

Church School report 2023

Church School goal: Provide the knowledge and foundation of the Christian life and teach children Orthodox life skills to prepare them to serve God in Orthodox parish communities in the future.

Objectives:

1. Instructing children in the foundation of Orthodox faith at Church School classes every Saturday.
2. Teaching children Orthodox life skills (singing, reading, serving, parish volunteering) to prepare them for their future ministry at the church.
3. Establishing friendship among Orthodox peers.

Church School activities every Saturday:

4:15 pm – Youth Choir/Church Slavonic

5:00 pm – Church School class

6:00 pm – All-Night Vigil (children participate, sing and serve)

Specific goals for 2022-23 academic year:

1. Studying and understanding on a deeper level the Acts of the Apostles.
2. Studying the “Finding Joy ” - practical and Christ-centered program aimed at teaching children skills to deal with everyday life situations.
3. Participating in the All-Night Vigil.
4. Developing students’ church reading skills in English and Slavonic.

Textbooks we use:

1. **“The Story of the Young Church”** - colorful and visual, interactive and connected to students’ life.
2. **“Finding Joy”**.

In addition to the main topic, students study the new practical program “Finding Joy”. Through the stories from Scriptures it teaches children to connect themselves to Christ

in the situations of stress and uncertainty, to look at the situation in a different perspective, to move from anxiety and fear to peace and joy, feeling God's presence in their lives.

Every 5-6 weeks all the groups gather for the review sessions, questions and discussion with Father Gregory.

Youth Choir

Saturday's Youth Choir led by Anna Mullin concentrates on Children's Liturgy music and Presanctified Liturgy pieces.

After studying the All-Night Vigil at church school and learning Vigil music at Youth Choir during the previous year, children got engaged in singing in the choir and serving in the altar during the All- Night Vigil.

Developing church reading skills in English and Church Slavonic.

This year we continue to work on the developing students' church reading skills in English and Slavonic.

Teachers help children with church reading skills and support students when preparing for the reading at the Children's Liturgy.

Our teacher Elena Mullin works on developing children's Church Slavonic reading and writing skills. Students are learning to read prayers and Psalter in Church Slavonic.

Church school groups and teachers:

1. 9-12 years old - Father Colin
2. 13+ olds - Father Gregory

Goal for the fall 2023 to reopen a group for younger children:

4-6 and possibly for 7-9 years old. We are looking for teachers and volunteers!

Other Church School activities 2022-23.

I semester: September-December 2022:

1. Celebrating the beginning of the new Church School year, reading the Akathist to the Mother of God by children. October, 2.

2. Pilgrimage to the Dormition Monastery (participation in the Divine services, work and spiritual discussion), October 30.
3. Halloween Alternative, October 31.
4. Visiting elderly parishioners.
5. Collecting warm clothes
6. Packing lunches for the homeless in Detroit, December 13.
7. Children's Liturgy on St. Nicholas Day, December 19 (since 2015)

II semester: January- May 2023:

1. Helping with Yolka preparation and celebration - January 21
2. Packing lunches for the homeless in Detroit, March.
3. Decorating the church for Palm Sunday, April 9.
4. Children's Liturgy on Bright Saturday, April 21.
5. Children's Paschal celebration and Egg hunt, April 30.
6. St. Nicholas Day – Last day of church school: participating in the Divine Liturgy and greeting our Church School Graduates, May 22.
7. Pilgrimage to the Dormition Monastery (participation in the Divine services, work and spiritual discussion), May 27-28.