

SPECIFIC SUGGESTIONS FOR THE CHILD IN WORSHIP

Preparing Children for Worship

Baptism, Old and New Testament lessons, confession and forgiveness etc.

1. Make arrangements to acquaint the children personally with ministers and worship leaders.
2. Give the children a tour of the sanctuary, including the chancel area, nave, narthex, and the furniture used in worship: the pulpit, lectern, altar, communion table, baptismal font, organ, candles, flowers, etc. It would be good to draw a map of the worship space and then with the kids label each part.
3. Teach the child to use the worship book including how to find hymns, read stanzas from the hymnbook, responsive readings, etc.
4. Learn the basic hymns used in your church's worship.
5. Learn songs and responses that are usually memorized by the congregation, e.g., the Doxology, the Lord's Prayer, the Apostles' Creed, etc.
6. Learn key terms associated with worship
 - a. Musical terms: prelude, anthem, offertory, hymn, postlude, antiphon, psalmody, etc.
 - b. Types of prayers: invocation, prayer of the day, prayers of the people, offertory prayer, benediction, etc.
 - c. Other liturgical acts and terms: passing the peace, Lord's Supper, Holy Communion,
7. Encourage children to write prayers of various kinds, e.g., prayers of praise, thanksgiving, confessions, etc.
8. Introduce the children to the meaning of Christian symbols.
9. Introduce the children to the Christian year by preparing banners, singing hymns and using other worship aids that reflect the character of each season.
10. Prepare the parents for involving their children in worship through special seminars or classes. Topics might include the following: how to help your child during worship; introduce your child to those around him/her in worship; singing hymns and responses at home; praying with the child at home; involving the children in home worship that reflects the various seasons of the church year, e.g., a home Advent wreath; learning a "hymn-of-the-month" at home; reflecting on the worship service at home with the child after each service; looking over the order with your child before the service; anticipating what is to happen next in the service. Encourage parents to sing and respond actively as a model for the child; sit closer to the front of the sanctuary.

Hawn, C. Michael. "Practical Ideas for Involving Children in Worship." Witvliet, ed. A Child Shall Lead: Children in Worship. Garland: Choristers Guild. 1999. pp 73-74.

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The Child as Congregational Participant

1. Involve people that the children know in worship leadership, including church school teachers, choir leaders, parents, children ministers, etc.
2. Involve family units in worship as liturgists.
3. Use more stories or a more narrative approach to the presentation of scripture and biblical events as well as in sermons. These stories can be sung as well as spoken. May hymns stress a narrative approach to the life of Christ or other biblical characters.
4. Use sermon illustrations that cite children as examples.
5. Use illustrations from children's literature during sermons. C.S. Lewis' *Chronicles of Narnia* is a good example.
6. Look for ways to allow children to participate in the sacraments.
7. The use of simple dramatizations of biblical/historical figures in costume doing monologues can add to the child's experience in worship.
8. Use litanies and responsive readings that single out children as a participating group.
9. Include the concerns of children in prayers as well as the concerns of adults.
10. Develop worship guides for children. The following is a list of options to choose from in preparing worship guides for children"
 - a. Pre-worship checklist of things to look for in the upcoming service, e.g., worship leaders, day in the church year, hymns needed, scripture lessons, symbols used, color of the day, etc.
 - b. Hymnbook markers for hymns to be used.
 - c. Bible book markers for scripture to be read.
 - d. Inclusion of texts that the congregation may know by memory, e.g., Lord's Prayer, doxology, Apostles' Creed.
 - e. Litanies and responsive readings.
 - f. Space for writing prayers.
 - g. Puzzles and games that reflect the content of the sermon and scripture lesson or the nature of the particular season of the Church year.
 - h. Space for guided drawing that reflects the theme of the service.
 - i. Meanings of words that may be difficult to understand.
 - j. Graphics and pictures that illustrate a particular section of the service or use various Christian symbols.
 - k. elements that personalize the service for a child