

## **United Methodist Church of Mount Vernon**

**304 First Street West, Mount Vernon, Iowa 52314-1701**

August 27, 2017

Dear Parents and guardians,

Welcome to Rally Day and thank you for registering your child for Sunday School! We are looking forward to another exciting year with the Deep Blue curriculum from Abingdon Press. In opening worship, we will join together with fun activities and songs. For most of our elementary age students, Sunday School will follow a rotation format with opportunities to participate in different learning stations such as Cooking, Games, Storytelling, and Art. At the beginning of each class, time is set aside for prayer and for sharing each child's highs and lows from the week.

We thank you for the opportunity to work with your students. Our church mission is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. Please know that we always keep this mission in mind when planning Sunday School. Also, developing disciples is not exclusive to church and Sunday School. We encourage you to take a prominent role in your child's faith development. Pray with your children, ask them what they learned, and read the Bible together. As a parent, you have the greatest influence on their walk with God. Please reach out if you would like to individually discuss how to encourage your child's faith. Sunday School works best with open communication. Please feel free to reach out to me with questions or concerns at anytime at [mjohnson.ic@gmail.com](mailto:mjohnson.ic@gmail.com).

In Peace and Love,

Pastor Mark Johnson, Christian Education Director

### **Sunday School Information**

Sunday school for all ages will begin **Sunday, September 10<sup>th</sup>**. Classes meet from 9:45 am to 10:45 am.

**High School Youth.** All youth, 9<sup>th</sup> through 12<sup>th</sup> grade, are invited to attend and will meet in the Balcony Classroom number 509.

**Middle School Youth.** Youth in grades 6<sup>th</sup>- 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> meet in the Youth Room in Fellowship Hall.

**5<sup>th</sup> Grade Youth.** 5th graders will have their own classroom and teachers with opportunities for Bible study, and hands-on mission and service projects. To begin the year, students should gather in the Sanctuary where they will be met by their teacher and shepherd before starting the day's activities.



**Elementary & Preschool children.** Each Sunday morning, children will gather in the Sanctuary where shepherds for each age group will be waiting in their designated pew until opening time begins at 9:45 am. During opening time, we will get settled with our shepherds, sing songs, make announcements, collect our offering, and introduce the day's lesson. Following opening time, shepherds will escort their children to classrooms and make sure that all children arrive safely to their classroom or assigned station of the week.

**Kindergarten – 4<sup>th</sup> grade children** will participate in the new *Deep Blue* Rotation Station Sunday school. Rotation model Sunday School is a multi-week study of one Bible lesson from different angles for deeper learning. **Each age group will rotate to a different learning station each week.** This year we have four stations: Cooking, Art, Storytelling, and Games. Each grade will experience three or four stations per Bible lesson. We have used rotational models for many years and they have been embraced by children and adults alike.

**Preschool children** will be escorted by the preschool teachers to their very own preschool classroom. Here they will study the same *Deep Blue* Bible lessons as the elementary, but through a variety of learning activities designed specifically for preschoolers.

**Dismissal is at 10:45 am.** In an effort to keep all children safe, we do request that you fill out the Dismissal form when registering. Children will be dismissed as you indicate. **If you are picking children up from their Sunday school class,** you will find the classroom rotation schedule posted on the bulletin board in the hallway that leads from the Sanctuary to the Education hallway. The schedule is also posted near the classrooms on each level.

**Sunday School offering.** Our weekly offering supports two children through the World Vision program. Karla and Yussif are our sister and brother in Christ and have become our friends as we share God's love with them and they, in turn, share their faith and love for God. Karla lives in Nicaragua and is 14 years old. Yussif lives in Ghana and is 11 years old. Your children will make cards or write letters to Karla and Yussif from time to time. As we receive letters from the children, they will be read during our Sunday school gathering time. Our sponsorship for the children is \$30 each per month. Our goal is that our Sunday offering will cover this monthly expense as well as provide some extra money to send in celebration of each of their birthdays. Thank you for your support of this very meaningful and special ministry outreach.

**Safe Sanctuary Policy.** In the interest of keeping the children and youth of our church safe and to minimize any possibility of abuse within the church or at church sponsored activities, our church has adopted a **Safe Sanctuary Policy.** The creation of our policy was mandated by the Iowa Conference of the United Methodist Church to help insure that churches do indeed remain "safe sanctuaries". Copies of the policy are available to review and I encourage you to inquire about the policy if you have any questions. All staff and church volunteers are required to complete Safe Sanctuary training and to agree to comply with our policy.