

Holy Trinity Religious Education Program

Raleigh, North Carolina

Betsy G. Higgins

*("When you're through changing, you're through")*

Objectives:

Keep the Sunday school learning experience fresh, vibrant, relevant. Create a "highway to spiritual maturity".

- Review and enhance the Sunday school curriculum to ensure it is relevant, incorporates new methodologies, and is helping our youth develop an "Orthodox mindset".
- Incorporate a series of "certification programs" for students at the elementary, junior, and senior level based on the achievement of designated milestones that reflect the church's mission for the religious education of its youth.
- Restructure the classes to reflect targeted teacher-student ratios and effective allocation of limited volunteer teacher and administrative resources. Classes should consist of mid-size groups; this size is compatible with a "structured" curriculum, yet allows for a degree of informality and interaction. Each student must complete a registration form and pay a \$15 fee.
- Improve/Upgrade the educational facility and classroom furnishings/resource materials.
- Convince the teachers that the Director is there to help teachers become better equipped to serve the educational ministry. Inspire teachers by providing continuing education, training, and material resources. Recruit strong and talented individuals as teaching staff. Establish professional standards of performance; obtain waivers; establish dress codes for faculty (and students).
- Establish a parent teacher organization (PTO) as a resource to students and teachers and to foster parent involvement in their child's religious education.
- Assign oversight of the Sunday School Program to the Director of the Weekday School Program. The Weekday School Director is an employee of Holy Trinity and has the skills and resources to provide the level of professional oversight needed to effectively administer the SS program and assemble and lead a team of volunteers.
- Be patient and don't steamroll the changes into place. Appeal for cooperation and team play among Sunday school staff.

The Church's Religious Education Goals:

Systematically minister to and inspire our youth to assimilate Orthodox thought and theology and participate in the liturgical, sacramental, and communal life of the Orthodox Church.

Curriculum Development: Director

The Sunday school needs teachers who are willing and equipped to do more than simply show up on a Sunday and teach a class. Determine what teachers need to meet the church's religious education goals; provide continuing education and resources to assist teachers with curriculum development, i.e. articles, audio-visual, books, websites, personal research, lesson plans, guest speakers, retreats/seminars; provide ongoing training in time management, lesson planning, basics of classroom discipline, etc.