

## Suggestions for the Congregation

- ★ Remember that at the baptism or dedication of children, we in the congregation make a commitment to help and encourage them to become a disciple of Christ.
- ★ Introduce yourself to the child who is sitting by you. Make them feel welcome and important. Get to know children by name. Ask them how their week has been!
- ★ During the greeting time, greet the children as well as their parents.
- ★ Understand when parents need to take younger children to childcare or the rest room and then return to Worship.
- ★ Have patience with the learning process. We are all the children of God.
- ★ If you observe a family "on overload," help them out and invite one of their children to sit with you, if the child knows you. Invite a child with whom you are acquainted to sit with you during Worship on occasion, even when the child's parents are present.
- ★ During the service, call attention to what is going on: "Now we are praying... going to sing... going to welcome a new baby into God's family... about to share in the family meal..."
- ★ Compliment children who have listened attentively during the service. A smile of encouragement accomplishes more than all the "shushing" in the world.
- ★ If you experience difficulty in hearing or focusing, gently let the child know by saying something like "I am unable to hear. Would you be so kind as to be more quiet?"

## Children are Welcome Here!

Children are important, and we have a commitment to help them learn to worship. Perhaps they will not always understand what is going on or being said, but they can understand that this is a place where they are loved and accepted.

Children's worship bulletins are available at the entrance to the sanctuary for morning attendees. These bulletins follow the same lectionary readings around which adult worship is planned, and provide activities related to the scripture passages to help engage children's interest.

Families who stay for two worship hours in the morning, may wish to worship as a family one service, and bring their children to Sunday school or a classroom worship setting for the other.

Nursery care for children born in 2009-2011 is available at both services in the children's wing. During the 9 AM service, we offer Sunday schools for Toddlers (born 2007,8) JK & K (born 2006,7) and Kool Kids (Gr. 1-4). During the 11 AM service we offer a class for Gr. 5/6 and age appropriate worship for young children (born 2005-8) and for school aged children (Gr. 1-4).

While the first Sunday of each month children begin the service in the sanctuary for a children's time, children are also welcome to stay in the sanctuary with their parents to worship there.

We hope the suggestions contained in this brochure will increase your enthusiasm and excitement about being in church! We're glad you're here!

### Resources Used in Making this Brochure

*A Child Shall Lead: Children In Worship*, John D. Witvliet

*God's Children: Welcoming Children to Worship*, Trinity Lutheran Church, New Hamburg, ON

*Worshiping with Children Brochure*, First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley, CA

*Parenting in the Pews*, Robbie Castleman

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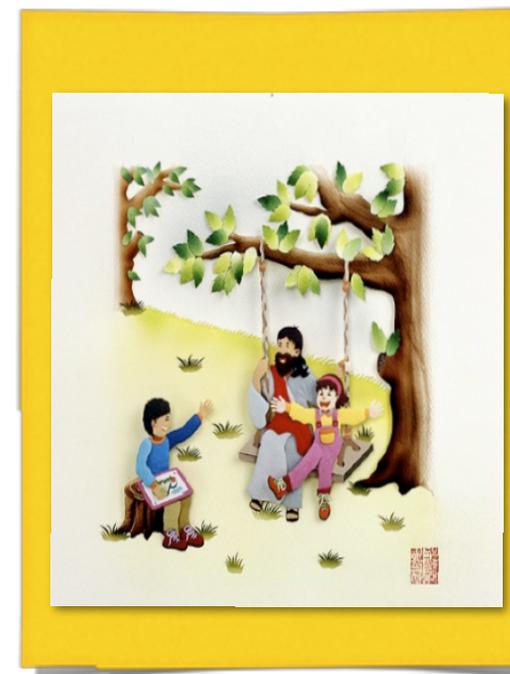
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# Worshiping with Children

A Guide for Kortright Presbyterian Church  
Parents and Congregation



*Let the little children come to me,  
and do not hinder them,  
for the kingdom of heaven belongs  
to such as these.*

*Matthew 19:14*



## Welcome to Worship at Kortright Presbyterian Church!

*Adults and children must learn how to worship. Children learn how to worship from the examples of those around them. They cannot learn if they are not present.*

*To effectively demonstrate the Christian faith, we need to be good models for the children. Children may not remember what was said, but they will remember the examples of those around them.*

*It takes extra time and effort to involve children in the life of our church family and in worship, but the end results are well worth the sacrifices made.*

*Parents can choose to: 1) bring their children with them into the sanctuary, or 2) At the 11:00 hour to have their children (up through Grade 4) worship with children of similar ages.*

*Our hope and prayer is that we, as a church family, will see our children and grandchildren continuing to serve God. It is important to grant grace to the little ones who wiggle and squirm, and encouragement to the parents who have made this important decision to model their faith to their children.*

*This brochure offers suggestions to help make worship a meaningful experience for everyone. Our heartfelt desire is to glorify to God through our worship, and in this spirit, **we welcome you to Worship!***

### *Suggestions for Parents*

- ★ Sunday morning starts on Saturday night. Lay out clothes, ready the offering envelopes, and gather together everything you'll need.
- ★ Make Sunday morning different! Set the alarm early enough to allow a relaxed pace. Have a simple, special Sunday breakfast.
- ★ Make some ground rules ahead of time for appropriate behavior in church.
- ★ Allow time to get settled. Take children to the bathroom before the service begins. Teach your child to say prayers as a way of preparing themselves.
- ★ Pick up a children's worship bulletin as you enter the sanctuary.
- ★ As a rule, sit as a family toward the front of the sanctuary. Children who can see will feel more a part of the service.
- ★ Worship WITH rather than BESIDE children. Stand children on the chair so that their ears, eyes, and mouths are near those of other worshipers as they sing, pray, and read together. Hum or la-la along with those who cannot yet read the words. Sing repeated phrases and choruses within worship songs.
- ★ During songs children may want to move into the aisles to move to the music using child-sized flags (for those 5 yrs. & up) or wrist ribbons.
- ★ Help young readers use Bibles; encourage them to bring their own. Point out words for young readers and even non-readers who can pick out repetitive words.
- ★ Whisper instructions, questions and comments "Now is the time we tell God about stuff we are sorry about." "Listen to this story. It is a good one!" "How do you think Jesus felt when that happened?"

- ★ Allow children to participate in the offering by sharing their allowance or other money they might have earned. Your child should have his/her offering before arriving at church. Children's envelopes are available from the church office, and contributions made through those are attributed to parents for tax purposes.
- ★ Children are invited to participate in communion at the decision of their parents. Since Communion is a sacrament, we encourage children to understand the importance and meaning of Communion before participating.
- ★ Don't be reluctant to hug. There is much to be treasured and little to be embarrassed about when a twelve-year-old lays her head on her parent's shoulder in church.
- ★ Be firm and consistent. Apply the same discipline for worship disruption that is applied in other matters.
- ★ Be sensitive to when a child's restlessness crosses the line and becomes a distraction to others. Go outside for a breath of fresh air when your child needs a break. Or enjoy the art cart available in the library at any time during the service with your guidance and supervision. Then rejoin the congregation when you are ready. Children are encouraged to participate with their parents in the entire Worship Service.
- ★ On the way home, hear what people did, enjoyed, and wondered about.

