

NEXTGEN PATHWAY



Park Cities
BAPTIST CHURCH

WHAT IS THE NEXT GEN PATHWAY?

Our mission in the Next Gen Ministry is to **equip and empower our kids and students** to have an **authentic** and **active** faith. Our goal is to help your children and students follow Jesus. To do that, we know they must first know Jesus.

As your children and students grow up, we want them to have a relationship with Jesus Christ. Our sin separates us from God, but through Jesus' life, death, burial and resurrection, we have eternal life. When we trust Jesus — the only one who can save us from the punishment of our sin — we are brought into his family.

The Next Gen Pathway helps develop their faith so they can continue to follow Jesus for the rest of their lives. We want our children to be disciples of Jesus, and we want to help guide your child or children to learn to follow him.

WHAT ARE THE MARKS OF A DISCIPLE?

We have identified eight key areas a disciple should possess. This is not an exhaustive list, but one that helps define our goal. Every stage of life helps develop these characteristics as your child or children learn to follow Jesus.

- Read the Bible
- Learn how to pray
- Share Christ with others
- Serve selflessly
- Find community
- Live authentically
- Worship corporately
- Value the Church

SALVATION

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE?

Salvation is the moment a person places their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. Because of our sin, we are separated from God, but through Jesus' life, death and resurrection, he made a way for us to be forgiven and restored to a relationship with him.

Salvation is a gift of grace received through faith — not something we can earn through good works. When a person trusts in Jesus, they are forgiven of their sin, made new and brought into God's family. This begins a lifelong journey of following him.

Each child comes to this decision at a different time. While parents and the church play an important role in guiding and teaching, salvation is a personal response to the gospel.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

If your child begins asking questions about following Jesus or expresses a desire to trust him, take time to have intentional conversations about the gospel.

You can reach out to a member of our ministry team for guidance or schedule a time to talk with a pastor about your child's understanding and next steps.

PARENT PRACTICES

- *Pray regularly for your child's heart to be open to the gospel.*
- *Create space for ongoing conversations about sin, grace and faith in Jesus.*
- *Listen carefully to your child's questions and respond with patience and clarity.*
- *Share your own story of how you came to know Jesus.*
- *Encourage your child to respond to Jesus in faith when they are ready.*

BAPTISM

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE?

Baptism is an outward sign of an inward transformation. It is an act of obedience that identifies a believer with Christ's death, burial and resurrection.

Baptism does not save; it publicly declares what God has already done in the believer's heart through faith. We do not practice infant baptism because scripture teaches that baptism follows a conscious decision to follow Jesus.

Believers are immersed in water to symbolize this, based on Romans 6:3-4.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

If your child is ready, complete the Baptism Interest Form. A minister will contact you to schedule a meeting.

PARENT PRACTICES

- *Pray for guidance in conversations.*
- *Set a weekly time for family devotionals.*
- *Celebrate your child's decision to follow Jesus.*
- *Participate in the Lord's Supper together, observed on the first Sunday of each month.*



SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGHOUT CHILDHOOD

EARLY CHILDHOOD YEARS (BIRTH THROUGH PRE-K)

CHILD DEDICATION

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE?

Parents are the child's primary disciple-maker and role model. Your goal during this early stage of life is to introduce them to God and the church and to show them how to love other people. Being active in church is a powerful example for your toddler and can shape how they view faith.

We dedicate children following the biblical example. Proverbs 22:6 says, "Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it." Luke 2:22 tells us about Joseph and Mary taking Jesus to Jerusalem to be presented to the Lord. Jesus later says in Mark 10:14, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."

WHAT ARE YOUR NEXT STEPS?

Register to attend our Child Dedication Seminar. This seminar will help you understand more about our preschool ministry and our church. It will also inform you about the different groups you can join.

PARENT PRACTICES

- *Children grow rapidly at this age, and all they need is you. They use all five senses to explore their world. They enjoy hearing Bible stories and respond positively to picture Bibles and worship songs.*
- *Pray together — mealtimes are a great start.*
- *Repeat "God loves you" and model it.*
- *Let them explore a Bible with pictures.*
- *Model church attendance and participation.*
- *Talk about Jesus at home and when you are out.*

Child dedication is the first milestone. This opportunity allows you to introduce your children to God and the church and to show them how to love others. It is a commitment to the Lord before the church, and a commitment from the church to the family.

We want parents to know they are not alone. Even the youngest children can learn that God loves them. This lays the foundation for the ultimate goal — your child deciding to follow Jesus.

We desire all parents to be part of a Connect Group on Sundays. We also offer groups such as MomCo and Men's Connect lunches. These groups provide encouragement and support as you parent your children.

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL YEARS

WHAT TO EXPECT IN THIS SEASON:

This is a new stage of life for your child. They will likely have a new routine, a new school and new challenges. With challenges come opportunities. As they adjust, your role is to help them discover what God wants to teach them and to grow their wonder of who he or she is.

This stage is critical because it builds a foundational understanding of why they were made and how God created the world. Their brains are developing rapidly, allowing them to grasp more complex concepts. They also begin developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

WHAT ARE YOUR NEXT STEPS?

Children may begin asking questions about sin and their need for a Savior. These questions create opportunities for meaningful gospel conversations.

PARENT PRACTICES

- *Talk about salvation, faith and church regularly.*
- *Consider the New Christian Class offered throughout the year.*
- *Pray for your children and ask the Holy Spirit to guide conversations.*
- *Look for ways to serve as a family.*

As your child grows, you can help shape how they think about who God is and his love for them. Their emotional and social skills also develop as they form meaningful friendships that foster empathy, cooperation and teamwork. These all contribute to what it means to follow Jesus — treating others the way he treats us.

Visit pcbc.org/kids for resources or to schedule a meeting with the PCBC Kids Minister.

FIRST GRADE BIBLE PRESENTATION

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE?

We believe the Bible is God's Word and is completely true.

First grade is a special but sometimes challenging year.

God gives us his Word to reveal himself, show his plan for salvation and guide us in truth because he desires a relationship with us. This ceremony highlights the importance of the Bible and affirms that first graders can begin reading it.

Each child receives a Bible, and parents are encouraged to help their child begin reading God's Word.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

Parents of first graders should attend the First Grade Bible Presentation in September. Registration opens in August.

PARENT PRACTICES

- *Discuss scripture weekly as a family.*
- *Encourage participation in the New Christian Class.*
- *Support independent Bible reading using tools like the Dwell Kids Journal.*
- *Model daily Bible reading and discussion.*

NEW CHRISTIAN CLASS

WHAT IS THE PURPOSE?

Children begin asking deeper questions about life, death and sin. This class equips both parents and children to have meaningful gospel conversations. It provides a foundation for the Christian faith, helps develop a personal relationship with Jesus, answers questions and prepares children for baptism.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

Register your child for the class during the year.

PARENT PRACTICES

- *Encourage questions about faith.*
- *Pray for guidance and for your child to come to Jesus.*
- *Be ready to share your own faith story and baptism.*

MIDDLE SCHOOL YEARS

WHAT TO EXPECT IN THIS SEASON:

Middle school is defined by change — new schools, physical development, shifting social dynamics and increased academic expectations.

Because so much is changing, students need consistent guidance from parents to help navigate this stage.

WHAT ARE YOUR NEXT STEPS?

- Register for “Parenting Your New Middle Schooler”
- Encourage attendance at GetAway and Thee Camp.

- Join a Crew house for Bible study and community.
- Visit pcbc.org/students for resources or to schedule a meeting with the PCBC Student Minister.

PARENT PRACTICES

- *Attend 5th Grade Graduation Service*
- *Participate in Destination X and Student Ministry Open House.*
- *Engage in Sunday groups and Crew gatherings.*
- *Begin conversations about identity.*
- *Encourage empathy.*
- *Discuss consequences.*
- *Establish healthy routines.*
- *Talk about technology and social media.*

HIGH SCHOOL YEARS

WHAT TO EXPECT IN THIS SEASON:

High school introduces greater responsibility. Students begin forming their identity and making independent choices about friendships, dating and values.

WHAT ARE YOUR NEXT STEPS?

- Attend a Parenting Your New High Schooler seminar.
- Consider participating in one of the high school mission trips.
- Encourage participation in GetAway and Thee Camp.
- Join a Crew house.

PARENT PRACTICES

- *Discuss work, service and responsibility.*
- *Talk about driving and independence.*
- *Reinforce identity in Christ versus culture.*
- *Encourage ownership of faith.*
- *Help establish personal spiritual habits.*
- *Discuss healthy relationships.*
- *Teach life skills.*
- *Guide technology use.*
- *Serve together as a family.*

Parents can help anchor their identity in Christ as outside influences increase.

- Encourage regular service in the church.
- Maintain regular faith conversations.
- Visit pcbc.org/students for resources or to schedule a meeting with the PCBC Student Minister.

LAUNCHING SENIORS

WHAT TO EXPECT THIS SEASON:

This stage prepares students to leave home and transition into adulthood. Parents help finalize independence while the church equips families for this transition. We aim to guide both students and parents through this season in a Christ-centered way.

WHAT ARE THE NEXT STEPS?

- Register for the Empowering Graduates Seminar.
- Participate in Senior Sunday, held the first Sunday in May.

PARENT PRACTICES

- *Attend the seminar in the spring.*
- *Attend the senior banquet.*
- *Celebrate Senior Sunday.*
- *Affirm strengths and encourage finishing strong.*



EACH STAGE OF LIFE BRINGS NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO
GROW IN FAITH, AND EVERY CHILD'S JOURNEY WILL
LOOK A LITTLE DIFFERENT. OUR DESIRE IS TO EQUIP AND
ENCOURAGE YOU ALONG THE WAY, TRUSTING THAT GOD IS
AT WORK IN YOUR CHILD'S LIFE. AS YOU REMAIN FAITHFUL
IN POINTING THEM TO JESUS, WE BELIEVE HE WILL
CONTINUE TO SHAPE THEIR HEART, DEEPEN THEIR FAITH
AND LEAD THEM INTO A LIFELONG RELATIONSHIP WITH HIM.