

# Faith Path

*Make the most of your moments.*

Dear Parent,

One of the core values of First Christian Church is family. We honor God's design of the family being the primary place for discipleship. The Faith Path exists to partner with you as you guide your child's spiritual journey one step at a time. We encourage you to take the following simple steps to begin the process in your family.

## **STEP ONE: WATCH**

We've provided a short video that explains the philosophy behind Faith Path at [firstchristian.com/faithpath](http://firstchristian.com/faithpath). Please take a few minutes to watch in order to better understand why First Christian Church wants to partner with you in fulfilling your most important parenting assignment.

## **STEP TWO: REVIEW AND REGISTER**

In this kit, we've provided an overview of our "one step at a time" strategy. If you would like to become a Faith Path family, please fill out the Family Information Card and return it to the HomeFirst Center.

You will receive a birthday email for each child with the Faith Path kit that will help you leverage the best faith formation strategy for your child's stage of development. You'll also receive info about any additional opportunities First Christian offers to support you along this journey.

## **STEP THREE: START**

To help you jump start the process of intentionality, this kit includes two activity options called Faith Walk and Faith Handoff. We encourage you to put a day and time on your schedule right now to get started.

Thank you for taking seriously the task of guiding your child's faith at home. We hope you find the Faith Path initiative helpful. Feel free to visit [firstchristian.com/faithpath](http://firstchristian.com/faithpath) or visit the HomeFirst Center located between the Children's Ministry area and Playland to learn more.

Joyfully Partnering With You,



Leah Miller  
Children's Ministry  
Director

[lmiller@firstchristian.com](mailto:lmiller@firstchristian.com)  
330-456-2600



**FIRST CHRISTIAN**  
CHURCH

# Your Intentional Plan

How will you be intentional this next year?

- Pray daily for and with my child.
- Consistently spend time in God's Word.
- Bless my child daily.
- Attend church regularly.
- Other: \_\_\_\_\_

We offer a free kit to coach you through every recommended focus mentioned on the inside of this overview kit. To request a physical or digital download kit for your kids' ages, visit [firstchristian.com/faithpath](http://firstchristian.com/faithpath) or stop by the Home First Center.

## Recommended Resources

*It Starts At Home* by Kurt Bruner and Steve Stroop (book)

First Kids Parent Resources — [firstchristian.com/family](http://firstchristian.com/family)

First Christian Student Ministry — [firstchristian.com/students](http://firstchristian.com/students)



## FAITH PATH OVERVIEW

*“MY CHILD, LISTEN AND BE WISE.  
KEEP YOUR HEART ON THE RIGHT PATH.”  
—PROVERBS 23:19*

# Purpose of Faith Path

## Why?

First Christian Church believes God designed the family to be the primary disciple-making relationship. In other words, God gave parents the privilege of nurturing faith in the next generation. That's why the Faith Path was created, as a step-by-step plan to help you be intentional as you prepare for key faith milestones and foster spiritual disciplines in your child's faith journey.

## What?

The Faith Path strategy is intended to help you develop a clear plan to intentionally point your child toward Christ in an age appropriate manner. We hope that you are naturally exposing your child to many of these faith practices from an early age. The Faith Path recommends focusing on particular practices or preparing for certain milestones at specific ages and stages. We will provide you with free kits that include training, resources and ideas to help you guide your child along the path.

## When?

You can start today regardless of your child's age or stage of development. Don't worry if you miss a step or if you start the process with an older child. You can always go back and emphasize earlier steps. We also encourage you to reinforce these practices as your child matures rather than view them as a one-time emphasis. You'll find recommended resources and ideas for beginning each step in your child's life and continuing as he or she matures.

# Focus of Faith Path

The Faith Path suggests a focus of specific practices and milestones at certain ages. However, you know your child best and can determine the most appropriate time to emphasize each step.

**Parent Dedication** (Recommended focus: Birth - 2 years) Make a commitment to raise your child in a Christ-centered home.

**Blessing** (Recommended focus: Ages 3+) Establish the practice of praying for and giving a blessing to your child on a routine basis.

**Family Time** (Recommended focus: Ages 4+) Establish the practice of connecting as a family while passing spiritual truths to your child.

**Prepare to Lead Your Child to Christ** (Age will vary: kit provided at Age 5+) Learn how to lead your child to Christ. Although it may be several years before your child expresses an interest in becoming a Christian, now is the time for you to prepare for those discussions.

**Prayer** (Recommended focus: Ages 6+) Teach your child about prayer and establish the practice of praying as a family.

**Bible** (Recommended focus: Ages 7+) Teach your child about God's Word and establish the practice of reading and memorizing scripture as a family.

**Worship** (Recommended focus: Ages 8+) Establish the practice of adoring God personally, at home, at church and as a lifestyle.

**Giving & Serving** (Recommended focus: Ages 9+) Establish the practice of giving and serving others for God's glory.

**Salvation & Baptism** (Age will vary: Kit is available upon request) When your child trusts Jesus as Lord and Savior, help guide them to baptism and celebrate the decision to follow Jesus.

**Preparing for Adolescence** (Recommended focus: Ages 11+) Discuss the changes and challenges of puberty with your child.

**Purity** (Recommended focus: Ages 13+) Prepare and challenge your child to cherish and commit to purity.

**Rite of Passage** (Recommended focus: Ages 16+) Celebrate and give your child a vision for the future as an emerging adult.

**Launch** (Recommended focus: Ages 18+) Coach your child to move toward college and/or career and adult independence.

## Faith Path

## The Faith Handoff

### HOW TO USE:

As a Family Time activity

### VALUE:

An intentional time to emphasize why God wants families to build each other's faith

### PREPARATION:

Here's what you'll need for this activity:

- Something to use as a baton to pass (like a cardboard tube from an empty roll of paper towels)
- A Sharpie
- A Bible
- A small stone

### STEPS FOR A GREAT EXPERIENCE:

- **READ:** Invite the youngest reader in the family to read I Corinthians 9:24 aloud and ask: What does it take to run a race well?
- **ACTIVITY:** Find a place the family can run a relay race such as on the sidewalk or from one part of the house to another. Run the race several times by changing up the order of runners. Time each race. On the final attempt someone should "accidentally" mess-up the handoff causing that particular run to be slower or even disqualified.



## Faith Path

## Faith Walk

### HOW TO USE:

As a Family Time activity

### VALUE:

An intentional time to introduce the Faith Path by discussing trust between family members and God.

### PREPARATION:

Here's what you'll need for this activity:

- A blindfold
- A Bible
- Some items to create obstacles such as pillows, boxes, steps, chairs, cones, etc. Faith Path guide

### STEPS FOR A GREAT EXPERIENCE:

- **SAY:** "We are going to go on a special adventure together. The challenge will be that you will be blindfolded and will need to listen to my direction to help guide you along the way."
- **DO:** Blindfold your child. Once the child is blindfolded, set up a path of numerous obstacles for them to navigate through with your help. You can set other family members as obstacles and have them give "wrong" directions.
- **READ:** Read Proverbs 23:19 before you begin the activity.



## STEPS (CONTINUED)

- **ACTIVITY:** Take your child's hand and guide them through the challenging path. Direct them both vocally and physically as they come close to obstacles. Think of fun and creative ways for them to avoid the obstacles such as "take three jumps to the left" or "crabwalk forward till I say freeze." Give encouragement and redirection when going the wrong way. When done, remove the blindfold and give high fives. If you have other children, reset the obstacles and take turns blindfolding and leading them through.

- **DISCUSS:** Ask your child...  
"What was it like not knowing next steps or obstacles before you?" "Was it hard when another family member gave instructions?" "Did some of the instructions seem strange or uncomfortable to you?"

Explain that God has given parents the opportunity and responsibility to guide their child's spiritual journey. Share that there may come a time when the instructions you give will seem strange and may require trusting you. Also explain how other voices may try to mislead them as they get older.

- **READ:** Look up Hebrews 13:5 and read it together.
- **DISCUSS:** Not only do they have you as a parent, but God's Word says that the Lord will never leave or forsake us. Let them know that you will be seeking the Lord together along this exciting journey. Look at the Faith Path guide together to determine which step your child/children are currently at based on age.
- **PRAY:** Thank God for each member of your family and the exciting faith path that God has for each individual.

## STEPS (CONTINUED)

- **DISCUSS:** Explain that handing off the baton is the most important and risky part of every relay race. Invite input on why doing so is hard/risky. Be sure to mention that both the person giving and receiving must be alert and care about running the race well.
- **READ:** Read aloud Psalm 78:5-7 and explain that God has given parents the most important baton pass in the world – passing a strong faith to their children and grandchildren. Explain that, just like in the relay race, helping children learn to know and love God requires an intentional effort.
- **ACTIVITY:** Use a marker to write "FAITH PATH" on a small stone. Have the family sit in a close circle and pass the rock from person to person. Then widen the circle and do it again. Keep widening the circle until it becomes too difficult to pass the rock without tossing it.
- **DISCUSS:** Explain that it is much easier to build one another's faith if you work hard to keep close family relationships. Invite input on how you might do that such as spending time together, forgiving each other, affirming one another, etc.
- **READ:** Read aloud Deuteronomy 6:5-9 then invite the kids to suggest times and ways your family can include talking about God's word in your routine.
- **PRAY:** Come close and pass the stone from person to person. As each person receives the rock ask them to ask for God's help silently or aloud such as "Help me not drop the baton of faith" or "Help me love my family as I should."