

Children's Worship

Our Children's Worship experience allows children to be with their families and congregation during a significant part of worship; they may enjoy, participate and learn with you. Just before the ushers come forward for offering, the children are dismissed for Children's Worship. Children ages 3* Yr. –K should be brought to their rooms by a parent. Children in 1st-2nd grade can meet their leaders by the bottom of the stairs and they will walk together to their classrooms. If this is your first visit, please go with your child so you know where to pick him/her up.

Classrooms for 3* yrs.—K are on the first floor behind the restrooms.

Classrooms for 1st-2nd grade are on the second floor above the kitchen.

* by September 15 of that school year

*children stay with this group throughout the year until the next fall.

Children's Worship time ministers to a child's need to hear an age-appropriate Bible message and to the parental and congregational need to focus on the pulpit Word.

ABC's for Parents and Friends of Children

Arrive in time to find a good place to sit.

Bring colored pencils or crayons and paper along with a favorite book or children's Bible.

These tools can be used for quiet coloring or reading during times when the worship activity is beyond their understanding.

Clue children in as to what will happen next in worship.

Children who can read will want to go over the words for the praise songs, confession and affirmation (printed copies available at *Guest Services*). They also like to look up the scripture and readings for the day. They like to be prepared.

Discuss worship at home.

This will give children time to ask questions and receive answers concerning worship. It will also help prepare them for any special events or services of worship (i.e., the Lord's Supper, Baptism, Youth Day, or special dedications).

Express your joy in having children in worship.

During the greeting be sure to welcome the children near you. Include them in your conversations before and after worship to let them know they belong.

Fulfill your responsibility to others.

If your child begins to disturb worshipers around you, inhibiting their ability to concentrate, go to the back of the worship area where you can hear the service. Chairs are provided for you.

Worshiping with Children



at the Bridge

This brochure is designed to aid parents and members of our congregation as we welcome children in worship.

Welcome to Worship

Children are very much a part of our worshipping community. Their presence here is based on the Biblical tradition and Reformed conviction that children are members of the covenant community. Our Children's Team has prepared this brochure to help you know what age-appropriate experiences are available during the worship service. These experiences have been designed with care to minister to the needs of all present: children, parents and congregation.

Worship is one of the basic ways people learn what it means to be Christian.

Children gain the following from being with the community of faith and being incorporated into worship as they grow:

- ◆ *They learn that they belong to Christ and are welcome to His church.*
- ◆ *They come to know, through repetition, the Lord's Prayer, and other frequently used responses.*
- ◆ *They build memories of shared experiences of Christian community.*
- ◆ *They are enriched by the beauty of music and art as creative expressions of human praise to God.*
- ◆ *They hear stories from the Bible read and interpreted, and begin to experience worship as one place where God may speak to them.*
- ◆ *They witness the drama of Baptism and the Lord's Supper--both visible signs of God's grace.*
- ◆ *They discover that they are valued as persons by God and by God's people.*

The Nursery Child

Infant—3 Year Olds

Child care is available during worship services for infants through 3 year olds. At 9:30 there is a room for infants thru 18 months, a room for 18 months thru 3 year olds, and a worship experience for children 3 year s old by September 15 of that school year (see Children's Worship section.) At 10:45 there is a room for infants thru 18 months, a room for toddlers 18 months thru 2 1/2 yrs. and Bible Discovery Classes for 2 1/2 and 3 year olds. These rooms are staffed by excellent coordinators and congregational volunteers.

The Preschool Child

3 Years—Kindergarten

The preschool child comes to worship with:

- ◆ *a rather limited attention span,*
- ◆ *seemingly endless energy, and*
- ◆ *a growing curiosity about everything*

While these ingredients can combine to test a parent's patience, there are several things parents can do to make this time more meaningful for your child, you and those around you:

- ◆ *Prepare the child for the various parts of the service of worship, explaining special events ahead of time and answering questions that need an answer "right now" in a quiet whisper.*
- ◆ *Allow the child to bring colored pencils or crayons along, or allow the child to check out a book from the Library before the service.*

The Primary Child

1st-4th Grades

The school-age child brings new abilities to worship:

- ◆ *a greater capacity for attentive listening,*
- ◆ *an increasing ability to read, and*
- ◆ *the ability to organize and memorize information*

Parents can help the primary child toward greater participation in worship as these capacities develop by:

- ◆ *picking up a copy of the praise and worship flyer at the Welcome Center and helping the child follow along with the songs, confession and affirmation as the words appear on the screen.*
- ◆ *inviting the child to follow the reading of the Scripture lesson in the pew Bible;*
- ◆ *encouraging the child to listen to the sermon for stories, answers to questions, or important thoughts; and*
- ◆ *talking about the sermon after church and asking the child what he/she remembered best about the sermon.*

Children's Music

Occasionally, children's musical groups are a part of the morning's music ministry. Sometimes the groups are from Sunday morning classes, sometimes the groups are from our Sunday evening activities. Your child is welcome to be a part of Rainbow Kids (4* yrs.-K) or Sonshine Kids (1st-5th grades) on Sunday evenings.

*must be 4 by Sept. 15 of that school year.

Acolytes

Fourth graders serve as candle lighters on a rotating basis.