

Dear families,

Stone Hill Church's mission is *to make dedicated followers of Jesus Christ in Princeton, the Northeast, and around the world*. One of the ways we seek to do it is by connecting to one another in authentic Christian relationships. This task, however, has been made more difficult due to the current circumstances. We've spent a great amount of time brainstorming ways to enable families to stay connected despite the limitations placed on us by social distancing regulations.

Starting September 13th, Pastor Tracy will lead us through a new series in the book of Ephesians, with the purpose of building unity in the church and encouraging us to grow together as we recognize our identity in Christ and in the body of believers.

We also know small groups have been used for years as a way to go deeper in Scriptures and develop relationships, which is why many small groups have started using the discussion questions provided by Tracy during the month of August. We believe these group discussions have contributed to a deeper understanding of the passages as well as a deeper connection to one another.

As Family Ministry Directors, we want to work with Pastor Tracy to reach these goals while continuing to further our mission of supporting parents in the God-given task of discipling their kids. We have worked to provide options for Biblical learning and fostering of community during this season, but as much as we have dedicated time and effort to make virtual Sunday School happen, it hasn't proved to be effective in reaching our students on a large scale, with only 10-15% of our children and youth participating.

For these reasons, we are launching an initiative to replace Sunday School in Children and Youth ministries from September to January as we walk through Ephesians.

One of our favorite tools from D6 is the Parent Page, whose purpose is to bring the discussion from Sunday school into the homes, as parents and children talk about what they learn and find encouragement and ideas to put these things into practice as a family. Using this as a model, we will make available weekly a Parent Page that contains both a summary of the main topics as well as discussion questions based on the sermon for people of all ages. If you join our service from home, you will be able to download the page to use with your family as well as some additional activities for children. If you join us in person, you will be able to have access to them in print.

A second piece of this initiative is the formation of pods of 2-3 families (or up to 15 people). A few of these pods will take place in person at the church, at 10:45 a.m., and others will take place via Zoom. The purpose of these pods is for families to walk together through the discussion questions as well as reflect on the sermon, giving parents an opportunity to foster their children's faith while connecting with other families.

We are reaching out to some families to facilitate these pods. If you would be interested in joining a pod or starting a pod with another family, sign up [here](#). It's important to remind you to wear a mask, wash your hands and practice social distancing if meeting in person.

We believe this initiative will be a more effective way to provide Biblical knowledge to every student, while building a Christ-like community in an environment that welcomes questions and

doubts. We encourage you to try it for one month and see the results in leading your family in a deeper knowledge of God and a sweeter connection to one another.

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