



Why Family Ministry? ...

What are the Stakes?

Families are special to God. Psalm 68 says that “God sets the lonely in families” (v. 6), and throughout his Word he lifts up the importance of marriage, parent-child and other family relationships. The first book of Timothy even says that one way we put our “religion into practice [is] by caring for [our] own family ... for this is pleasing to God” (1 Timothy 5:4).

Yet throughout our community and the world, families are in trouble. Torn apart by infidelity, divorce, abuse, violence, poverty, homelessness, addiction, illness, and so often a simple lack of attention, families, which God intended to provide comfort and love to the lonely, are all too often lonely and painful places themselves.

No one should have to tell us how high the stakes are. Think of the pain that comes from any one of the issues in the paragraph above. What happens when a husband or wife learns of a spouse’s unfaithfulness or spends years waking up beside someone who is physically near but emotionally distant? Or to children raised in abusive homes or caught in nasty divorces? Or families who lose a loved one to alcohol, drugs, pornography, gambling, gangs or street violence? What about the families of the 29,000 children who today will die — **die** — of starvation, malnutrition and preventable diseases?



God’s heart breaks for every person and every family caught up in a cycle of pain. Does yours?



The good news is that it doesn’t have to be this way! Jesus Christ came to bring redemption, reconciliation, healing and hope to the world. The new life offered to those who put their faith in him can heal even the deepest wounds and breathe new life into broken families. *But not if people don’t know!*

The Bible says that followers of Jesus have been given the “ministry of reconciliation” and calls us “Christ’s ambassadors” in the world (2 Corinthians 5:18, 20). It says that “*By his mighty power at work within us, he is able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope*” (Ephesians 3:20, italics mine).

Building stronger families in Christ Jesus...

- Reaching out with the love of Jesus (evangelism)
- Connecting with other believers (fellowship)
- Growing in faith (discipleship)
- Using our God-given gifts in ministry to others (service)
- Falling more deeply in love with Jesus Christ (worship)

... Developing families of faith.

Relying always on God's strength, Family Ministry at CELC wants to partner with you to build stronger families in Christ Jesus, to reach out to the hurting and to bring hope in Jesus' name to our community and the world.

Does that excite you? It should! Does the pain in the world bring you to tears or *tick you off*? We hope so. God wants to capture that passion, connect it with the gifts that he has given you, and send you out to make a difference in the world. And we want to help.

Relying always on God's strength, Family Ministry at CELC wants to partner with you to build stronger families in Christ Jesus both within and outside of our church, to reach out to the hurting and to bring hope in Jesus' name to our community and the world. **We come before you humbly saying that we can't do it alone; we need each and every one of you engaged in the mission.**

What does engagement mean? Quite simply, it means actively participating in the opportunities available to you at CELC. Please invite your friends, family, colleagues and neighbors to join you in those opportunities. And please, please, please, think about the stakes, figure out what breaks your heart or ticks you off, and throw yourself into making a difference in that area. We would be happy to help you discover your spiritual gifts and connect with an area in which to serve. Please let us know how we can best assist you in being a faithful steward of the life God has given you. As parents, you play the most influential role in your child's faith development, and your participation in Family Ministry is key in reaching the hearts of your children and other young people in our community.



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A photograph of a family of four, including a mother, a father, and two children, posing together and smiling. The father is in the foreground, the mother is behind him, and the children are around them.

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.” – Deuteronomy 6:5-9