



TYNDALE

• SEMINARY •

Course Syllabus Spring and Summer 2013

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY
CHED 0553 / CHR 3223

June 24 – 28 (MONDAY TO FRIDAY)
9:00 am – 4:00 pm

INSTRUCTOR: The Reverend Dr. Valerie Michaelson

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Office Hours: TBA

To access your course materials, please go to www.mytyndale.ca. Note that all official Tyndale correspondence will be sent to your @MyTyndale.ca e-mail account. For information how to access and forward Tyndale emails to your personal account, see www.tyndale.ca/it/live-at-edu.

I. COURSE DESCRIPTION

Builds a Biblical foundation, explores faith development issues and formulates a rationale for ministry to children. Practical approaches that respond to the spiritual needs of children and nurture their growth as whole persons are included.

This course builds a theological, spiritual, biblical and pedagogical foundation for understanding ministry to and with children in the church. In the intentional practical focus of this course, we will explore hands on ways of responding to these needs of children in the church and nurture their growth, as holistic beings, in their lives in Christ. We will look at unique qualities, gifts and joys of childhood and imagine ways that the church can respond to children *as children*, not as mini adults.

We will examine different ministry models and practices in light of biblical teaching and also explore ways that the culture (for better and for worse) influences children's ministry. The importance of stories and the gift of the intergenerational community of the church will be strong themes.

During the course, we will have ongoing discussion about themes that arise from lectures, from assigned readings, and from students' questions and experiences. This course will be highly interactive and while it will include substantial theological and biblical content, the practical implications and developing skills for practical ministry are a high priority.

Prerequisites: none

II. LEARNING OUTCOMES

At its best, nurturing children in the Christian life is grounded in a rich biblical theology and in the intergenerational community of the church.

At the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Understand a theological/biblical vision of the church and of children's ministry.
2. Demonstrate an awareness of: the importance of stories in nurturing children; current cultural issues related to children and childhood; issues related to children's spirituality and the importance of intergenerational ministry.
3. Use acquired practical tools and skills for engaging children in God's story, nurturing children in a life of prayer and inviting children into the worshiping life of the church.
4. Demonstrate an understanding of ways that church leaders can support parents in the home as they nurture their children in the Christian life.
5. Understand the role of curriculum in children's ministry and critically evaluate different resources available for and approaches to ministry to children in the church.

III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS

A. REQUIRED TEXTS

Beckwith, Ivy. *Formational Children's Ministry: Shaping Children using Story, Ritual, and Relationship*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2010.

May, Scottie, et al. *Children Matter: Celebrating Their Place in the Church, Family and Community*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005.

B. ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

1. Required Reading and Class Participation: Each student is asked to come to the first class having read at minimum the first two chapters of each required text. Please come prepared to share a short, favourite quote from one of the texts that represents something you think is important in children's ministry. **(10% of final grade)**

2. Observe a Children's Ministry Setting: The context of your observation can be in a church or camp setting (or other setting as agreed upon with instructor). Reflect on this experience using guidelines that will be given out in class and drawing from content of class discussions. Hand in a 6-7 page paper that includes a brief description of the setting, and both theological and pedagogical reflection about how this ministry is functioning positively and areas in which it could grow. (You will be equipped to do this in class.) Please select the setting and obtain permission to do the observation ASAP. This assignment will provide experience in analyzing and critiquing children's ministry settings. **(25%) Due July 24th.**

3. Critical Book Review: Students are expected to write and submit a critical book review of 6-7 pages in length: choose one of the books from the list provided in the bibliography at the end of this syllabus, or another book that you choose in consultation with the instructor. The instructor will make it a priority to help you choose a book that addresses issues relevant to your own context or that addresses your own interests or concerns in children's ministry. (Book review choices not listed in this syllabus must be pre-approved by the instructor). The assigned task is to provide a careful and thorough examination of the basic issue(s) at stake in the text, to evaluate the relative strength(s) and/or weakness(es) of the author's case and to discuss the text and its relevance to your own children's ministry context. The purpose of this assignment is to give you experience using tools learned in class (including theological reflection) to reflect on issues relevant to children's ministry. **(25%) Due July 24th.**

4. Final Paper: Drawing from class discussions, your own ministry context and supplementary readings, choose an issue or question related to children's ministry in the church to explore. Students will consult with the instructor throughout the week of classes to agree on a topic and/or research question. It is hoped that the question or issue the student chooses to explore will be of practical benefit to his or her own ministry context or to his or her personal interest in nurturing children in the Christian life. Ideally, this paper will have both a theological/ biblical and practical component.

This paper should be in the range of 10 - 15 pages, double spaced. **(40%) Due on July 31st**

C. GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR THE SUBMISSION OF WRITTEN WORK

1. Submit written work in a style consistent throughout with the model set out by Kate L. Turabian in *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations* or with the

[Chicago Manual of Style Online](#) (see the [Chicago-Style Quick Guide](#); for citing scripture texts, refer to sections [10.46 to 10.51](#) and [14.253 to 14.254](#)).

Written work ought to be free of spelling mistakes, punctuated correctly, and adhere to basic rules of grammar. The work should be submitted in a clear, straight-forward style and demonstrate clear organization, argument and coherent thought. Ensure that you have accurately and fully documented source used in your paper (footnotes are preferred, but parenthetical references may be used). Please double space all written work and use 12-point font. **Submit papers electronically to vmichaelson@sympatico.ca.**

2. Students should consult the current Academic Calendar for Academic Policies on Academic Honesty, Gender Inclusive Language in Written Assignments, Late Papers and Extensions, Return of Assignments, and Grading System. The Academic Calendar is posted on <http://www.tyndale.ca/registrar/calendar>.

Academic Integrity

Integrity in academic work is required of all our students. Academic dishonesty is any breach of this integrity, and includes such practices as cheating (the use of unauthorized material on tests and examinations), submitting the same work for different classes without permission of the instructors; using false information (including false references to secondary sources) in an assignment; improper or unacknowledged collaboration with other students, and plagiarism. Tyndale University College & Seminary takes seriously its responsibility to uphold academic integrity, and to penalize academic dishonesty.

D. SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Evaluation is based upon the completion of the following assignments

Required Reading and Class Participation	10 %	In class
Critical Book Review	25 %	July 24 th
Observation of children's ministry setting	25 %	July 24 th
A Final Paper	40%	July 31 st
Total Grade	100 %	

In order for final marks to be submitted on time, all assignments must be emailed to the instructor no later than the prescribed due dates. Thank you.

IV. COURSE SCHEDULE, CONTENT AND REQUIRED READINGS

Monday am: A Theology of Children's Ministry in the Church: Overview

Monday pm: Stories, God's Story and Restorying

Tuesday am: Examining the Cultural Context of Today's Children

Tuesday pm: Practical Tools for Engaging Children in the Bible Story

Wednesday am: Spirituality of Childhood; Nurturing Children in a Life of Prayer

Wednesday pm: Intergenerational Ministry

Thursday am: Children in Worship / Children and Ritual

Thursday pm: Children, Church Ministry and Curriculum

Friday am: Fostering Connections Between Church and Home

Friday pm: The Possibility and Hope of the Church

V. SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY

This bibliography provides a list of many of the resources that will be referred to in class. Those marked *** are highly recommended as books to consider choosing for your book review. (See also Tyndale's [Children's Ministry Online Reading Room](#))

Beckwith, Ivy. *Formational Children's Ministry: Shaping Children using Story, Ritual, and Relationship.* Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2010. (course text)

*** Beckwith, Ivy. *Postmodern Children's Ministry.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004.

*** Berryman, Jerome. *Children and the Theologians: Clearing the Way for Grace.* New York: Morehouse Publishing, 2009.

_____. *Godly Play: An Imaginative Approach to Religious Education.* San Francisco: Augsburg Fortress, 1995.

Bunge, Marcia J. *The Child in Christian Thought.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.

*** Sofia Cavaletti. *The Religious Potential of the Child: Experiencing Scripture and Liturgy with Young Children.* Chicago: Archdiocese of Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1992.

_____. *The Religious Potential of the Child 6 to 12 Years Old.* Chicago: Archdiocese of Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1992.

Coles, Robert. *The Call of Stories.* Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1989.

Dawn, Marva. *Is It a Lost Cause? Having the Heart of God for the Church's Children*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1997.

***Devries, Mark. *Family Based Youth Ministry*. Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Books, 1994.

*** Elkind, David. *The Hurried Child: Growing Up Too Fast Too Soon*. Cambridge, MA: Perseus Publishing, 2001.

Gobbi, Gianna. *Listening to God with Children: The Montessori Method Applied to the Catechesis of Children*. Loveland, OH: Treehaus Communications, 1998.

Hay, David, with Rebecca Nye. *The Spirit of the Child*. London: Fount Paperbacks, 1998.

*** Kinkaid, Julie. *Overturing the Tables: Consumerism, Children and The Church*. United Church Publishing House, 2008.

Lloyd-Jones, Sally. *The Jesus Storybook Bible*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zonderkidz, 2007.

*** Louv, Richard. *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children From Nature-Deficit Disorder*. New York: Algonquin Books, 2005.

May, Scottie, et al. *Children Matter: Celebrating Their Place in the Church, Family and Community*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005. (course text)

Miller-McLemore, Bonnie. *In the Midst of Chaos: Caring for Children as Spiritual Practice*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2007.

*** Pritchard, Gretchen Wolff. *Offering the Gospel to Children*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Cowley Publications, 1992.

*** Stonehouse, Catherine. *Joining Children on the Spiritual Journey: Nurturing a Life of Faith*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2007.

Turkle, Sherry. *Alone Together: Why We Expect More From Computers and Less From Each Other*. New York: Basic Books, 2011.

*** Turnpin, Kate. *Branded: Adolescents Converting from Consumer Faith*. Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2006.

Wilkinson, Mary Ruth and Wilkinson Teel, Heidi. *A Time to Read: Good Books for Growing Readers*. Vancouver: Regent College, 2001.