

# Review

## KPC Statement on the Christian Education of Our Children (Proposed, 10-2-01; Revised 11-12-01)

Whereas, we desire to be a church submitted to the lordship of Jesus in every area of life,

Whereas, we are committed to building families according to God's wonderful design for family life,

Whereas, the Bible and the *Evangelical Presbyterian Church Book of Order* state clearly the importance of the Christian education of our children and call the church to support parents in their primary role in that endeavor,

Whereas, we wish to foster these aims among our congregation, community, state, and nation,

We, the Session of Kempsville Presbyterian Church, adopt the following statement.

We acknowledge the need for confessing our faith with regard to the education of our children in order to guide our congregation to faithfulness and bring about dignity, encouragement, and support for parents and Christian educators in the context of our increasingly secular society.

We understand the purpose of education to be the bringing up of godly offspring who will glorify God through faithfulness to the stewardship and redemption mandates (Gen. 1:28; Mt. 28:18-20). The goal of education is to bring up our children in the training and instruction of the Lord (Eph. 6:4) so that they will know and keep God's commandments (Deut. 6:6-7). Education begins with the Bible and then applies the authority of Scripture to all of life (2 Tim. 3:16). Christian education encompasses all aspects of life, including academic and vocational as well as spiritual and moral education. In the end, it is our hope that the overall educational experience of our children—through home, church, and school—is effective to make them faithful disciples of Jesus Christ in every walk of life.

In order to provide a distinctively Christian education for our children, there must be a godly partnership of church, home, and school. We affirm the role of parents as the most substantial educational influence in the life of their children, and we, as the church, desire to partner with and support parents in their unique role. Scripture teaches us that parents have the right, duty, and final authority to provide their children with a distinctively Christian education (Deut. 4:9; Prov. 1:8; Prov. 6:20; Eph. 6:4; Deut. 32:7; Gen. 18:19; Prov. 3:1; Ps. 78:3). Parents fulfill this by establishing an educational lifestyle that includes such things as prayer, Bible reading, conversations, and table talk in the home; it also includes formal learning, whether in the home or outside. The Church should support parents in their role as educators by helping them to become wise and devoted Christians, giving them confidence in their role as educators, teaching them how to educate their children, and directing them toward resources that will help them provide their children a good education. Both the church and schools outside the home can have a supplementary role in our

children's education, but they should not undermine the role of the parents. Parents must evaluate their capabilities in terms of their own spiritual and intellectual maturity and material and other resources as to what means of education will best suit their family at any given time, always reaching for the ideals of Christian education. They should be conscientious to bring educational influences into the lives of their children that will truly lead them to Christian faithfulness. They should guard against secularizing or otherwise corrupting educational influences ["Everyone who is fully trained will be like his teacher" (Lk. 6:40). "He who walks with the wise grows wise, but a companion of fools suffers harm" (Prov. 13:20). "Do not be misled: 'Bad company corrupts good character'" (1 Cor. 15:33)].

We recognize the important role of all Christian educators and pray God's blessings for schoolteachers and school staff. In particular, we commend the positive influence Christian educators are able to make in both private and public educational institutions and in Christian home schools.

We commit ourselves as a church to inculcate faithfulness in the congregation in its pursuit of the Christian education of our children; foster responsibility in parents to assume their educational role; support parents with encouragement and resources; facilitate partnership between church, home, and school; encourage all Christian educators; advance Christian education in our community and nation; and direct the ministry of the church toward these ends.

Specifically, Kempsville Presbyterian Church seeks to support parents through the following such means:

- KPC Life University and Family Life education for adults
- Sunday School for children and youth
- Periodic distribution of materials for worship and learning in the home
- Family-based children's and youth ministries fostering partnership of church and home
- KPC Resource Center with helpful educational materials
- Scholarship Fund for Christian Education
- Family friendly ministry programming
- Other ministries providing support and encouragement to Christian educators in private, public, and home schools

## Scripture references.

De. 6: 4-7. Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 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 and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up.

Ps. 78: 1-7. O my people, hear my teaching: listen to the words of my mouth. I will open my mouth in parables, I will utter things hidden from of old- things we have heard and known, **things our fathers have told us. We will not hide them from our children;** we will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done. He decreed statutes for Jacob and established the law in Israel, which he commanded our forefathers **to teach their children, so the next generation would know them, even the children yet to be born, and they in turn would tell their children.** Then they would put their trust in God and would not forget his deeds but would keep his commands.

Ep. 6:4. Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, **bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.**

II Ti. 3:14-17. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, **and how from infancy you have known the holy Scriptures,** which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God- breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

## The EPC Book of Order.

The Form for Baptism addresses five questions to the parent(s), then addresses the congregation as follows:

“This sacrament also lays solemn obligations upon you, the people of God.

1. Do you, the members of this congregation, acting for yourselves and in behalf of the whole Body of Christ, assume responsibility with these parents for the spiritual nurture of this child?
2. Do you commit yourself to set a godly example before this child, to provide, as far as you are able, all that is necessary to the end that this child may one day confess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord?”