

Children and Worship

Children are welcome and encouraged to be in worship at Providence Presbyterian Church.

Bringing children into the sanctuary is something like letting them eat at the dinner table: even though their manners can be far from elegant, it's done in the hope that they are a valued and important part of the family.

Children giggle, poke, and swing their legs, simply because they are children. But they also sing, pray and give with us.

We as adults should accept—even value—a child's restlessness in worship, trusting that they are also learning:

- ◆ that it's important to come to this place each Sunday
- ◆ that they belong to this special company of people
- ◆ that the sights and sounds and feels of the sanctuary are good, though not always understood
- ◆ that something is expected of them in this place, and they may respond in song, in prayer, and in offering

Consider the age of the child and what the child is about:



ABC's For Parents
& Other Adults

Arrive in time to find a good place to sit. Make sure children's physical needs are met before worship begins.

Bring something for little ones to hold or look at—children's worship bulletins are available at the entrance to the sanctuary.

Contribute visibly in worship by singing, praying, making an offering, responding. You are a role model in all that you do.

Direct children to locate the hymns & scripture lessons before worship begins.

Exhibit joy and enthusiasm in your own worship. The children will notice

Find ways to appreciate families and children with whom you worship.

Ages 3-4: This child spends much time climbing off and on the pew; sticks fingers in the communion cup holders; may wander down the aisle if seated at the end of the pew; wants his/her own bulletin, keeps it in constant motion, and clings to it tenaciously if a parent tries to take it away; writes first name on friendship pad in BIG letters; fits toes nicely into hymnbook rack.

But what else is happening at the same time? This child can be assisted with finding the page numbers of the hymns and have them ready for singing; may sing along with everyone else (maybe using his/her own words); can join in singing the Doxology and praying the Lord's Prayer. This child wants to hold the offering plate as it goes by, and wants to add to its contents, perhaps sensing that worship involves giving. **(Childcare is offered at both services for 3's & 4's)**

Ages 5-6: These children generally sit in place unless there is an acceptable reason for moving, the best one being a dropped bulletin or pencil. As it flutters to the floor, it lands well under the pew ahead, followed by a small body which wiggles around and returns grinning triumphantly. This child writes her/his whole name, address, and phone number on the friendship pad, and checks every box. While feet are closer to the floor at this age, the hymnbook rack is still a nice footrest.

Stop to consider, though—this child can do some new things. He/she knows when to sit and when to stand; can bow their head during prayers; sings some of the words to familiar hymns, after locating them in the hymnbook (which can now be

held by the child); is excited to discover readable words in the bulletin; and is beginning to apply reading skills to matters of faith. **(Children's church is offered following the "moment for children" for kindergarten and first graders)**

Ages 7 & up: The older child can handle the bulletin with more agility—in fact, has learned to fold it into an airplane; has also learned not to sail the plane over the heads of the congregation, but enjoys threatening to do so; swings feet back and forth, creating a discernible rocking sensation, often hitting legs or bumping the pew ahead; pretends to take money out of the offering place instead of putting it in.

But the 7 year-old can read the bulletin, find the scripture lesson, and follow along as the scripture is read. This child also knows that we read a hymnbook differently from other books, and follows the hymns pretty well with a helping finger. **(A worship enrichment class is offered for 2nd and 3rd graders at various times during the school year)**

SO! Bringing your child to worship may be a real exercise in aggravation. So are many other facets of good parenting which we manage to get through. We must remember that children are part of Christ's church, and they must be among the people who worship God. They may not participate just the way adults do, but they are growing in understanding and learning to take their places in the church family. Young children may be wriggly and noisy, but it is their birthright as Christians to worship. Our satisfaction comes in later years when we see them stand in our midst with a faith of their own.

Children and Childcare

Childcare

OUR Nursery Ministry offers your children a caring introduction to God's community. Childcare is offered each Sunday from 8:45 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. for children four and under. Our childcare is run by both paid staff and volunteer helpers. If your child or grandchild benefits from our childcare ministry, we encourage you to participate as a volunteer throughout the year.

On Sunday mornings, the nursery is divided into the Crib Room and the Toddler/Two Room. Each nursery room is supplied with age appropriate toys and books. Parents will need to sign in and receive a beeper when they bring their children and are asked to properly label all diaper bags, cups and lids, bottles, etc.

We want children from an early age to hear and experience God's love for them through our nursery ministry. Beginning at age 3, children participate in Sunday School. We follow the school system age requirement, and we ask that your child be three (3) by September 1 before entering into Sunday School.

Other Nursery Times—Nursery staff is available for all Sunday morning worship services. Other occasions where childcare may be available include some of the Presbyterian Women's events, Bible studies and Wednesday night fellowship. If you have questions about specific events, please refer to the monthly newsletter, weekly Communiqué or call the church office.

Security—A safe nurturing environment is a primary concern for the church as well as for parents and families. We address our security concerns by having paid staff and parent helpers in childcare areas, by having a sign-in system and using a beeper system for the youngest children.

In addition, there is always a childcare representative present on the lower level of the Christian Life Center on Sunday mornings.

A NOTE TO PARENTS—*We accept the responsibility of caring for your child in the nursery—here's how you can help us.*

- ◆ Label everything that belongs to your child: diaper bags, bottles, clothing, jackets and coats, pacifiers.
- ◆ Sign in—even if your child is there every week. Keep the nursery check-in form current by including special instructions concerning your child, such as allergies.
- ◆ Let nursery workers know if your child is going through any new phases, such as biting, teething, even potty training. If potty training, bring a change of clothes for your child in a bag with his or her name on it. Accidents are common when kids are away from their daily routines.
- ◆ Leave special toys at home. Don't force caregivers to explain to other children why one toy cannot be shared.
- ◆ Follow the rules, especially when it comes to sick kids. When in doubt, please stay home. Your little one will be much more comfortable there, anyway.
- ◆ Be prompt about picking up kids after the service, meeting or class. Remember that most nursery workers are volunteers, so don't take advantage of their time. If you're one of the last parents to pick up your child this week, get there more quickly next week.
- ◆ Pray for the volunteers and paid staff who run the church nursery, whose ministry it is to nurture and provide quality care for your child(ren).

LOCATIONS

Age Group	9:00 Worship Service	10:00 Sunday School	11:05 Worship Service
Babies	CLC 14	CLC 14	CLC 14
Toddlers & 2's	CLC 16	CLC 16	CLC 16
3's & 4's	CLC 13	CLC 13	CLC 13

Children's Ministries

Celebrating, Learning and Serving Christ!

Sunday School

Children in preschool through 5th grade use the Reformed curriculum, *Walk with Me*.

Do we want children to know the stories of the Bible? Of course we do. But our curriculum *Walk With Me* doesn't stop there. We guide children to always ask, So what? What does God's Word mean for me now—today? And we motivate children to act on what they discover in God's stories. Sessions are designed to touch the hearts of both leaders and kids and to encourage them to live out their faith. Leaders are encouraged to model faith for the children in their groups—and also to learn from the faith children model for them.

Goals

- To nurture and encourage each child to know, love, and serve God.
- To nurture the faith of children and leaders within a caring community.
- To teach children the story of Scripture, from Genesis to Revelation.
- To help children understand biblical/Reformed truths.
- To challenge children and leaders to live their faith.
- To equip children to share their faith and serve others in the community.
- To partner with families in nurturing the faith of their children.
- To encourage children to make the church's teachings their own.
- To help children value the rich diversity of people in God's kingdom.
- To learn more, visit www.walkwithmeonline.org

Children's Church

Children's Church is offered at both the 9:00 and 11:05 worship services following the moment for children.

Beginning in September, we will offer Children's Church year round. It does not meet on 5th Sundays. Children's Church is a time for kids to spend worshipping God with children their own age. It is a fun time for all involved— children and adults!!!

Volunteers lead a short story time with activities or crafts for kids in Kindergarten and 1st grade. If you have a child who will be in K or 1st grade next year, please consider volunteering for one of the worship services. Your commitment is once every other month during either the 9:00 or 11:05 worship services. (Parents, please remember that there is no Children's Church on **5th Sundays**.) Please keep your children with you in church to help ensure their safety.

***TK, K and 1st graders
are welcome at Children's Church***

Christmas Program

Every year at Christmas, the children lead the congregation in a Christmas Program, helping us remember and celebrate the birth of Christ. The program is developed and led by Annie Beth Donahue, our children's music director. This year the program will be on Sunday, December 7, 2008. Look for practice information in late November. Every child is invited to participate!

Teachers	Age Group	Room#
Cindy Biggers, Beth Brodie Elizabeth Gill, Kim Sumrell	Three and Four Years Old	13
Beth Downing, Melanie Guercio Shelly Hardee, Ellen Morgan	TK/K & First Grade	7
Bentley Ball, Pat Bryan Michelle Cachine, Brian Irving	Second and Third Grades	212
Vicki Coger, Tamera Green, Jennifer Mace	Fourth & Fifth Grades	216

Children's Ministries

Celebrating, Learning and Serving Christ!

Acolytes

Children ages 6-12 may serve as acolytes and provide the lighting and extinguishing of the altar candles (symbolizing bringing the Lord's light into the church and carrying it back out again). This helps those of us seated to prepare our hearts for worship and work in the Lord.

Worship Enrichment

Worship Enrichment is a newly created ministry for kids in 2nd and 3rd grades. This will be offered following the moment for children during the 9:00 service ONLY in the fall. With Panther games in the fall, we thought it would be better to offer this time at the 9:00 rather than the 11:05.

This age group will spend approximately 13 weeks learning about worship. We will walk through all of the movements in worship from the Call to Worship through the Blessing and Charge. Special attention will be given to the sacraments of the Lord's Supper and Baptism.

Kids who go through this program will be recognized during a worship service in November/December where they are invited to take communion, some for the first time.

Once a child has gone through this program, he/she is able to sit through worship and be a part of the worshipping community of faith.

Junior Youth

Junior Youth ministry is offered for 4th and 5th graders on various Sunday afternoons during the school year. This is a time for kids to meet for fun and fellowship, preparing them to enter Youth Fellowship when they are 6th graders.

Vacation Bible School

Held in July, this concentrated week begins on Sunday afternoon with the whole church family joining together for dinner. The week is filled with Bible learning, dramatic skits, singable music, crafts, snacks and recreational games. We end on Sunday with a church wide celebration during the Sunday School hour.

The VBS theme for July 12-17, 2009 is Crocodile Dock. For more information, visit <http://www.group.com/vbs/crocodiledock/>.

CHILDREN, YOUTH and MUSIC

The children and youth music ministry provides a musical experience where all kids engage in fun activities, develop their individual spiritual life, and participate in the worship life of the church especially on Sunday mornings.

Music ministries for kids and youth include:

- ◆ Vacation Bible School
- ◆ Chimes
- ◆ Junior Handbells
- ◆ KaPOW
(Kids at Providence on Wednesday)
- ◆ Easter Services
- ◆ Spring Musical
- ◆ Music on the Lawn
- ◆ Youth Sundays
- ◆ PB&J (Preschool Babies and Jesus)
- ◆ Occasional Music on Sundays

Weekday Preschool

Our preschool offers a nurturing educational environment for toddlers through transitional kindergarten. The preschool is in high demand, as is evident by its long annual waiting list. Please contact Kim Ellison for information at 704-844-9206.