

DRAFT JOB DESCRIPTION – The Riverside Church (May 2025)

JOB TITLE: Director of Education and Formation (Children and Families)

REPORTS TO: Minister of Intergenerational Christian Education & Formation

DEPARTMENT: Education

SCHEDULED WORK WEEK: 35 hours per week

Interested candidates may contact The Rev. Dr. Leah Fowler, lfowler@trcnyc.org

JOB SUMMARY:

Serving as an integral part of the Education and Formation Team, the Director provides pastoral leadership, management, intergenerational worship, and program planning for the entire Riverside Church community including children, youth, families and adults of all ages *with a primary focus on children and families*. This individual brings a diverse set of skills to a multi-faceted range of responsibilities that cross educational, developmental, liturgical, generational, ecumenical, artistic, and demographic boundaries. This person embodies the best practices of education and worship to facilitate spaces and experiences that invite children and families to engage the Riverside Church and our faith to their fullest potential.

The Director collaborates with the Education and Formation Team to create a long-term vision for children and families at The Riverside Church and their integration into the full life of the worshipping community. This person also inspires a team of lay leaders, childcare workers, adult volunteers, and Education Commission members to partner in this vision and enact it on a large scale. Finally, the Director advocates, along with the Education and Formation Team, for the further inclusion of children and families and their needs in worship, bringing the ministry into the 21st century of progressive educational thought and practice.

Essential Job Responsibilities

- Provide curriculum and materials that enrich the faith formation of preschoolers and school-aged children.
- Help create worship experiences founded in best practices of play, exploration, and discovery.
- Co-create, with the Minister for Intergenerational Christian Education and Formation and the Director of Youth and College/Early Career Adults, faith formation experiences in addition to church school and Sunday morning worship that serve to help children connect to the Bible, the way of Jesus, other Christians, other forms of spirituality, and other faith traditions.
- Provide opportunities for integrating children and adults in healthy, mutually beneficial intergenerational contexts, such as Family Worship, Children's Sabbath, and the Family Christmas Eve service.
- Explore new and fresh ways to make children and families feel more comfortable in corporate worship experiences.

Family Engagement

- Work with the Minister of Intergenerational Christian Education & Formation to create a robust support system for parents and guardians.
- Design monthly gatherings to promote family interconnectedness and relationship building.
- Explore new and fresh ways to engage families during the summer months.
- Create and distribute digital resources for families through Facebook, YouTube, and the weekly newsletter.

Community Engagement

- Develop and sustain existing partnerships with community organizations, such as the Boys and Girls Club and the Children's Defense Fund.
- Develop and sustain programming that engages the children in our New York City neighborhood, such as the Harvest Festival.
- Explore possibilities for summer engagement of area children with Riverside children.

Collaboration

- Partner with the Minister of Worship to create worship experiences in the nave that enrich the faith formation of children and families.
- Utilize gifts of writing, music, and storytelling to communicate the gospel in intergenerational ways.
- Partner with the Minister of Social Justice to educate children and families on the importance of justice work.
- Create pathways toward activism and service that are appropriate for children and families.
- Partner with the Minister of Parish Care to facilitate counseling and care for children and families.
- Partner with the ministry to older adults to create connections between age groups.
- Partner with the Director of Youth and College/Early Career Adults on children and youth worship planning and implementation.

Leadership and Management

- Recruit a strong team of educational leaders for church school and other Riverside programming for children and families.
- Provide leadership, development, and direction for church school leaders and other adults who volunteer with programming.
- Provide leadership and management for summer staff

- Provide leadership and management for childcare staff hired to serve in the nursery and preschool areas.
- Evaluate lay and employed staff.
- Create a space where our youngest congregants feel safe and welcomed.
- Assume other tasks as assigned by the Minister of Intergenerational Christian Education & Formation.

EDUCATION AND EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENTS:

1. M.Div. degree (or comparable graduate education) and minimum five (5) years of experience in this area.
2. Educational or teaching experience with children of varying ages, abilities, demographics, and backgrounds.
3. Theological understanding consistent with the core values of the Riverside Church.
4. Teaching or pastoral experience in a congregation with a multi-cultural membership and diverse staff.
5. Excellent communication skills, both written and verbal.
6. Demonstrated ability to interact in a collaborative manner with other ministries and staff.
7. Superb skill in administration, budgeting, and staff supervision.

This position can be filled by ordained clergy or by a layperson with theological background.

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