

**ACTS Seminaries of Trinity Western University – Centre for Ministry Excellence**  
In collaboration with Northwest Baptist Seminary

**CHM 592A – Children’s Ministry in the Church Context**

**Professor of Record: Dr. Kent Anderson**  
**Spring 2012 – 3 Hours**

**Course Description**

This course is designed to enhance students’ ability to function effectively in effectively in the context of church-based Children’s Ministry leadership. It engages students in an in-depth critical study of relevant issues and concepts, and promotes growth in skills that are pertinent to that area of ministry leadership. Graduate credit for this course is offered by ACTS Seminaries (Trinity Western University) in partnership with Northwest Baptist Seminary through the ACTS Centre for Ministry Excellence.

Specifically, this course will look at the perception, role, and purpose of children in the context of the church from Bible times to present day. It will assess each era in light of that ages understanding of children and the church. A contemporary theology of the church will then form the basis for understanding current ministry trends and for evaluating current ministry praxis.

**Course Objectives**

This course intends to lead each student toward mastery of children’s ministry in the church context as seen through four different, though complementary domains. This course will lead the student...

*Knowledge* ...to be able to understand and speak knowledgeably about children’s ministry in the church context, demonstrating an awareness of the models and styles of leadership relevant to the field, and displaying a critical understanding and broadening perspective on the subject of leadership within children’s ministry;

*Research* ...to become conversant with the strategic literature (classical and current), the key issues under discussion, and the prominent practices and theories, that can help him or her develop the capacity to think critically and analytically about leadership within children’s ministry;

*Skills* ...to develop their leadership skills by applying theory to practice in a specific context that will allow them to increasingly critique, problem solve, and modify their practice of leadership to the demands of children’s ministry, developing an appreciation for the integration of skills, disciplinary concepts, and a Christian worldview;

*Character* ...to cultivate the characteristics of personal mastery that will enable her/him to hone personal leadership styles, form personal conclusions, and apply creative concepts to the practice of children’s ministry in the church context.

Specifically, this course will lead the student...

**Cognition**

- ...to understand the history of children in the context of the church from bible times to present day, with particular focus on its teaching on the role, purpose and perspective of the child in order to articulate the value of a child in the church family.

- ...to become conversant in contemporary theology of the church: the church as God's chosen people, God's gifted people, God's sent people and God's people led, so that the student can confidently articulate the child's place in the church family.
- ... to explore current ministry trends of family ministry, spiritual parenting, and narrative teaching in order to develop an understanding of the churches role in the spiritual teaching of children.

#### **Inner Development**

- ...to give critical thought to and articulate a personal Philosophy of Children's Ministry based on a renewed understanding of church, ministry practice, and ministry trends.

#### **Cultivation**

- ...to develop vision, core values, and objectives for family ministry and spiritual parenting with the purpose of extending your ministry to the families within your church.

### **Required Textbooks and Resources**

#### Textbooks:

Anthony, Michelle. *Spiritual Parenting*. Colorado Springs: David C. Cook, 2010.

Beckwith, Ivy. *Postmodern Children's Ministry: Ministry to Children in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004.

Jones, Timothy Paul. *Family Ministry Field Guide*. Indianapolis: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2011.

Lloyd-Jones, Sally. *The Jesus Storybook Bible: Every Story Whispers His Name*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2007.

#### Articles: (will be posted to MyCourses)

Grant, Reg, and John Reed. "The First 'R' of Storytelling: Reading." In *Telling Stories to Touch the Heart: How to Use Stories to Communicate God's Truth*, 37-52. Wheaton, IL: Victor Books, 1990.

Guroian, Vigen. "The Ecclesial Family: John Chrysostom on Parenthood and Children." In *The Child in Christian Thought*, edited by Marcia J. Bunge, 61-77. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2001.

Miller, Patrick D. "That the Children May Know." In *The Child in the Bible*, edited by Marcia J. Bunge, 45-62. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008.

Nelson, Laurie. "Narrative Theology and Storytelling in Christian Education with Children." *Christian Education Journal* 11, no. 1 (Autumn 1990): 95-104.

## Course Outline

Content will be delivered by several lecturers, all of whom have experience in various aspects of the field. Lecturers include Dr. Daryl Busby, Dr. Archie Spencer, and Dr. Ken Pudlas; others will be added as they are confirmed.

DATE	TOPIC	READING & OTHER ASSIGNMENTS
Jan. 9	Introductions and Orientation Contemporary Philosophy of Children's Ministry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduce yourself in online forum</li> <li>• Watch lectures</li> <li>• Read <i>Post Modern Children's Ministry</i>, pages 9-70</li> </ul>
Jan. 16	History of Ministry to Children: Early Church, Reformation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch lectures</li> <li>• Read <i>Post Modern Children's Ministry</i>, pages 71-122</li> </ul>
Jan. 23	History of Ministry to Children: Sunday School Movement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch lectures</li> <li>• Read <i>Post Modern Children's Ministry</i>, pages 123-165</li> </ul>
Jan. 30	Contemporary Theology of the Church: the church as God's chosen people, the church as God's gifted people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch lectures</li> <li>• Read article from <i>The Child in the Bible</i>, pages 45-62 (posted on MyCourses)</li> <li>• Read article from <i>The Child in Christian Thought</i>, pages 61-77 (posted on MyCourses)</li> <li>• Forum: History of Ministry To Children</li> </ul>
Feb. 6	Contemporary Theology of the Church: the church as God's sent people, the church as God's people led	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch lectures</li> <li>• Read <i>Family Ministry Field Guide</i>, pages 11-92</li> </ul>
Feb. 13	Special Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch lectures</li> <li>• Read <i>Family Ministry Field Guide</i>, pages 93-160</li> <li>• Forum: Contemporary Theology of the Church</li> </ul>
Feb. 20	Family Ministry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch lectures</li> <li>• Read <i>Family Ministry Field Guide</i>, pages 161-218</li> <li>• Forum: Special Needs</li> </ul>
<b>Feb. 27</b>	<b>Reading Week</b>	
March 5	Family Ministry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch lectures</li> <li>• Read <i>Spiritual Parenting</i>, pages 11-80</li> </ul>
March 12	Spiritual Parenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch lectures</li> <li>• Read <i>Spiritual Parenting</i>, pages 81-150</li> <li>• Forum: Family Ministry</li> </ul>
March 19	Spiritual Parenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch lectures</li> <li>• Read <i>Spiritual Parenting</i>, pages 151-218</li> </ul>

March 26	Narrative Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch lectures</li> <li>• Read <i>Jesus Storybook Bible</i>, pages 1-175</li> <li>• Read article from <i>Christian Education Journal</i> (posted on MyCourses)</li> <li>• Forum: Spiritual Parenting</li> </ul>
April 2	Narrative Teaching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watch lectures</li> <li>• Read <i>Jesus Storybook Bible</i>, pages 176-350</li> <li>• Read chapter from <i>Telling Stories to Touch the Heart</i> (posted on MyCourses)</li> <li>• <b>Reading Log:</b> Due April 6</li> </ul>
April 9 - 30	Work on and hand in assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Forum: Narrative teaching</li> <li>• <b>Narrative Teaching Assignment:</b> Due April 9</li> <li>• <b>Final Project: Philosophy of Ministry Paper:</b> Due April 16</li> <li>• <b>Leadership Experience:</b> Due April 30</li> </ul>

## Course Assignments

**READINGS AND LECTURES (10%).** The student will read all assigned readings and listen to all online lectures, and will report all such activity at the end of the semester. Please note that all forums are based on readings and lectures, hence participation in them is imperative. *Due: Ongoing throughout the semester.*

**PARTICIPATION IN FORUMS (15%).** The student will participate in six online forums throughout the semester. The forums will be led by forum leaders with considerable children’s ministry expertise, and will be based on lecture material from the two weeks prior to the forum date. The student will participate in two ways:

1. By posting a 250- to 400-word answer to the discussion question posed by the forum leader by 11:59 pm on the first day of the forum week (in bold below).
2. By posting at least two, 100- to 200-word responses to other students’ postings by 11:59 pm on the final day of the forum week. These responses must further the conversation, either by adding new insight or respectfully challenging another student’s conclusions. It is not adequate to simply agree or disagree with the posting.

At the beginning of the semester, the student will be placed in a forum group with four other students, and these groups will remain consistent throughout. The forum leader will participate in the discussion, adding insight, responding to issues, and challenging ideas for the purposes of deepening conversation, refining thoughts, and mentoring the student through the lecture material. The forums will occur on the following dates:

- **Forum #1: Jan. 30** – Feb. 3 – History of Ministry to Children
- **Forum #2: Feb. 13** – 17 – Contemporary Theology of the Church
- **Forum #3: Feb. 20** – 24 – Special Needs
- **Forum #4: March 12** – 16 – Family Ministry
- **Forum #5: March 26** – 30 – Spiritual Parenting
- **Forum #6: April 9** – 13 – Narrative Teaching

**NARRATIVE SCRIPT (15%).** The student will choose one Bible story being used in their church curriculum scope and sequence this spring, and will write a script for a creative telling of this story to children. The narrative will be 7-10 minutes in duration when read aloud, and will utilize creative storytelling techniques to communicate the

message. The student's selection of biblical story must be approved by the forum leader, and should not be "familiar"—Noah's Ark, Daniel in the lions' den, David and Goliath, Jonah, etc. *Due: March 26 (story selection); April 9 (final submission).*

**FINAL PROJECT: PHILOSOPHY OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRY PAPER (30%).** Drawing on insight gained from the class readings and lectures, personal experience, Scripture, and 7-12 external sources (books or journal articles), the student will develop a one-page personal philosophy of children's ministry, and write a 3000- to 3500-word research paper in its defense. The following questions will guide the formation of the philosophy statement:

- What is the rationale and goal for children's ministry?
- What are the biblical and theological foundations of children's ministry?
- What are the unique challenges of children's ministry?
- What is the role of those serving within Children's Ministry, both children's minister and volunteer?
- What is the relationship between church and home in the spiritual formation of children?
- How can your strengths be best used within your personal philosophy of children's ministry?
- What is your vision for children's ministry?

The student may structure the paper in any way that makes logical sense, but must answer and defend each of the questions above (although not necessarily in that order). The paper will be evaluated based on the student's ability to define and defend their answers, not on their ability to parrot a popular contemporary ministry philosophy. The answers given should be the student's own, even if they contradict popular thought and opinion.

The final submission must include a title page, outline, and bibliography, none of which are included in the word count. The paper will follow Turabian formatting for all external citations, and be typed, double-spaced, in 10- or 12-point font. Further details on academic research, especially at a distance, can be found below in the "Information on Research" section. *Due: April 16. Note: this assignment must be passed in order to pass the course.*

**PARTICIPATION IN LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCES (30%).** The student will complete one of the projects described in the syllabus appendix. Completion of this project will require roughly 30 hours. *Due: April 30.*

## Determination of Final Grade

As described above, the final grade will be weighted and determined according to the following scale:

Readings and Lectures	10%
Forums	15%
Narrative Teaching	15%
Leadership Experience	30%
Philosophy Paper	30%
<i>Total:</i>	<i>100%</i>

The grade scale for converting percentages into letter grades, grade point averages, and such is as follows:

A+	97-100	4.30	Superior
A	94-96	4.00	Excellent
A-	90-93	3.70	Very Good
B+	85-89	3.30	Proficient
B	80-84	3.00	Good
B-	75-79	2.70	Average
C+	70-74	2.30	Adequate
C	65-69	2.00	Pass
C-	60-64	1.70	Deficient
F	00-59	0.00	Fail

## **Contact Information**

Forums are led and assignments are graded by Forum Leaders. Forum leaders may be contacted via the information they give in the initial forum. Issues related to the student's status at ACTS Seminaries, including accounts, enrolment, and other matters, can be directed to the learning coach, Karen Anderson (Karen.Anderson@twu.ca). Administrative questions relating to the assignments, readings, lectures, or syllabus, may be directed to Nicole Lanigan (Nicole.Lanigan@twu.ca).

## **Assignment Submission**

The student is strongly encouraged to keep copies of all submitted work. Assignments may be submitted electronically as an attachment, directly to the Forum Leader's email address as provided in the initial forum. Ensure that all electronically submitted work carries on your title page your preferred email address for returned assignments.

## **Extensions**

Assignments must be completed and submitted on or before the deadlines noted in the syllabus in order to receive credit without penalty. Extensions may be considered in certain circumstances, but must be arranged with the forum leader in advance of the assignment deadline; penalization may still occur. Students who experience major crises that preclude them from completing the course should notify the professor of record immediately.

## **Information on Research**

In order to attain the learning objectives of this course, it is vital for the student to engage and interact with a variety of academic materials on children's ministry. The student is encouraged to make use of any local sources that may be available to them—their pastor's library, local university libraries, or public libraries. In addition to these sources, all course participants have access to the TWU library, both on-campus and online. The TWU library's online holdings include dozens of e-books and electronic academic journals, and the student is encouraged to become familiar with the library website ([www.twu.ca/library](http://www.twu.ca/library)), which contains links to several helpful tutorials for online research. Any inquiries regarding library use should be sent to the TWU learning coach, Karen Anderson.

## **Statement Regarding Research Ethics**

TWU complies with Canadian government guidelines established to ensure ethical research. As such, all TWU students who wish to engage in research involving human subjects, including but not limited to interviews, focus groups, and online surveys, must complete an application to the TWU Research Ethics Board for approval. Generally, this means that while students may carry on conversations about subjects or concepts in the course of everyday life (provided these conversations are not quoted in a project), they are not permitted to carry on conversations about subjects or concepts when these conversations form the basis of their research. Because the line between the two is sometimes difficult to discern, caution is recommended; in case of uncertainty, students should contact their learning coach or the CME office for clarification. Full details of the TWU Research Ethics Policy can be found at [www.twu.ca/academics/research](http://www.twu.ca/academics/research).

## **Web Support – Student Portal ([www.twu.ca/services](http://www.twu.ca/services))**

All students at TWU have a TWUPass username and password, which is determined at the time of an online application. Students can use these credentials to log into the TWU Student Portal where they can manage their username and password and register for a TWU student email account, which is vital for communication about grades, account statements, lost passwords, sign-up instructions, and other such matters.

This course will utilize the TWU MyCourses system (<https://courses.mytwu.ca/>), which requires the student's TWUPass username and password for access. It is recommended that students who are new to the online learning context familiarize themselves with the MyCourses interface via the tutorials (written and video) available on the MyCourses site. Technical problems can be addressed to the helpdesk found at <https://www1.twu.ca/support>.

### **Transcription of Credit and Letters of Permission to Transfer Credit**

Upon completion of this course, a transcript can be made available for the purpose of transferring this credit to another institution. Whether such an institution will accept such credit is solely at their discretion. A student may wish to seek a "letter of permission" (LOP) from the alternate school in advance of taking the course in order to assure the applicability of this course to a given program.

## **Appendix: Leadership Experience Project Descriptions**

### **Option A: Family Ministry Event.**

The student will plan, coordinate, and host a family ministry event at her/his church, being extremely creative in choosing the type, style, audience, and location of the event. Note: this may be the first family ministry event hosted in the student's church, and for this reason does not need to be for the entire church body. Instead, the student can see this as a pilot project and *invite* a smaller group of families.

**Mandatory Elements.** The following elements must be included in the project; suggested time breakdowns are given, but the student should divide the time in whatever way allows him/her to effectively complete the project in roughly 30 total hours.

1. Vision Statement (3-5 hours): The student will write a 2-page statement describing the vision, core values, and objectives for family ministry. Each core value and objective must be supported by at least one scripture reference.
2. Planning Committee (6-8 hours): The student will form and lead a planning committee of at least 3 people including the student. This committee will meet at least three times, and will:
  - Review the student's vision statement, giving feedback and assisting in refinement.
  - Brainstorm ideas for a family ministry event.
  - Plan, advertise/invite, and host the event.
  - Complete a post-event evaluation form (provided on MyCourses) giving the student feedback on her/his leadership, both on the committee and during the event itself.
3. Teaching (4 hours prep): The student will lead a teaching time at the event.
4. Event Hosting (5 hours): The student will host the event by April 22, 2012.
5. Report Compilation (8 hours): The final submission will include several elements.
  - a. **Title Page**
  - b. **Table of Contents**
  - c. **Vision Statement**
  - d. **Description of the Event (1-2 pages):** The student will describe the event, detailing how it aligns with the vision and values, and which objectives it seeks to fulfill. Please note this is not an evaluation. In fact, it would be best to write this component prior to hosting the actual event.
  - e. **Teaching Script.** The student will include her/his teaching script. Any visual aids used to enhance the teaching (PowerPoint, teaching illustrations, etc.) will be included as an appendix.
  - f. **Event Evaluation (1-2 pages).** Did the event fulfill the vision, core values, and objectives as anticipated? What spontaneous feedback did you receive from families within the church? What feedback did you receive from your committee?
  - g. **Self-Evaluation (2 pages).** Using the feedback from the planning committee, the student will answer the following questions: What were my greatest strengths as a leader? What were my

greatest weaknesses? Was I able to effectively cast vision and create passion for family ministry within my church context?

- h. **Appendix:** The student will include any teaching aids as described above if applicable.

### **Option B: Spiritual Parenting Workshop**

The student will plan, host, and teach a spiritual parenting workshop. Note: this may be the first such workshop hosted in the student's church, and for this reason does not need to be for the entire church body. Instead, the student can see this as a pilot project and *invite* a smaller group of families.

**Mandatory Elements.** The following elements must be included in the project; suggested time breakdowns are given, but the student should divide the time in whatever way allows him/her to effectively complete the project in roughly 30 total hours.

1. Vision Statement (3-5 hours): The student will write a 2-page statement describing the vision, core values, and objectives for spiritual parenting. Each core value and objective must be supported by at least one scripture reference.
2. Planning Committee (6-8 hours): The student will form and lead a planning committee of at least 3 people including the student. This committee will meet at least three times, and will:
  - Review the student's vision statement, giving feedback and assisting in refinement.
  - Brainstorm topics for a spiritual parenting workshop and decide on a date for the workshop.
  - Plan, advertise/invite, and host the workshop.
  - Complete a post-workshop evaluation form (provided on MyCourses) giving the student feedback on her/his leadership, both on the committee and during the workshop itself.
3. Teaching (6 hours prep): The student will lead the teaching at the workshop.
4. Event hosting (4 hours): The student will host the event by April 22, 2012.
5. Report Compilation (8 hours): The student's final submission will include several elements.
  - a. **Title Page**
  - b. **Table of Contents**
  - c. **Vision Statement**
  - d. **Description of the Workshop (1-2 pages):** The student will describe the workshop, detailing how it aligns with the vision and values, and which objectives it seeks to fulfill. Please note this is not an evaluation. In fact, it would be best to write this component prior to hosting the actual event.
  - e. **Teaching Script.** The student will include her/his teaching script. Any visual aids used to enhance the teaching (PowerPoint, teaching illustrations, etc.) will be included as an appendix.
  - f. **Event Evaluation (1-2 pages).** Did the event fulfill the vision, core values, and objectives as anticipated? What spontaneous feedback did you receive from families within the church? What feedback did you receive from your committee?
  - g. **Self-Evaluation (2 pages).** Using the feedback from the planning committee, the student will answer the following questions: What were my greatest strengths as a leader? What were my greatest weaknesses? Was I able to effectively cast vision and create passion for family ministry within my church context?
  - h. **Appendix:** The student will include any teaching aids as described above if applicable.