

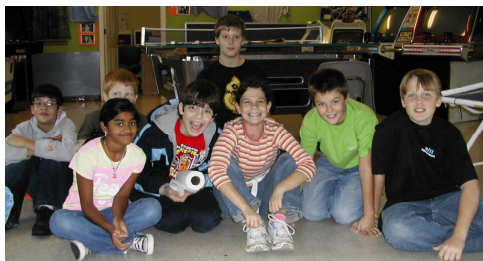
for children's ministry but can be overwhelmed by the style and methods of teen programming. Vertical meets them where they are with an experience just for pre-teens that demonstrates God's active presence in their lives as they navigate the unique challenges of life and faith in early adolescence.

### What resources does the church provide to parents of pre-teens?

We would love to interact with you about issues surrounding pre-teen family life and want to be a resource to help you become a better parent. We offer an array of options including Stephen's Ministry caregivers, pastoral or professionally-licensed counseling, and referrals to external, licensed counselors. We can also provide you with appropriate reading materials for self study. Just contact any church staff member for more assistance.

### How can I help?

We welcome committed volunteers and have a variety of opportunities that accommodate all schedules and utilize your talents to care for and reach out to students. Opportunities to serve include small group leaders, chaperones, event organizers, and many more. Please contact Cory Thomas or Jennifer Daniel at any time to find out how your time and talents can be used in this ministry.



## Dear Parents,

We're so thankful you've chosen to allow your student to attend Vertical, our preteen ministry designed specifically for 5-6<sup>th</sup> graders! We want them to have a great time worshiping God, making Christian friends, and growing in their faith. Included in this packet are answers to our most Frequently Asked Questions. If you have a suggestion or a question not covered, please feel free to communicate with us by phone or email listed below. You are a tremendous influence in the spiritual life of your student and we're praying for you!

In Christ,

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Middle School Pastor

**Jennifer Daniel**  
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# 5-6th Grade Parent Guide



### What should my student expect?

Vertical offers a modern worship experience with a live band and interactive Biblical teaching, followed by small group discussion for relevant application of the lesson each Sunday morning.



The service generally flows as follows: Sign in and hang-out time,

large group experience with Bible teaching and worship, small group time, then dismissal.

Vertical students are invited to participate in outside events throughout the year. We believe these events will enhance their spiritual life through building their relationships with other Christian students and adults. Past events have included group service projects, bowling, conventions, camps and mission trips.

### How should I handle drop off and pick up?

Your student may be dropped off as early as 10:30a.m. in the youth café. Parents are welcome to walk their student upstairs, but it is not required. The students begin interacting with their peers and small groups. Service ends at approximately 12:00, and it is recommended to have a common meeting place for your family. Some parents meet their student in the youth café or your family may meet in

another area of the church. If this is your student's first Vertical experience, then we encourage parents to accompany their student into the youth café, and meet in the same place for pick up.

### What will my student learn?

Our large group/small group curriculum presents a monthly virtue, which the students dig into and learn practical faith lessons for everyday life. The virtue is taught through Bible stories, engaging worship and practical application through small group discussion and activities. Our goal is to teach students to be spiritually vital, biblically grounded, relationally healthy, personally generous, socially responsible, and evangelistically bold in age-appropriate ways.



### Will my child have the opportunity to receive communion?

Yes. Typically, Vertical will offer regular and gluten-free communion on the same Sundays that communion is offered in adult worship. Please encourage your students to participate if they have made a profession of faith or abstain if they have not.

### My child wants to be baptized, what do I do?

Baptism is an important next step in a student's journey of faith. Initially, you'll want to visit the church website: [www.gracejohnsoncity.com](http://www.gracejohnsoncity.com) and click on the baptism link. Please read the church's position on baptism and then register your student's desire to be baptized. A church staff member will follow up with a baptismal interview. You are always welcome to discuss this directly with any church staff member. We offer several baptism services throughout the year in adult worship where your student will be baptized.

### How can I communicate with volunteers or church staff?

We encourage you to get to know our Vertical volunteers and student ministry staff. Small group leaders are available on Sunday mornings before or after service or you may contact a staff member at any time by calling (423) 928-5601. We are happy to connect you with your student's leader and/or speak to you about your student.

### Where does Vertical fit?

Vertical is a division of student ministry, but is a transitional experience. 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders often feel "too old"

