

## Tips for Preparing Your Children for Worship

### 1. Model enthusiasm about worship.

Throughout the week, talk about the joy and privilege of worshipping God together as a family. Remember, children learn by watching you, and as you get ready for church each week, your children will pick up your attitudes about worship by how you act.

During worship, your children learn by watching you. As you sing to the Lord, they are watching! When you sit and listen intently or even take notes during the sermon, they are learning. As they sense your heart sincerely praying, they are learning to do the same!

### 2. Communicate expectations.

Explain to your children what to expect, such as singing worship songs, hearing Scripture, praying, greeting others, giving an offering, listening to a sermon, etc.

Share with your children what behavior and attitudes you expect during this time: to participate by standing and sitting with the congregation, to be a respectful listener and to focus on God while singing and praying.

### 3. Have children bring their Bibles.

Encourage your children to find the Scripture passage in their Bibles. For younger children, you will have to help them and perhaps point to the words as the Scripture is being read.

### 4. Encourage your children to worship through songs.

You may want to play songs ahead of time that are commonly sung in our worship services to help your children learn the words and tunes. However, even if the children don't know the song, explain that God is looking for a heart that is connecting with Him. Encourage your children that even if they can't read every word or get the tune perfectly, as they focus on giving praise to God while singing, God is pleased.

### 5. Prepare your children for prayer time.

Explain to your children that during prayer time it is best to close their eyes and picture talking to God. They should be listening to the person praying and agreeing with them or also thinking of other things that they can be telling God about silently. On the way to church, you may also discuss with your children some concerns or praises they can pray about that day.

### 6. Help your child participate in offering.

If your children are in the worship service when the offering is taken, it helps them feel more a part if they can put something in the offering. Discuss with your children at home the purpose for offerings and how we are to use our resources to give into God's Kingdom work.

**7. Take care of physical needs.**

Your children will be able to focus if they have used the bathroom before worship service and have a full stomach.

**8. Make use of the Children's Worship Bulletin.**

Each week, there is a special bulletin prepared for the children. During the sermon, the children may use this to help them listen better. In order to find the answers, they must listen to the sermon. These bulletins can be turned in to the Children's Welcome Desk to be put in our basket for a monthly drawing for a prize.

**9. Carry a special bag for worship.**

You might want to carry a bag with paper and pencils or crayons. Some children can listen and even focus better when drawing about what they are hearing. For older children, you could bring a journal and encourage them to write their thoughts about worship that day. Discourage using the Connect Card as scrap paper, as they have a special purpose.

**10. Discourage bringing books or electronic games.**

Unless you have a preschool child in worship, there is no need for books. If you allow your children to read or play games during worship, you are teaching them that it is ok to come to worship and not join in. They will perhaps miss an opportunity to experience God for themselves in that time.

**11. Prepare for baptism and communion time.**

Explain to your children the purposes for baptism and communion. This will help your children have greater joy for those being baptized and know to respect the Lord's Supper during communion time. If you need resources for teaching about these aspects of worship, please ask the Children's Ministry staff.

**12. Use transitional times.**

Take times to whisper in your children's ears something that shows your participation. You might want to tell them how that song draws you close to God or how the Scripture is speaking to you. This will help keep them engaged and encourage them to look for moments to share with you.

**13. Discuss the worship time on the way home.**

As you leave church and are driving home, it might be a great time to talk about what your children experienced that day. Ask them what they learned or how they felt God moved in the worship time. You may want to use *Bringing It Home Conversation Starters* that will be provided by our staff.