

Christian Formation Committee Report- 2020 Annual

Submitted By: Fr. Tommy Matthews, Crystal Furman, Debbie Stallings January 2021

Committee Members:

Fr. Tommy Matthews (Associate Rector), Crystal Furman (Committee Chair), Mona Livermont (Sunny's Kids Director), Andrew Whatley, Debbie Stallings (Vestry Liaison)

Our Theme for the 2020 year was *Drawing the Circle Wider*. I don't think we realized that this would be geographically due to Covid 19 restrictions. However, we were able to shift from our physical classrooms to virtual classes with very little trouble. We were able to carry out the themes and programs chosen while dealing with the prescribed safety restrictions and guidelines. Many thanks are due to our faithful teachers and parents. Our next year's theme is *A Year of Service*, which will call for a lot of creativity due to the ongoing Covid pandemic.

Education:

Adult Education:

While our Lenten journey was different this year due to our "shelter-in-place" directives, we were still able to meet on-line through live and pre-recorded prayer and worship services. The Scripture Class and the Ages and Stages class were both able to adapt and continue to meet and stay in touch virtually during this year. While many of our traditional activities were curtailed, we were still able to offer Cafe Theology by Mtr. Liz, (which will be led by laity upon her retirement at the end of January 2021), and Wednesday in the Word was changed to Thursday in the Text, due to scheduling conflicts, and Centering Prayer via Zoom. We are beginning an epiphany study this winter as well as our traditional Lenten study through the *Good Book Club*. Our adult coffee/Sunday School hour this fall was *The Way Of Love Curriculum* with a short study on *Gratitude* for Thanksgiving and a special *Way of Love Advent* series for Advent. Attendance each Sunday was between 10-20 people.

Children and Youth Education:

The Christian Formation Committee formed a sub-committee in the spring comprised of Mindy Barringer, Andrew Whatley, Levi Livermont, Mara DiGiovanni, Tommy Matthews and Mona Livermont for the purpose of updating and choosing new curriculum that would offer a more comprehensive study of both Old and New Testaments, have easy lesson plans to help facilitate teachers and substitutes to be flexible and creative, would have more modern situations that would allow the students to apply what they are learning outside the church, and would help our children form their own understanding when exploring scripture as they grow and advance through their classes and curriculum in church. The new curriculum chosen for *Sunny's Kids* (pre-K -5) was *Living the Good News* and the *Community of Christ* was selected for the Youth (6-12). Teacher training in the new curricula was given digitally this year. Since

both curricula have on-line instruction and teacher aids, we were able to continue to offer Sunday School virtually via Zoom throughout the year. *Sunny's Kids* have had 5-8 students weekly, Middle School had 8-10 students weekly, and High School has had 2-3 students per any given Sunday. There are immense challenges presented by offering a virtual class to our young charges, but our teachers are handling them beautifully.

Our Youth's in-person evening activities have resumed using safe distancing and other guidelines set forth by our diocese.

Events:

This year, due to Covid restrictions, our summer VBS was held on-line. At the beginning of the week, the children picked up the week's activities at the church and then participated in an on-line video presentation, plus crafts. The theme concerned the various church ministries and their purpose in church worship. The attendees learned about the altar guild, flower guild, music, and bread guild. The classes built towards an instructive Eucharist by having each student create their own home altar or worship area.

Objectives for 2021:

1. Continue to find ways minister to our people through service and teaching
2. Continue to offer a variety of opportunities to learn and grow in Christ and His service
3. Continue to offer opportunities for our youth and young students to participate visibly in our church
4. Develop and execute a 2021 Confirmation class for our Youth using both online and safe distancing in-person classes