

# 6 Milestones of Maturity

Experience growing up with Christ Community Church

CHRIST  
COMMUNITY  
CHURCH



...where church and family work together to celebrate the 6 most significant milestones of becoming a mature follower of Christ.

1

## FIRST STEPS

0-2 YEARS OLD

- \*Mothers of Little Ones
- \*New Parent Class
- \*Baptism by 2 years old

2

## FAITH COMMITMENT

3 YEARS - 2ND GRADE

- \*Gospel-Centered Parenting Class
- \*Kids in the Pew Class

3

## COMMUNING MEMBER

3RD-5TH GRADE

- \*Communicant's Class
- \*First Communion
- \*Kids of Courage

4

## CHURCH INVOLVEMENT

MIDDLE SCHOOL

- \*Preparing for Adulthood Weekend
- \*8th Grade Journals

5

## PASSAGE TO ADULthood

9-10TH GRADE

- \*Service Role
- \*Postmodern Teen Class
- \*Inquirer's Class

6

## GRADUATION

11-12TH GRADE

- \*Student Leadership
- \*Cross-Culture Mission Trip
- \*Jr/Sr Rite of Passage

# 6 Milestones of Maturity

## Christ Community Church

### Introduction

In terms of our family life, very little is more important to us than our children. They change our focus in life and cause us to sacrificially love as Christ loved us. Christ Community partners together with parents to make sure that every child matures the way that they should into mature followers of Christ. We see 4 main ingredients involved in this process:

- \*Corporate Worship*
- \*Gospel Training*
- \*Gospel Community*
- \*Outreach*

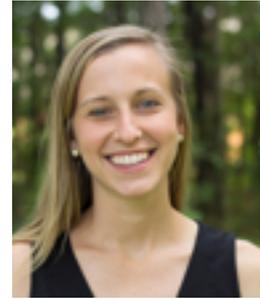
In addition, we have identified the 6 most significant milestones of becoming a mature follower of Christ. Each milestone includes a over-arching name and how each of the 4 main activities of spiritual growth are implemented.

- \*First Steps* (0-2 years old)
- \*Faith Commitment* (3 years - 2nd grade)
- \*Communing Member* (3rd-5th grade)
- \*Church Involvement* (Middle School)
- \*Passage to Adulthood* (9th-10th grade)
- \*Graduation* (11-12th grade)

So join us as we experience together growing up with Christ Community Church.

David Heinrichs  
Associate Pastor of Family and Music Ministries





## **MILESTONE 1. FIRST STEPS**

**Preschool - (2, 3 and 4 year olds), Elizabeth Cooper**

### *Corporate Worship*

This is optional at this age. We welcome children of all ages into our Sunday services; however, we do not children not become a distraction during the sermon. During the first service, pre-school children are pulled out to a separate location to corporately read through the Jesus Storybook Bible ([LINK HERE](#)). They also color a picture that corresponds with that day's story. We encourage parents to have their children baptized by this age and stage. This requires a conversation with an elder/pastor to set it up. We encourage parents who are unsure of the role of this sacrament at CCC to read article 15 of CCC's constitution and John Sartelle's booklet explaining infant baptism (free to those who ask the CCC office or [LINK TO PURCHASE](#)).

### *Gospel Training*

At this age, children are engaged in our Sunday School program. We have time to play together, worship together with singing and prayer, and then learn together in Bible survey/literacy classes ([LINK TO CURRICULUM](#)).

### *Gospel Community*

Gospel community at this age all starts with the family! Part of our culture at CCC (i.e. this is what every family does regularly) is to have family worship once a week. This is your family's "small group." There are several great options for families that will help you engage kids of all ages in one setting. The basic ingredients are prayer/worship, Bible study and personal accountability. Link to the [RIGHT NOW MEDIA](#) resource page.

### *Gospel Outreach*

Preschool children need to take the first steps by being exposed to various types of gospel outreach and also learn how to encourage others around them. This is found within the Sunday School curriculum.



## **MILESTONE 2: FAITH COMMITMENT**

**Early School (3 years old - 2nd grade), Sharon Radford**

### *Corporate Worship*

Each child of this age/stage ought to participate in all aspects of the service before the sermon (worship, confession, prayer, etc). They begin to learn how to sit quietly and participate with everyone appropriately. One Sunday in late summer, we do a Kindergarten “New to the Pew” orientation class one hour before the service that helps children get ready to worship with us. Then when the sermon begins, these children are dismissed to the K-2 pullout program upstairs where a volunteer reads a Bible story, reviews the Shorter Catechism and serves a snack. It is optional to have your child stay with you for the sermon as long as they are not distracting to others nearby, and we help parents provide their child with age-appropriate material to engage them when they lose focus.

### *Gospel Training*

At this age, children are engaged in our Sunday School program. We have skits that teach the 4 essentials of the gospel (God’s Holiness, Man’s Sin, Jesus’ Salvation, Life in Christ), worship together with singing and prayer, and then are taught in Bible survey/literacy classes ([LINK TO CURRICULUM](#)).

### *Gospel Community*

*Same as above* - Part of our culture at CCC is to have family worship once a week. This is your family’s “small group.” There are several great options for families that will help you engage kids of all ages in one setting. The basic ingredients are prayer/worship, Bible study and personal accountability.

### *Gospel Outreach*

Early elementary children participate in our all-church outreach events like the Fall Festival, Founder’s Day, Beach Day and VBS during the summer. Each of these events are designed to encourage your child to bring un-churched friends to our church. We also invite un-churched children from the community to join us in Sunday School each week so that we can learn about the Bible side by side.



## **MILESTONE 3: COMMUNING MEMBER**

**Older Elementary (3rd-5th grade), Sharon Radford**

### *Corporate Worship*

Children of this age/stage are expected to participate in all aspects of the service. We provide some materials that will help the kids engage with the topic/passage of the morning as well as learning to take notes in the sermon. At this age, while kids may not be able to focus for an entire sermon, they can certainly take a few key concepts from each sermon. We encourage families to follow up with their children during family worship to help them.

### *Gospel Training*

At this age, children are engaged in our Sunday School program. We have skits that teach the four essentials of the gospel (God's Holiness, Man's Sin, Jesus' Salvation, Life in Christ), worship together with singing and prayer, and then are taught in Bible survey/literacy classes ([LINK TO CURRICULUM](#)). We also include 6 lessons of the Communicants workbook

Communing Member Class - We encourage families to begin the process of the Communicant's Class that prepares them to take communion. It is a parent-driven class that normally happens by their 3rd grade year, but can happen whenever you think your child is ready. It is an 8 week course that combines lunch meetings at CCC and home study sessions and culminates in an elder interview and graduation in front of the church. Link to class booklets: [CCC Communing Member Class](#) and also see below the addendum on Communing Member's Class.

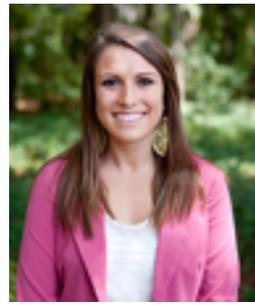
### *Gospel Community*

It is part of our culture at CCC is to have family worship once a week. This is your family's "small group." There are several great options for families that will help you engage kids of all ages in one setting. The basic ingredients are prayer/worship, Bible study and personal accountability.

### *Gospel Outreach*

Kids of Courage is an outreach arm of our Children's Ministry. It is designed for 3rd-5th grade students who want to be exposed to what God is doing in the world. Having a missions focus enables these kids to begin to develop an outward orientation. Kids of

Courage also offers kids with initial steps of service to the local community. The group meets every other week throughout the year. ([LINK TO A SAMPLE CALENDAR](#))



## **MILESTONE 4: CHURCH INVOLVEMENT**

**Middle School (Grades 6, 7 and 8), Kellie Spittel**

### *Corporate Worship*

Middle School students are ready to listen to the whole sermon, take notes and be ready to discuss later at home. They are usually encouraged to sit next to their parents who model for them the best ways to listen and engage in the service.

### *Gospel Training*

At this age, children are engaged in our Sunday School program. We have a combined HS/MS worship and prayer time at the beginning in the youth theater, and then middle school breaks off for their lesson. The curriculum varies but aims at a deeper understanding of specific books of the Bible and techniques on how to study the Bible on their own. Students at this age are encouraged to have daily devotions on their own, and Sunday School is designed to show students how.

### *Gospel Community*

In addition to a weekly family worship, middle school students begin developing mentorship relationships with several young adults who volunteer as youth leaders. This may take the form of regular Bible studies or one-on-one meetings.

### *Gospel Outreach*

Middle School students have three ways of growing in the area of outreach, participating in the tutoring program, Bridge , and the summer mission trip. The tutoring program is on Wednesday afternoons. Students can help tutor un-churched elementary age kids from the local neighborhood. Bridge is our weekly outreach ministry which encourages middle school students to bring un-churched friends to enter into the preaching of the gospel. Through games, snacks, small groups, and Biblical teaching, students are given a chance to respond to the gospel. CCC students are part of this process by bringing their friends and helping them see the gospel clearly by following up with them. The summer mission trip happens every third year and focuses on an impoverished community within 6 hours of home. The trip combines deed and word ministries and includes training for the various roles students will play.



## **MILESTONE 5&6: PASSAGE TO ADULTHOOD & GRADUATION**

**High School (grades 9-12), David Heinrichs**

### *Corporate Worship*

Students at this age participate fully as if they were adults. This means they can play an active role in the production of the service (greeters, sound booth, ushering, worship band etc). Students can sit next to their parents, but are also encouraged to sit together as a group becoming more and more independent. They are expected to take notes and participate in every aspect of the service.

### *Gospel Training*

High School students are trained in two ways. First, by coming to Sunday school they encounter strategic lessons designed to equip them to share the gospel in a lost and dying world. This includes a careful and responsible study of the Bible, prayer for un-churched friends, and apologetics. Second, they are trained by youth leaders to participate in outreach ministries including the tutoring program Bridge and Detour (the main outreach to HS students).

### *Gospel Community*

In addition to a weekly family worship, high school students continue developing mentorship relationships with several young adults who volunteer as youth leaders. This may take the form of regular Bible studies or one on one meetings. In addition, teens are encouraged to take the Inquirer's Class sometime while they are in high school and join the church on their own.

### *Gospel Outreach*

Teens are trained and engage in ministry at many levels at Detour, Tutoring and mission trips. They are encouraged to partner with the youth leaders to identify and invite new teens, help create a gospel-celebrating atmosphere, lead games, help lead small groups and pray with these teens.

All **juniors and seniors** have the option of joining the Breakout Team. This team guides each teen with specific ministry goals they accomplish throughout their last 2 years of high school. Leadership opportunities range from joining the MS youth team, tutoring ministry, sound booth, worship band, greeting, local mission partnerships and more.

## **\*ADDENDUM: Communing Members Class: Getting My Child Ready for Communion**

With respect to our life together as a church, very little is more important to us than coming to the Lord's table once a month. The communion table, in conjunction with the word, speaks to us of the fellowship of God. It is at the table that we see so clearly his grace and get a foretaste of the banquet that is to come.

When we put these two things together it is only natural that we should want to see our children partaking with us at the table of the Lord. But for many there are a lot of questions surrounding this moment. Some of these questions are products of our experience. Some of the questions result from a lack of knowledge. Still others are foisted on us by denominations and traditions.

This is an attempt to answer some of the questions and hopefully spur on continued dialogue about these issues.

### ***1. How do I know if my child is ready?***

We believe that parents know their children better than anyone. You know their temperament as well as their exposure to the necessary truths.. You know the sensitivities of their hearts. Given that, what follows are a list of things to look for in your child:

- Is this something your child desires? A good sign that your child is ready to take the Lord's Supper is their own desire, which we must discern from peer pressure and parental pressure.
- Is your child able to discern and articulate (on an age appropriate level) his/her need for and appropriation of the forgiveness of Jesus? Things to look for:
  - understanding of the need for grace
  - inability to be justified by works
  - feelings of remorse for sin
  - thankfulness for Jesus' personal sacrifice for her o desire for obedience
- Is your child able to talk at an appropriate level about the meaning and symbolism of the sacrament?
- Is your child growing in their overall understanding of the Christian faith through available means such as Sunday School, Family Worship, etc...

### ***2. How can I encourage my child to think of communion in a healthy way and prepare them to take the table?***

Parents do need to be proactive in preparing their children for the table. Our kids learn by observing, but they also need faithful steering. Of course part of preparing our children is preparing ourselves. Listed in the resource section are some articles that will

aid your own understanding of the Supper and equip you to talk more confidently about it with your child. As you go:

- Speak positively about your own experience of and appreciation of the Lord's Table.
- Read pertinent scriptures with your child – Matthew 26:26-29, Mark 14:22- 25, Luke 22:18-20, I Corinthians 10:14-22, 11:17-34
- Talk with them objectively about what is happening in the Supper. (One could certainly use the Westminster Shorter Catechism #96,97. Heidelberg Catechism #'s 75-82 as a rough guide) – specific topics to cover:
  - Assurance that we belong to Christ
  - Need to come to the table reconciled with others (Matt 5:23-24)
  - Strength the Holy Spirit gives us in union with Christ to obey

### ***3. What is the process for my child being admitted to take communion at Christ Community Church?***

This is a process that will begin with you. Once a child expresses their desire to become an active participant at the Lord's Table, you along with your child should make that desire known to the session (talk to an elder, a pastor, call the office). Once that desire is known, you should plan on participating in the Communicant's Class, which includes two meetings involving both parent and child at church and 17 parent-driven lessons at home. Once each child has completed the class, a meeting will be set up with representatives of the session to discuss the child's understanding of their need and appropriation of Jesus as well as their understanding of the table (see topics listed above). This interview will of course be an age appropriate interview. Assuming your child is received into communion they may begin taking communion alongside their parents.