CHILDREN IN WORSHIP

Worship is at the heart of our faith and Christian life, and children are welcomed and encouraged to be in worship at West Side. Worship is God-centered praise and adoration. As we worship, we are transformed and grow as followers of Jesus. Children need to be in worship just as much as adults do.

Bringing children into our sanctuary is something like letting them eat dinner with the rest of the family at the dinner table. Even though their manners may be far from elegant, it’s done because they are part of the family and, over time, they will learn table manners as they practice them.

Our Covenant Children
Children giggle, poke, and swing their legs simply because they are children. But they also can sing, pray, and give with the congregation. Their presence in worship grows out of the biblical tradition and the Reformed theological conviction that children are members of the covenant community.

How Do Children Learn to Worship?
Children learn to worship by worshiping with the congregation Sunday after Sunday.
• They learn they belong to Christ and are welcome in Christ’s church.
• They come to know, through repetition, the Lord’s Prayer, the creeds, the Doxology, and the beautiful songs of our faith.
• They build memories of shared experiences of Christian community that they may draw upon when they are older.
• They are enriched by the beauty of music and art as creative expressions of praise and as human responses to God.
• They hear stories from the Bible read and interpreted, and they begin to see Christian worship as one place where God may speak to them and be with them.
• They witness the drama of baptism and the Lord’s Supper—both visible signs of God’s grace, kindness, and favor.
• They discover that they are valued as people by God and by God’s people at church.

How Do Parents Help Children?
Bringing your child to church may, at times, be a real exercise in patience. So are many other facets of parenting that we manage to get through. We must remember that baptized children are members of Christ’s church, and they need to 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 in worship may be wiggly and noisy, but it is their birthright as Christians to worship. Our satisfaction comes in later years when we see them stand in the midst of the church and go out into the world with a faith of their own.
Provisions for Children in Worship – Fall 2021

During the 9am service, children 3 and up will be invited to sit at a table in the front of the Sanctuary where they will listen and respond to the sermon through crafts.

During the 10:30 service, children will join with the congregation in worship at the beginning of the service. About 15 minutes into the service, they will be dismissed for Sunday School. A leader will be at the back of the Sanctuary to lead them out. On communion Sundays, they will remain in the Sanctuary for the entire service.

Children’s pages and crayons are available in the foyer.

Children who need to move around can be taken to the Parent’s Room located behind the Sanctuary. The service can be seen and heard from there.