

# Journey Newsletter

*A Publication of Paths Crossed Network Ministries, Inc.*

## Foundational Scriptures

- Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.  
  
Proverbs 22:6
- Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.  
  
Mark 10:14

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## Our Church.....Our Greatest Investment

By: Min. Soundra Simpson

Of all the many things that I experienced in my lifetime, one of my fondest memories is taken from the pages of my church.

Word of Life Christian Center Ministries (*formerly St. Luke F.B.H. Church*) sat perfectly in the midst of our neighborhood, the Mill Farm in west Bennettsville.

Word of Life was more than just a church, it served as a refreshing watering ground where everyone attended weekly services on a regular basis. Our pastor, Rev. Dr. I.D. Hodge was not only recognized as the pastor of our community, but has been rightfully acclaimed as the people's pastor.

For the countless children ( a good 80 on any Wednesday night or Sunday morning) who attended Word of Life, we knew



without a doubt that we were loved and appreciated. It was in our church that we were taught the Word of God and who we were in Christ. We proudly walked around declaring that we were "King's kids." Once again, it would be our pastor who reminded us of our value and self-worth.

Of the many gifts that we can give to our children, the greatest gift that we can give is a rich heritage in the House of God.

When trials and tribulations come, it will be the foundation of our churches that our children will stand firm on as they trust in the almighty God they have come to know over the years.

Take the time to make the greatest investment by attending a church with your children. The worst thing a parent can do is to leave the decision to serve God up to the child. Parents, just know that one day, if not now, but later, your children will need to know that when they call upon God, He will answer!!! Selah!!

## The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father**, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.  
Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven  
give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. -  
Amen (Matthew 6: 9-13)



## Teaching Our Children to Worship

With everything that is going on in the world around us, the Church cannot afford to exclude children in our worship services. In our congregations it would be reasonable for us to consider involving children in worship in a few of the following ways. As Youth Pastor feel free to tailor each activity based upon the needs of your children and/or ministry.



1. Reading the scripture lesson of the day.
2. Helping to distribute the offering plate.
3. Bringing forward the bread and cup for celebration of the Lord's table.
4. With assistance, leading a small portion of the congregational prayer.
5. Helping to give out bulletins or worship folders prior to the service.
6. Helping to light candles in the worship prior to or during service.
7. Participating in a choir or other musical ensemble.
8. Playing a simple musical piece during the offering, or singing a hymn to close the congregational prayer.
9. Contributing to a list of prayer requests that can be given to our Pastor or prayer leaders during the service.
10. Assisting adult greeters, especially welcoming other children.

## Preparing Our Children to Worship

There are very few things that children *can't* do in worship if they are taught, guided, and have adequate time to prepare. As Youth Pastors we have an obligation to teach excellence and notify our parents and children of upcoming events and services.

1. Introduce children to ministers and worship leaders.
2. Tour the sanctuary with children so they know what things are and their proper names.
3. Teach children how to use the hymnal.
4. Teach hymns that your congregation frequently sings, in addition to songs and reading responses.
5. Teach key worship words including the Lord's Prayer.
6. Teach and encourage children to write prayers of praise, thanksgiving, confessions, dedication, and blessings.
7. Teach children various sacred symbols and it's meaning.
8. Make and distribute copies of hymns, songs and various worship readings.
9. Teach children the Order of Worship (i.e. when to stand, sit, and how to properly respond).
10. Teach children the various books of the Bible so they can follow along with the pastor and ministry leaders.

## Preparing Our Children to Serve

1. Allow children to visit and take communion to shut-ins (i.e. homebound, hospitals or nursing homes).
2. Allow children to write and send "thinking of you" cards to shut-ins.
3. Allow children to participate in community mission projects (i.e. serve at homeless shelters, collect school supplies or winter coats).
4. Allow children to clean the sanctuary, decorate for special occasions, and sponsor a community clean-up project.
5. Allow children to plant a tree in memory of historical or awareness events (i.e. Breast Cancer or AIDES).



# Creating Safe Sanctuaries



The thought behind creating Safe Sanctuaries is about being prepared, thinking ahead, and strategically for potential incidents that can occur to any child within our churches. The objective is not about limiting various programs and services offered to our children and local communities. Instead, it's focus is to concentrate upon building safety parameters that will first protect the reputation of our leadership, staff members and congregations. Also, it is about doing ministry safely and according to the law with children, youth and the adults who work with them.

Recognizing the growing threat of child abuse and its presence even among God's own people; various laws have been adopted in an effort to protect our children. As ministry leaders, we not only have a responsibility to know and understand these laws; but also to implement these laws within our paid and voluntary hiring practices.

God calls us to make our churches safe places, protecting children and other vulnerable persons from sexual and ritual abuse. As ministry leaders we are held accountable for creating communities of faith where children and adults can grow safe and strong without fear of inappropriate sexual behavior. Regardless of your church size, ministry leaders or staff members this is a subject that must be addressed on a regular and consistent basis. The size and needs of the church may dictate your meeting frequency and training.

Below are a list of safety questions to review to determine your approach to addressing and creating Safe Sanctuaries.

1. My church screens and check references for all paid employees, including clergy, who have any contact with children and/or youth?
2. My church screen all volunteer workers for any position including children and/or youth?
3. My church trains at least annually all volunteers and/or paid workers with children and/or youth to understand the nature of abuse and to recognize indicators of abuse?
4. My church trains at least annually all volunteers and/or paid workers with children and/or youth workers in how to carry out our policies to prevent abuse?
5. Our workers and volunteers are informed of state law requests regarding abuse and their responsibility for reporting all incidents.



*A collection of books, training guides, documents, and forms are available at Cokesbury Bookstore.*

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6. My church has a clear reporting process and/or procedures for a suspected incident of abuse that follow the requirements of our state law.
7. My church has adequate insurance coverage available in case a complaint of abuse occurs?
8. My church has a clearly defined building usury strategy as a component of our abuse prevention plan?
9. My church has a clearly defined response plan to be implemented in case an allegation of abuse is made against someone in our church?
10. My church offers at least annual education opportunities to parents of children and youth about how to recognize and reduce risk of abuse?
11. My church take our policies and procedures seriously to prevent child abuse against any child and/or youth?



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The purpose of Paths Crossed Network Ministries is to minister total healing to women from all walks of life regardless of race, culture, age, religious beliefs or past experiences. Min. Soundra relies on the Word of God to serve as her foundation in seeing hurting women change from a state of brokenness to wholeness.

Paths Crossed is dedicated to providing leadership training with an emphasis on developing healthy churches and Christian relationships within the Body of Christ.

To learn more about Paths Crossed, please visit:

[www.pathscrossednetwork.org](http://www.pathscrossednetwork.org)

*"Women from all Walks of Life Called to World-wide Ministry."*

### Our Foundation.....CHILDREN & PRAYER

As parents we have a huge responsibility to ensuring we have properly equipped our children to be successful in every aspect of their lives. Not knowing everything our children will face in life, we typically focus on developing healthy spiritual and family relationships, becoming contributing citizens, aspirations of achieving educational and financial goals to only name a few things.

Of the many lessons a parent can teach a child, the most important by far is developing a healthy spiritual relationship with our heavenly Father. Although there are many important topics to be taught, the subjects of reading the Word of God and prayer ranks highest on my personal list.

Prayer in its own right serves as our foundation in developing a solid relationship where we are free to talk to God; and He

talks with us. Teaching our children about prayer should be taught in its simplest form and in a way that is easily understood.

As parents you can approach prayer from the "building block" theory by starting with a short and simple prayer that is gradually added to over a period of time. Initially, you may want to teach your child to pray for their immediate family (*i.e. mother, father, sisters, brothers, and grandparents*) and after a few weeks, include your church family and on and on.

One of the most damaging things that we can do as parents is to

hold our children hostage in praying the same prayer over and over. When we teach the right behaviors, our children will follow along. I have personally found that our children look forward to spending those few precious moments with mommy and daddy before settling down for the night.

Teach your children this is their personal time with God and that He hears and responds to their every need....no matter how big or how small.

