

Vision for the Future

The Why

Our desire is to create environments that will intentionally contribute to faith formation and making disciples of Jesus Christ. This will help us to streamline ministries, improve student and parent experience, and promote ministry coordination from birth through high school.

The How

We will move 5th grade into Kids Ministry and combine 6th- 8th grade into one Middle School Ministry.

The Timeline

April 30, 2023- Parent Meeting: communicating vision for Kids Ministry and MSM to parents.

May 1, 2023- Wide communication to the Church: We will email a video recap of the previous day's meeting. We will also post a document to the website explaining our reasoning behind our decision.

June 4, 2023- Promotion Sunday: 8th-grade students will move into HSM, and 5th-grade students will move into MSM. For this one year, MSM will be in 5th- 8th grade.

June 2023- June 2024- Preparation: during this time, we will communicate with parents and remind them of the upcoming changes. Parents are welcome to bring their questions to Billy Moore (the Middle School Director) and Grace Luginbuhl (the Children's Director).

June 2, 2024- Promotion Sunday: 5th grade will stay in Kids Ministry this year. At the same time, MSM will make up of 6th-8th graders from now on.

Reasons for Making Changes to Our Ministries?

Organizational

- We want to streamline and simplify our ministries. With this change, the Middle school director will fully minister to all middle school students rather than dividing his time between the ministries. This change will also enable our Student Ministry intern to experience the full spectrum of student ministry, not just our 5th and 6th-grade ministry.
- We want to open up the door for the expansion of kids' ministry to build upon the foundation of their faith. We also want to bridge the gap between kids ministry and middle school ministry to create smoother transitions between ministries.

Developmental

- 6th grade is a natural starting point for middle school ministry. Most students will hit puberty in or around 6th grade. Studies and observations show that brain chemistry pre and post-puberty is very different. Therefore, this change will help us minister more effectively to 5th and 6th graders. We have found that the maturity difference between a 5th grader and an 8th grader is enormous. Not just physically but also mentally and emotionally. We want the opportunity to talk through some mature topics that we do not feel 5th graders are ready for.
- As kids enter 4th and 5th grade, they transition from kid to teen years. It's a time of growth, development, and change. We want to best equip our students during this transitional period with enough time and opportunities to develop their spiritual depth, leadership skills, and relational maturity as they prepare for the next stage of life.

Spiritual

- With these changes come opportunities for spiritual development. As mentioned previously, we would like to teach and have edifying conversations with our middle schoolers on topics such as apologetics, sexual purity, self-harm, and identity, among other issues. We will be teaching these things from a Biblical perspective. When we cover these sensitive topics, we will communicate that to parents and work with them to ensure we do everything correctly. We will also have the opportunity aligned with surrounding camps as they define middle school as 6th-8th grade.
- We will also have the opportunity for our 4th and 5th graders to take on a leadership role within our kid's ministry. They can serve and lead their peers in different capacities on Sunday mornings, Wednesday nights, and special events. We are developing a habit of service and discipleship that will teach them to be part of the church from a young age. Serving in leadership roles will continue in middle and high school ministries as our students grow. Kids ministry also will offer a discipleship group for our 4th and 5th-grade students. It will offer them a deeper study of God's word, spiritual application, and more opportunities to solidify their biblical foundation as they transition from kids to teens.

FAQ

Q: When will this change be taking place?

A: On June 2, 2024. The only different thing that will take place in 2023 will be the 5th-8th grade meeting together under the Middle School Ministry banner.

Q: What will Sunday Morning and Wednesday night look like for Kids Ministry?

A: Sunday morning will remain the same, with the addition of our 5th-grade students. K-5th grade will meet in building B split up for their respective grades, then meet together for Kids View, our large group lesson time. After Kids View, students return to their respective grades and participate in class activities and discussions in small group time.

Our AWANA program will continue on Wednesday nights and expand through 5th grade.

Our 4th and 5th-grade discipleship group will also have unique opportunities to serve Sunday mornings during kids' view and Wednesday nights during AWANA.

Q: What will Sunday Morning and Wednesday night look like for Middle School Ministry?

A: Starting on June 4, 2023, 5th-8th grades will meet on Sunday mornings and Wednesday nights. Everything will continue as normal. Starting on June 2, 2024, students will move into their new grade, and Middle School Ministry will consist of 6th-8th graders.

Q: How will this affect VBS/VBX?

A: VBX 2024 will consist of 4th and 5th graders, and our 6th graders will have the opportunity to volunteer with VBS.

Q: How will this affect camps?

A: Winter and summer camps will be available to our 6th-8th graders. This falls in line with what camps around Arizona define as middle school.