

Gertrude Willis Lifespan Religious Education Award

The 2020 Gertrude Willis Lifespan Religious Education Award is presented to Jenny Nelson in recognition of her outstanding service in the Children's Ministry Program. Jenny has been a stalwart member of the Youth Staff team since she was in the 9th grade. As girl scout she did her Silver Award project here at the church with her troop. She served as an Insch Leader on the Worship Associate team taking special leadership in multigenerational services and making sure that our services are welcoming to our youngest members.

Her dedication and service to the children of the church has only grown in adulthood. This year in particular, Jenny has been an outstanding leader in the Children's Ministry at a time of profound change. Jenny is leader of our Rainbow Circle Preschool Program. This year Rainbow Circle moved into a new beautiful space and Jenny crafted new routines that created a loving atmosphere for children. She has provided exemplary leadership to the high school youth who serve with her in Rainbow Room showing them how to lead children in creative, loving, and nurturing ways. Attendance in the Rainbow Circle has grown under her leadership. Rainbow kids have been known to cry when they have to miss church and Miss Jenny. Rainbow Kids have been known to wake up on Sundays with a smile on their faces, knowing that they would get to see Miss Jenny.

Since we moved to online church, Jenny has created a church experience for children that is remarkable. Many churches have reported that preschoolers don't come to online church. Not at The Community Church! Rainbow Circle continues to draw children even in these difficult times.

Jenny also led Family Worship regularly this summer. She was Switchboard Jenny (the tech host) for our online Hogwarts Camp this summer, which was no small task. And last but not least, Jenny is the co-leader of our Campus Ministry Fellowship. Jenny brings wisdom, love, and talent to everything she does.