

Worship and Learning

Worship is one of the basic ways people learn what it means to be a Christian. Children learn worship by worshipping with the congregation Sunday after Sunday.

- Children learn they belong to Christ and are welcome in His Church.
- They learn to know the Lord's Prayer and other parts of the liturgy from memory.
- They build a fund of memorable, shared experiences in Christian community upon which they can draw when they are older.
- They are enriched by the beauty of the music and art as expressions of praise to God.
- They hear the Bible stories read and interpreted as their faith is strengthened.
- They witness the drama of God's action and forgiveness in Baptism and Communion.

Let the little children come to me ...

Matthew 19:14

ABC's for Parents and Friends of Children

Arrive in time to find a good place to sit that provides younger children with a good view of the front of the Sanctuary.

Be prepared, pick up a children's bulletin and a "church bag" before going in to worship.

Children like to be ready. Show them how to follow along in the worship service by helping them find the next song in the hymnal and Bible readings.

Discuss what happened in church when you get home.

Encourage children to come forward for children's message.

Free yourself from worry about children making some noise during worship.

Give thanks to God for the children in our church.

Hold family devotions throughout the year.

Involve children's talents in worship.

Jesus is the center of worship.

Kneel at the Lord's altar as a family.

Lead children's worship during the sermon time.

Make a joyful noise and sing together as a family.

Nurture and encourage young families.

Offer another family to sit with you in worship.

Pray for young families and their children.

Questions - answer them simply & quietly.

Remember to come to Sunday School.

Share a smile with those around you in worship.

Teach children by your example.

Understand that children are learning about church. Speak encouraging words to parents.

Volunteer to help: nursery, sit with a child, teach Sunday School, children's worship.

Watch for ways children are positively engaged in worship and offer praise for good behavior.

Xtra kindness by word and deed encourages parents.

You can make a difference in the life of a child.

Zeal! Share in a child's zeal in worship on Sundays!



Welcoming Children To Their Place In Church



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We Welcome Children to worship by

- Encouraging families to bring their children of all ages to worship services. Children are an important and welcomed part of our worshipping community.
- Encouraging parents to bring their infants, toddlers, older children to the altar to receive communion.
- Encouraging older children to participate in worship as acolytes, musicians, and scripture readers.
- Providing children's bulletins based on the Sunday scripture readings.
- Modeling appropriate church behavior for children by teaching them to stand, sit, or kneel, sing, and pray with the congregation.
- Accepting children as children, not adults, knowing that the younger the child, the greater the need to move around.

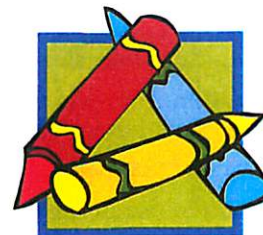
The Preschool Child

It is true that at times children may distract those around them and perhaps distress parents by their behavior. But as members of the family of God, children are needed by all of us as we worship and live as God's people. The preschool child comes to worship with

- A short attention span
- Seemingly endless energy
- A growing curiosity about everything

While these ingredients can test the patience of adults, things parents and friends of children can do to make the preschooler's experience—and everyone's—more relaxed and enjoyable include:

- Sit near the front where kids can have a clear view of all that is happening
- Prepare the child for the different parts of the worship service explaining special events ahead of time.
- Encourage children to pick up a children's bulletin and a "worship bag".
- Encourage the preschooler to "play church" at home with dolls and stuffed animals. Also encourage the child to practice whispering.



The Primary Child

The school-age brings some new abilities to worship:

- A greater capacity for attentive listening
- An increasing ability to read
- The ability to organize and memorize information

Parents and friends of children can help the primary child toward greater participation in worship as these capacities develop when they

- Help the child memorize the Lord's Prayer
- Review the bulletin with the child to identify new or difficult words
- Encourage the child to find, follow along, and sing the hymns in the hymnal and read the liturgy printed in the bulletin. Encourage active participation for standing and sitting during the service.
- Talk about the scripture readings and the sermon and ask what the child remembers best about them.
- Encourage the child to contribute to the offering.
- Use the children's bulletin during the sermon time.