

The Role of the Doorperson in a Godly Play/Faith & Play Story Session

- Is at the door "**ready**" before the children and parents arrive.
- **Greets** the children and parents; sets tone of welcome as the children enter.
- Doorperson **sends children to the circle** (where the storyteller is ready) only when they are ready, giving the children all the time they need to be ready. (It's OK to get back in line and work on getting ready!)
- **Supports** with a positive attitude the children who are not ready to join the circle. Sits outside the circle with the children who are not ready for the circle.
- **Greets and incorporates latecomers** into the community without disruption. Also supports any child who must leave the circle (bathroom, etc.) during the story.
- **Listens** to the story from their place by the door, modeling that the focus is on the story. (The story is for everyone in the room, even if they are not ready to be in the circle.)
- Doorperson enters the wondering from the door **silently**. (Does not join the verbal wondering with the children.)
- Supports the children as they gather materials for their work. Doorperson **empowers the children** to do for themselves what they can do. Assists the children only when there is a genuine need.
- Does not intrude on the community of children while they work. Doorperson sits in silence **observing**, and is careful not to judge the child's work; gives **neutral feedback** when a child asks for recognition of their work.
- Stays down at the **eye level of the children** whenever possible (sitting on a low chair or stool helps).
- Avoids casual eye contact and talk with the storyteller during the story session.

In a Nutshell: The Godly Play Philosophy

***Also applies to Faith & Play**

About children

- Even young children today face and wrestle with complex existential issues.
- Young children already have a spiritual life of depth that adults may not understand or honor.
- Young children can discover and use the language of religious narrative and symbol that will allow them to express themselves spiritually and “make meaning.”

About children’s work

- Children’s play is their work.
- Children are encouraged to choose their own work during each story session.
- Children like to work when it is work they have chosen for themselves.
- Adult guides do not interfere with the children’s work unless the child asks for help.
- When a child seems unable to ask for assistance, it should be offered by the adult.
- Part of the work of the community of children is the care of the room and how they treat one another.
- Children like to feel self-sufficient: it is good to allow them the opportunity to clean up their own spills and put away their own work.

About adult guides and children

- Storytellers and door persons are guides. They do not need to have all the answers.
- Children have much to teach adults who will take the time to listen.
- Children are encouraged to do the work of discovering answers.
- When a teacher takes time to listen and observe a child, the teacher can find more effective ways to lead the child into new discoveries.
- Children are treated seriously and with deep respect; they are subjects, not objects.

About the Godly Play/Faith & Play environment

- The room is a place for children
 - to be themselves.
 - to learn how Friends live in community.
 - to come closer to the mystery of God’s presence.
- Respect for the space and for one another is maintained in the room to help the children feel safe.

About enabling a community of children to develop

- In this work, children are encouraged to form their own community and take care of one another.
- A Godly Play/Faith & Play environment is not “over-adulted.” This allows children to form a community and empowers them to be responsible for their space. It also keeps the storyteller and door person focused on the children and their work.