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A Place to Call Home: Belonging in the Body of Christ in Home and School

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A Place to Call Home: Belonging in the Body of Christ in Home and School

Abstract

"Letters and numbers are important, but a seat at the table to commune and contribute is vital."

Posting about guiding children to their full potential as servants of God from *CACE -The Center for the Advancement of Christian Education*.

A Place to Call Home

Keywords

Center for the Advancement of Christian Education, CACE, confidence, community and school

Disciplines

Christianity | Education

A Place to Call Home: Belonging in the Body of Christ in Home and School

Gail Ashmore

October 4, 2022

Zion's Heart

Zion is a tender-hearted five-year-old who is empathetic and has a heart that beats with joy. Since he was born, my husband and I have prayed that he would have a voice for the Kingdom, love for the outcast, and joy in all circumstances. He has grown in his passion for his friends, his curiosity about the way things work, and his proud position as a brother. His happy place is coloring or playing football with his dad. He is known for his frequent belly laughs and silly dance moves. His first five years have consisted of discovery, growth, and celebration.

With all of these things, there have also been challenges. While Zion's sensitivity is his strength, it can also make him appear as if he lacks confidence or a voice. Oftentimes, his desire to be liked or accepted motivates his actions and decisions. He is most comfortable taking a backseat to his peers and struggles a bit to find his place in social situations. At a young age, he is already navigating the pressures to belong, feel accepted, and have a home within a community.

At Home with Jesus

As parents, my husband and I desire for Zion to be at home in his identity in Christ. It is our intention to create an environment in our family for him to belong to a body of people that encourages him, provides spaces of conversation, and celebrates who he is as an image-bearer of God. If we do not model a place to belong with Jesus, the world will certainly do so in a way that does not reflect our beliefs.

Because Zion is typically more motivated by the opinions of others, we have realized how important it is to model a place to belong with Jesus. While the invitation of the enemy is to find fullness as an individual, we desire to point him to God's invitation to fullness: community. The world will tell Zion to create himself and build his own kingdom in order to belong; however, we desire for him to know that he already belongs in the Kingdom of God. Having confidence in himself will not build a firm foundation, but having confidence in Christ and a seat at the table with others will provide a lasting foundation for him. As he transitions to TK, we continually pray that he is pointed to Christ, rather than who he should be.

At School with Jesus

As Zion enters TK at Sioux Center Christian School, he is one of the youngest in the class. He already adores his classmates and looks forward to showing them his new football shirt or craft. His teacher has been incredibly involved, caring, and intentional. The hospitality of the classroom is tangible. She has partnered with us in the desire to help him become more comfortable, which has taken time.

This feeling of being comfortable can be summed up in three prayers: that he would find his voice among others, discover the confidence to contribute his gifts to the world, and to know how deeply loved he is. My deep hope for his time at TK is for God to provide the body of people to help him grow in these areas. Instead of being shown who he can be as an individual, my husband and I desire for Zion to grow as a part of a community, that TK would be a safe place to explore that communal living. The goal is not to get Zion to a different place but to provide an environment to flourish as he is. TK at Sioux Center Christian School is certainly soil for him to grow in this way. Letters and numbers are important, but a seat at the table to commune and contribute is vital. Through the hospitality of his teacher, the nourishment of Christ, and the inclusive environment of his peers, it is already evident that Zion is growing in his confidence.