

COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH

# blueprint

for FAMILIES

The CCC plan for children and students



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Community Christian Church was started *to reach people who are not a part of any church*. We want to *help people find their way back to God*. We believe God created all of us and wants us to be constantly moving toward Him in an effort to live the kinds of lives He designed us to live. As a church, our strategy to help people find their way back to God is to help everyone pursue the 3 C's: Celebrate, Connect, and Contribute.

## **CELEBRATE**

For thousands of years, people have met together weekly to celebrate their relationship with God. At Community Christian Church, we are continuing in that stream of people. When we get together on Sundays, we simply proclaim the way of Jesus and remind ourselves of what God has done and what He's looking to do.

Each week we are trying to figure out how to live in God's world, God's way. We want to get rid of anything that keeps us from living the way God originally intended for us to live and embrace the fullness of life He has planned for us. We believe that living under the rule and reign of God, revealed to us through the Bible, is the best way to live, so we celebrate that each week.

## **CONNECT**

We believe God created us to live deeply with one another, to generously share whatever we have with each other, to lean into each other when life gets tough, to confess, encourage, and pray for each other; and to live open, honest, and authentic lives.

We are seeking to genuinely care for each other. We are not trying to put on a show or act holier than thou. We are real people trying to get the most out of this life we find ourselves in, and we are committed to journeying through it together.

## **CONTRIBUTE**

We are doing everything we can to live lives of significance, knowing that God created us to be a compelling force of good in the world. We look for things that are not right in this world and do something about them, becoming change agents.

We believe the church is at its best when we serve and love and give, caring about the things God cares about and partnering with Him to accomplish His dream for White Marsh and the world.

We filter everything we do as a church through the 3 C's, and anybody who is pursuing all 3 C's is moving in the right direction. When it comes to families, we acknowledge that

parents are the primary spiritual leaders of their children, and we want to do everything possible to help them thrive in that role. In recent times, churches may have overstepped their bounds by trying to be the primary spiritual leaders for children and students. The problem is it has not worked.

Experts around the country are tracking the number of college-aged students who grew up attending church, yet are walking away from their faith after high school. The estimate is between *70 and 80 percent*.<sup>1</sup> That is staggering. We believe that percentage can change for the better, and the answer is found when the church and the family partner together.

The purpose of this book is to outline our strategy for families with kids through each stage of their development, from the time they are born through their years in high school. CCC might have 40 hours each year with the average child or student, while parents will have about 3,000 hours. Knowing that parents will have much more time with their kids, we want to leverage the time CCC has to make the parents' time as effective as possible. Our hope is that by sharing our strategy, parents can partner with it to create a rhythm and a plan that works for their family through every stage of their child's life.

## **STRUCTURE**

We have divided the rest of this book into sections based on children's stages of life. In each section, key things to look for include:

***Environments*** - These describe the various environments offered for each age group. In these descriptions, you will find a summary and the goals of the environment.

***Typical Schedules*** - These outline what a typical Sunday will look like in each environment.

***Parent Resources*** - These highlight the various resources available to parents to inform them what their child is learning, as well as how to continue the conversation at home with their children.

***Events*** - These share the different events that go along with each environment and age group.

***Transitions*** - These outline the events that exist to help children and students transition from one age group to the next at CCC.

1 Lifeway Research Staff. "LifeWay Research Uncovers Reasons 18 to 22 Year Olds Drop Out of Church." LifeWay: Biblical Solutions for Life. 27 August 2009. [http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/article\\_main\\_page/0,1703,A=165949&M=200906,00.html](http://www.lifeway.com/lwc/article_main_page/0,1703,A=165949&M=200906,00.html).

## **PRESCHOOL - *Wonder***

From birth, babies are constantly searching and learning as they satisfy their curiosity. We want to help preschoolers be amazed at the wonder of God and show them God's love from the very beginning of their lives.



### ***Environments***

Baby Bay is our environment for infants and toddlers, from birth to age 2. Our goal is to *establish trusted care with families*. We take safety and security seriously; therefore, we do everything possible to make Baby Bay a safe, clean place for your children. Our leaders ensure that infants and toddlers in their care experience God's love during the service.

Kids Kove is our environment for preschool children, age 2 - Pre-K5. Our goal in Kids Kove is to *create a lasting first impression of their heavenly father*. In order to achieve that goal, we want children to walk away from Kids Kove knowing these 3 basic truths:

***God made me - God loves me - Jesus wants to be my friend forever***



We accomplish this by creating an exciting place where children have consistent leaders and experience a loving God. We continue to take safety and security seriously; therefore, we do everything possible to make Kids Kove a safe, clean place for your children.

### ***A Typical Schedule***

A bible story, worship through singing, activities to engage the senses, and small group time comprise each child's Kids Kove experience.

### ***Parent Resources***

***Drive Time Cards*** – Drive Time Cards are provided to Kids Kove parents each Sunday that highlight what children learned that day and offer activities parents can do with their kids at home throughout the week.

### ***Events***

Raising kids is one of the most challenging tasks anyone can tackle. This crucial and demanding job cannot be done alone. It takes the help of God and the support of a community. We want to teach our kids what it means to follow Jesus and be an example for them all along the way. Parent Child Dedication is conducted during Sunday services as an opportunity to acknowledge that these children are a gift from God and ask Him for wisdom and guidance as we do our best to raise them in faith and character. In many ways, it is a first step in building a partnership between CCC and parents. Parent Child Dedications are held once or twice a year.

### ***Transitions - Kindergarten Confidential***

Kindergarten Confidential is an event for kids going into Kindergarten along with their parents. It is an orientation to the elementary environments at CCC, including Discovery Island and KidStuf. Kids and parents experience Discovery Island, and parents have a chance to hear all about the opportunities and resources available to them and their elementary age child at CCC.



## **ELEMENTARY - *Discovery***

A child's elementary years are filled with discovery as they learn all sorts of new things, including who they are and how they see the world. At this stage of life, we want to help children find their identity and purpose in becoming a follower of Jesus. We want to help them discover how the Bible relates to them and how they live their life.



### ***Environments***

Discovery Island is our weekly environment for school age children, K-5. Our goal in Discovery Island is to guide kids to put their faith in Jesus and teach them who God is and how He wants them to live. This is where children experience small group much like adults do in Group Life. We concentrate on 3 basic truths:

*I need to make the wise choice*

*I can trust God no matter what*

*I should treat others the way I want to be treated*

### ***A Typical Schedule***

Fun and games when they arrive, large group time with singing and Bible teaching, and small group time comprise each child's Discovery Island experience.

### ***Environments***

KidStuf is where kids take their parents to learn. KidStuf is a monthly environment for kids in grades K-5 and their parents. The goal of KidStuf is to shape a child's relationship with God by strengthening the relationship with their parents. In KidStuf, families will learn about the same virtue that children learn about each month in Discovery Island.



## ***A Typical Schedule***

A combination of storytelling, drama, lights, music, and video engage and inspire children and their parents.

## ***Parent Resources***

***Fridge Door Cards*** – Fridge Door Cards give parents the Core Virtue, Memory Verse, Bottom Line (key concept), a question to ask kids, and a preview of the next week's session. Fridge Door Cards are available in Discovery Island each week.

***God Time Cards*** – Weekly God Time Cards focus on the same topics that kids learn in Discovery Island and provide ideas for how kids can engage with the Bible and talk to God at home. God Time Cards are available in Discovery Island each week.

***Family Times Virtue Packs*** – Family Times Virtue Packs equip parents with easy to use tools to make the most of everyday moments together. This tool is based on the biblical model that teaches that the home should be the primary place where a child learns about God.

Virtue Packs expand on the virtues taught in Discovery Island and KidStuf with activities to be used once a week during each of these four family times: Meal Time, Drive Time, Bed Time, and Morning Time. All of this is designed to give parents simple ways to help their kids grow in faith and character. Parents can buy individual packs or purchase a monthly subscription at [www.familytimes.org](http://www.familytimes.org).

## ***Events***

Dive In is a unique 45 minute presentation where parents and children, grades K-5, can learn what it means to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Dive In is a one time event (not a series of classes) developed to give parents the tools necessary to have a meaningful dialogue with their kids about how to begin their spiritual journey as they move towards baptism. Dive In events are scheduled as needed.



### ***Transitions - Middle School***

The 6th Grade Cookout is for students entering 6th grade along with their parents to get an overview of the Student Ministry's middle school programming. We understand that the transition from elementary school into middle school can be challenging for students and their parents. Not only are students entering a new school, they are also leaving Sunday morning children's programming and beginning to participate in Sunday services. We want to make this transition as smooth as possible. The 6th Grade Cookout is designed to give students and parents the opportunity to meet middle school volunteers, as well as have a chance to dialogue about how to best utilize the Student Ministry's programming for middle school students.

## **INTRODUCTION *to* STUDENT MINISTRY**

The Student Ministry includes students from 6th to 12th grade. We believe that God deeply cares about teenagers, and we want to help connect them to each other and to God on life's journey. We seek to create fully developed followers of Jesus through a "3 Legged Stool" model. The first of the three legs is our Large Group, the second, Group Life, and the third, Trips and Retreats.

CCC Student Ministry is passionate about embracing a deeper intimacy with Christ. God never intended for the Christian life to be lived alone, which is why we value and promote the building of Christ-like relationships. The teenage years are vital in each student's spiritual life. So much of who they become is formed during this time. We really desire to partner with parents to minister to and walk alongside their student. For students to have the best experience here at CCC, they should be involved fully in each leg of the model.

We base all of our teaching and programming around a set of principles, or irreducible minimums, that we would like to see every student understand and embrace before they graduate. These principles build on the basic truths that are taught in Children's Ministry at CCC. The principles are:

*Faith in God*

*Spiritual Disciplines*

*Purity*

*Healthy Relationships*

*Making Wise Choices*

*Authority of God*

*Purpose of the Church*

*Serving Others*

*Understanding the Story of the Bible*

## MIDDLE SCHOOL

Here at CCC we believe that the middle school years can be challenging for both students and parents. In spite of these challenges, middle school students are a lot of fun to work with. The middle school years bring with them a lot of energy and excitement, and we have created programming to channel all of that energy towards building a relationship with Jesus.

### *Large Group and Small Groups*

EPiC is our weekly environment for 6th-8th graders that includes time for games, biblical teaching, and friendships. Did we mention snacks, Wii, kickball, Guitar Hero, and so much more?

Each week, we connect deeper with friends through small groups and spend time looking into the Bible to discover the life God designed for middle school students. Small groups are made up of 8-12 students of the same grade and gender with one or two leaders.



### *A Typical Schedule*

Each week EPiC is divided into two distinct sections. The first hour is our large group portion. Students sign in and then enter the large group room, which is full of activities to engage in during their free time. After free time is finished, all students come back together for some group games and teaching. The teaching at EPiC runs in 4-5 week series that relate back to our core principles or irreducible minimums.

Once the teaching time is finished, students break down by grade and gender and head to their small group. During small groups, student ministry small group leaders lead students through some additional questions about the theme for the evening.

EPiC happens every Sunday at CCC. EPiC takes a break over the summer and resumes in the fall and breaks again for the Christmas holiday and resumes in January.

## ***Events***

Throughout the year, we design events where middle school students can invite their friends and get together and have fun. We really want students to have a positive experience with church, and this is one way they can. Here are some examples of our large group events:

### ***Student Ministry Amazing Race***

Our student ministry gets together for a mobile scavenger hunt. Students sign up and are placed into teams by grade level. Teams are then placed with a leader who transports them during the race. Each year, the Amazing Race is held at different and undisclosed locations. The first team to complete the list of things to photograph or obtain wins.

### ***Baltimore Blast Game & Concert***

The Baltimore Blast soccer team hosts annual Christian Youth Nights. These nights consist of a soccer game followed by a concert of a popular Christian band. We are able to provide tickets and transportation to these games.

### ***Trips and Retreats***

During the year, we have several trips and retreats for middle students to attend. These trips and retreats allow us to teach and build relationships in ways we are not able to on a week to week basis.



REVERB is a conference created specifically for middle school students in the Baltimore and D.C. area. REVERB happens in the late winter/early spring each year. Because REVERB is a local conference, it is a cost effective way to minister and reach out to middle school students in this area.

REVERB is a two-day conference that is held over a weekend. During the weekend, students spend the evenings in a hotel with a student ministry leader and other students of their same age and gender. For more information you can check out [www.REVERBconference.com](http://www.REVERBconference.com).

### ***Fall Retreat***

The Fall Retreat kicks off our fall programming and allows the Student Ministry to partner with other local student ministries. The Fall Retreat is designed for both middle school and high school students but runs as two different retreats during the weekend.

The Fall Retreat runs over a weekend at Camp Sandy Cove in West Virginia. Each retreat has a guest speaker that relates specifically to middle school students and is able to teach the theme effectively. Students spend the weekend sleeping in cabins and have the opportunity to experience many outdoor bonuses such as: a zip line, mountain boarding, trapeze, canoeing, kayaking, rock climbing, a skate park, and much more. The Fall Retreat is hands down the best way to kickoff the school year.

### ***Summer Trips***

During the summer, certain trips are planned to allow students to put into practice the principles they have been learning at EPiC throughout the year.

### ***Summer Service Trip***

One of the trips offered to middle school students is a service trip. The location of this trip may vary over the years, but the purpose does not. We want to instill students with the value of serving others. This trip gives students the opportunity to experience a city or town different than their own and serve someone they have never met. The summer service trip can range from 5-7 days and includes many different components. During the week, students will of course serve, but they will also have the chance to play together, sing together, and learn together. Participating in a summer service trip is typically one of the best ways for students to take steps in developing their faith. To help defer the cost of this trip, we offer multiple fund raising opportunities throughout the year.

### ***Indian Lake Christian Service Camp***

Indian Lake Christian Service Camp is located in Darlington, MD. Each summer Indian Lake offers camps for multiple grade levels. CCC Student Ministry offers a week of camp each summer for our middle school students. This week allows students to experience God while away from the busyness and distractions of our normal routine. While at Indian Lake, students meet other students from around the Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia area with whom they can build lasting relationships.



### ***Transitions - High School***

The 9th Grade Cookout is for students entering 9th grade along with their parents to get an overview of the Student Ministry's high school programming. Students entering high school often look forward to having more choices and making new and more friends; however, they also are concerned about being picked on and teased by older students, having harder class work, making lower grades, and getting lost in a larger, unfamiliar school. To help make this transition as smooth as possible, students and parents have the opportunity to meet new high school volunteers, as well as have a chance to dialogue about how to best utilize the Student Ministry's programming for high school students.

## HIGH SCHOOL

As students come nearer to graduation, the thought of becoming an adult becomes more real every day. We want to help high school students realize the path that God has laid before them and become fully devoted followers of Jesus.

### *Large Group*

IMPACT is our large group gathering for high school students. At IMPACT, students have the opportunity to hang out with other high school students, as well as engage with teaching prepared just for them. Elements of IMPACT consist of live music, food, teaching, competition, and connections with other students.



### *A Typical Schedule*

IMPACT takes place on a Wednesday evening every six weeks. When a student arrives at IMPACT, volunteer leaders who really care immediately greet them. After signing in, students have some free time. You can always find video games, board games, outdoor sports (when the weather cooperates), food, coffee, and much more. After some time to hangout, we bring the students together and have some friendly competition. It is not uncommon for the winners to walk away well rewarded. When we wrap up the games, we head into a time of worship led by our student band, and then into some teaching.

During the weeks that IMPACT takes place, there will be no high school Group Life. Grab a student ministry calendar for the full IMPACT schedule, or check out the CCC web site for an updated schedule as well: [www.communitycc.net](http://www.communitycc.net).

### *Small Groups*

Group Life is the main avenue for building community among high school students. Groups meet each week at various homes of leaders in the White Marsh community. Groups are the place for students to love and to be loved, to know and to be known, to care and to be cared for, and to share life with one another. This is the place where your student will learn what it means to follow Jesus. Groups are separated by gender and grade level.

### *A Typical Schedule*

High School Group Life happens every week during the school year. Each group's meeting time and location vary according to the group leader's schedule. Groups will also take breaks to do some fun activities throughout the year. Every six weeks, all groups meet together for IMPACT. Group Life breaks for Christmas and kicks off in January. Groups also break during the summer, but still meet once a month for a fun event.



### *Trips and Retreats*

Throughout the year, we have several trips and retreats for high school students to attend. These trips and retreats allow us to teach and build relationships in ways we are not able on a week to week basis.

#### *Fall Retreat*

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#### *Summer Trips*

During the summer, trips are planned to allow students to put into practice the principles they have been learning in their small groups and at IMPACT.

### ***Summer Service Trip***

One of the trips offered to high school students is a service trip. The location may vary due to international travel regulations, safety issues, and costs. This trip not only challenges students to serve while on the trip, but before we leave as well. Once signed up, students will meet multiple times in the months prior. These meetings allow students to get to know their team better as well as learn more about the value of being a servant. In addition to serving before and during this trip, students experience the sacrifice of raising financial support. Traveling in or out of the country is not inexpensive. To help defer the cost of such a trip, we offer multiple fund raising opportunities throughout the year. Trip packets and information will be available each winter so students can get a jump on their preparation for their service trip.



### ***Youth in Ministry - Student Leadership Conference***

Each summer, Youth in Ministry hosts a conference for high school students. It is a week-long conference designed for teens eager to pursue God's call for their lives. It is a time of in-depth exploration of personality and spiritual gifts, focused sessions on specific ministry areas of interest, and intense worship and praise. Youth in Ministry also offers scholarships for students who may not be able to afford this week on their own.

### ***Winter Retreat***

Each winter, our high school ministry takes a few days to spend together at the Winter Retreat. The Winter Retreat is held each January over Martin Luther King, Jr. weekend. We travel to Bethany Beach, Delaware where we rent multiple houses for our students to stay in during the weekend. Students will stay in homes by grade and gender. Every year the Winter Retreat has a different theme and allows us to spend time teaching a certain topic to students. The Winter Retreat is a great way to start off a new year.



## ***Events***

Throughout the year, we design events where high school students can invite their friends and get together and have fun. We really want students to have a positive experience with church, and this is one way they can. Here are some examples of our large group events:

### ***Student Ministry Amazing Race***

Our student ministry gets together for a mobile scavenger hunt. Students sign up and are placed into teams by grade level. Teams are then placed with a leader who transports them during the race. Each year, the Amazing Race is held at different and undisclosed locations. The first team to complete the list of things to photograph or obtain wins.

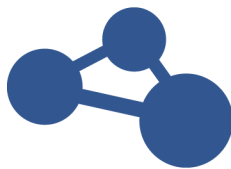
### ***Baltimore Blast Game & Concert***

The Baltimore Blast soccer team hosts annual Christian Youth Nights. These nights consist of a soccer game followed by a concert of a popular Christian band. We are able to provide tickets at a discounted rate and transportation to these games.

### ***Keep Going***

Hopefully this book has given you a good understanding of the CCC strategy for families. A strategy by itself is not worth much, but what it can do is help parents, who are passionate about their children following Jesus, connect with a church that is designed to help people find their way back to God. Two combined influences are greater than two influences working separately. This strategy can help CCC and families get on the same page as we seek to help children and students grow in faith and character. Only by working together can we create the greatest impact.

If you have any questions about children and student ministries here at CCC, or if we can help you in some way, please don't hesitate to contact us. The best way to reach us is through our web site, [communitycc.net](http://communitycc.net).



**a community christian church resource**  
8094 SANDPIPER CIRCLE BALTIMORE, MD  
[communitycc.net](http://communitycc.net)