they need spiritually. Jesus has called us to **intentionally** know him and live like him all day, every day in the **natural flow** of life. Nothing we do should be separate from our relationship with God.
2. **Do things that remind the family that their unique rhythm is important.** There is a delicate **balance** of bringing the natural rhythm of life together with spiritual guidance. LSCC will guard against crowding or undermining the family's rhythm with too much programming.

All programming and resources we design must help families see their natural rhythm as opportunities that lead knowing and becoming like Jesus. LSCC must celebrate important moments with the family. LSCC must encourage in times of critical transitions and phases in a child's life.

Objective

The objective is to know and become like Jesus. We never arrive at a place where we have finished becoming like Jesus, but will always be striving to take a next step to that objective. Jesus said, "If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me." (Mt 16:24) Following Jesus is a **process of growing** in our understanding of how God designed us to live. It's not a program, it's an **experience** - a lifestyle! That's **discipleship**. Following Jesus requires us to **worship** God, live life in **community** with others, and live to **serve** others.

1. **In what way can I deepen my relationship with God through worship?** How am I honing in on God's perspective? I need to strive to see people (myself included) the way He sees them (me).
2. **What is my next step toward genuine community?** In what way am I getting to know others and helping them know me deeply? Sharing life together, being accountable to others, loving others as Jesus loves them, are ways that reveal where I am on this part of my journey with Jesus.
3. **How has God designed me to serve?** My life should reflect Jesus' purpose for coming here. He served others. He gave up his life. I must live a lifestyle of service.

Phases and Milestones

How will LSCC partner with families and help them discover their unique rhythm for the purpose of knowing and becoming like Jesus? Through the **phases** and **milestones** each family will face over the 18 plus years of parenting.

These phases and milestones are catalysts to **partner** with families and help them discover their **rhythm**. We want every family to approach the milestones within each phase of a child's life equipped and inspired to grow in their relationships with each other and with God.

Phases

A phase is a timeframe in a child's life when we can leverage distinctive opportunities to influence their future. We have identified four phases a child will go through from birth to high school graduation in which LSCC will partner with families to help them be more intentional and meet these phases with the tools and resources they need.

Milestones

A milestone is a significant event that ushers in a phase of life and gives opportunities for deeper relationships. We have identified eight major milestones that occur within those four phases. The following is an explanation of those phases along with an understanding of how we go about recognizing and celebrating the milestones.

Phases and Milestones Explained

Phase 1

Early Childhood

Milestones: News of baby or adoption, adoption day/birthday, child dedication

News of Baby or Adoption, Adoption Day/Birthday

The news of a new member into any family changes life forever. Nearly half of these families are welcoming their first child into the family. So many new experiences. So many unanswered questions. The church can certainly encourage and equip families for this new experience. Whether through small group communities, books, coaching, events, LSCC can equip them for the journey ahead.

We will partner with families through:

- Birthday/Adoption Day Celebrations
- Child Dedications
- New parent small group communities
- Providing new parent care and support

Ages 0-1 Adoption Day/Birthday Celebration

The new family member is here! It's time to celebrate. We will not miss this opportunity to acknowledge one of the greatest gifts God can give a parent. This child is now under the care and responsibility of the family. The church begins its opportunity to show the love of Jesus through upholding the values of worship, community and serve.

We will partner with families through:

- Celebration (Card/care package delivered to home and prayer for the family)
- Invitation to next child dedication
- Next steps on how to get involved with kids ministry

Ages 2-5 Child Dedication

While we call this "Child Dedication" it is really about the family. This is a commitment of the family (biologically and faith community) to uphold family values, pray for and strengthen the integrity of the family and do life together. Dedication is about the commitment of parents to be the spiritual leaders God has called them to be.

We will partner with families by helping them take next steps to become people who are:

- Worshippers of God, constantly re-aligning their perspectives with His perspective.
- Living in a community that embraces a lifestyle where we are known and know others deeply.
- Engaging in an intentional lifestyle of service to others.

Important developmental questions our kids ask during this phase:

- Am I safe? Establishing trust
- Am I able? Developing confidence
- What are my boundaries? Cultivating self-confidence

Phase 2:

Elementary School

Milestones: First day of school, first faith steps

1st Beginning Elementary School

This is one of the biggest days in a family's life. The emotions run high (for parents and kids). The unknown can be scary. The next step in growing up is exciting to see. The highs and lows of what is to come compels us to help these families find communities in which they can lean on for support and celebration.

We will partner with families by:

- Celebrating each child's first day of school

1st-6th Baptism (First faith steps)

This is a stage of life when our children are motivated by fun. They are figuring out their identity, trying to gain approval and affirmation, working hard to learn new things. We need to help children understand God wants them to come to him as a child, full of passion that expresses their belief and trust in God in a childlike way. Baptism is the public profession of that faith and trust in Jesus and should soon follow a person's conversion. It is one of the first steps of the new believer. But so much leads to this public step: teaching about who God is, what Jesus has done, why we need to believe and trust in Jesus, taking that step of faith. These conversations build a foundation of belief for our children. So, when it's time, will parents be ready and confident to have those conversations with their child? When a child asks his parent to explain what it means to be a Christian, will mom or dad be prepared? When a child asks her parents what baptism is all about have we equipped them to be ready for that conversation?

What happens after baptism? How are we preparing parents to continue this faith journey?

We will partner with families helping them have important conversations about:

- **Salvation.** Provide an experience for families explaining what we need to know about Jesus and what we need to do with that knowledge.
- **Baptism.** Provide an experience for families explaining baptism and celebrating this important step with them.
- **What's next.** Provide opportunities for families to teach and uphold the values (worship, community, serve) in various ways enabling them to learn and grow together.

Important developmental questions our kids ask during this phase:

- Is this correct? Gain approval and affirmation
- Who am I? Develop identity
- Do I have what it takes? Broaden competence

Phase 3:

Middle School

Milestone: Middle School transition

6th-7th Middle School Transition

So much is happening in the life of a person at this stage. Not only are they preparing to move into a new school with new friends, new teachers, new responsibilities, but they are experiencing puberty, new expectations, they are taking their first steps to adulthood. Life isn't so much about fun anymore. It's about acceptance! The biggest questions they have is, who are my friends? And What can I do? Our children need to know there are no conditions to our acceptance. They need to know that God loves them no matter what mistakes they make or what their successes are. But navigating this time is difficult. Parents are watching their child grow up! With this stage comes many questions. Who is my child becoming? How much freedom is too much? How do I help my child express his desire to experience the life to which God has called him? How do I make sure my child understands I live and accept them without conditions?

We will partner with families to:

- Help with the practical steps of transitioning from elementary school to middle school.
- Prepare 5-6th graders to move to LSCC Students by providing a deeper small group experience.
- Begin conversations with families on topics like: purity, sex, adulthood, marriage, trust/freedom, technology, etc. (Parent Link)
- Give 5-6th graders the opportunity to experience new freedom, responsibility and community through a camp experience.

Important developmental questions our students ask during this phase:

- Who are my friends? Develop friendships
- What can I do? Develop influence

Phase 4:

High School

Milestones: High School transition, Graduation

8th-9th High School Transition

Now that our children have experienced new freedoms, new responsibilities, deeper community, life takes another leap forward. The move from middle school to high school brings some great challenges. High schoolers are being pressured earlier every year to declare a major emphasis of study, one that will be their desired career for the foreseeable future. How do parents help their children navigate such an important decision so early in life? These new freedoms and expectations, if coupled with wisdom will set our students up for success in their early adult life and will launch them into their college/career years with God's blessing.

We will partner with families by:

- Celebrating the move from middle to high school, the final grade school stretch!
- Beginning conversations that generate thinking about future goals/plans
- Providing resources that encourage parents to guide their children to develop deeper relationships that uphold Godly values

9th-12th High School Years

One of the most challenging times in a person's life is discovering new freedoms and balancing them with proper boundaries. Our sophomores and juniors are experiencing new freedom and asking questions like: where do I belong? What do I believe? What will I do? What is my passion? They are cultivating deeper relationships, clarifying values, defining future plans. It can be a difficult time for parents to let go and trust.

We will partner with families by:

- Teaching in ways that encourage students and parents to talk about future goals and plans
- Encouraging students to know how to set healthy boundaries
- Celebrating the accomplishment of Graduation

12th and beyond Graduation and Early Adulthood

The senior year is about one thing...graduation! It's the final stretch before launching into college or career. Finishing well is important. It sets the stage for the next phase in life. Parents have spent 17 years preparing for this countdown to launch! When it happens we must celebrate. After it happens we must help them remain connected to family, to friends, to faith

community. The time spent developing healthy boundaries, understanding expectations, navigating new freedoms will pay off. It's time to trust God and depend on the strength of faith cultivated in our adult children.

We will partner with families by:

- Celebrating the achievement of graduation (high school and college)
- Helping our graduates stay connected to friends and faith community
- Helping our graduates transition into new faith communities
- Help graduates find new roles/ways to invest in LSCC

Important developmental questions our students ask during this phase:

- Where do I belong? Aligning interests with acceptance
- What do I believe? Clarify values
- What will I do? Identify core relationships
- What is my passion? Clarify future plans

Family Website

The Family Team is currently developing our website to reflect the partnership we hope to build with families. Milestones and phases will be spelled out, resources will be easily accessible according to the phase you are currently in. Our goal is to have the majority of our web site completed and resources available by January, 2018.

Upcoming LSCC Family Events

To help you know what's coming, here are a few of our annual Family Ministry Events:

Students Fall Kickoff (September)

Students Fall Retreat (October)

Pumpkin Palooza for families (October)

Student Chili Bowl (February)

Kids Vacation Bible School (June)

Students Summer Camp (July)

Kids Summer Camp (August)

Specific dates and times will be listed in the Sunday program and on our web site.

The LSCC Family Ministry Team

Kevin Hartman, Family Pastor, 816-251-3406 kevin.hartman@lscckc.org

Jeremy Lanning, Student Pastor, jeremy.lanning@lscckc.org

Jesse Brown, Student Assistant, jesse.brown@lscckc.org

Courtney Bronars, Student Assistant, courtney.bronars@lscckc.org

Alan Clark, Kids Pastor, alan.clark@lscckc.org

Michelle Browning, Early Childhood Director, michelle.browning@lscckc.org

Shannon Wheeler, Family Min. Administrative Assistant, shannon.wheeler@lscckc.org

Kevin Hartman | Family Pastor | kevin.hartman@lscckc.org