

Worship is one of the basic ways people learn what it means to be Christian. Children learn to worship in community – worshipping with their parents and the whole congregation – Sunday after Sunday.



They learn they are beloved children of God; that they belong to Christ and are welcome in church.

They build a fund of memorable, shared experiences of Christian community from which they may draw when they are older.

They are enriched by the beauty of the music and art as expressions of praise and as human responses to God.

They hear stories from the bible, read and interpreted, and begin to see Christian worship as one place where God may speak to them.

They witness the drama of baptism and communion as signs of God's grace and love.

Bringing Children to worship may not always be easy, but it is an essential part of their growth in Christ.

ABC'S FOR PARENTS AND FRIENDS OF CHILDREN

Arrive in time to find a good place to sit. Sit where younger children have a good view of the chancel.

Bring something along for small children to hold or look at - something soft and quiet - crayons, drawing paper.

Clue in children as to what will happen next in worship. Children who can read will want to go over the litanies and find the hymns in the hymnal. They like to be ready.

Discuss worship at home to prepare children for any departures from the routine of worship such as a baptism. Also, give time to answer questions about worship.

Express your gladness at having children in worship. During Passing of the Peace, be sure to welcome the children near you. Include them in your conversation before and after worship to let them know they belong.

Free yourself from worry about children's behavior and be open to receiving their ministry to you.

Give thanks to God for the presence of children in worship.

Help parents of small children by showing your appreciation for their presence with us.

Making Room for Children



CHILDREN IN WORSHIP

Welcome to worship at Saint Andrew Christian

Church! Children are very much a part of our worshiping community. Their presence here grows out of the conviction that children are beloved members of the covenant community.

We Make Room for children in our worship by:

- providing a customized children’s bulletin to engage and familiarize children with our worship service.
- having a special time for children during our 10:45 worship.
- offering quality childcare for children from birth to age two in our nursery.
- providing *Children Worship & Wonder*, a Montessori-based worship experience for children age three through second grade during our 10:45 service.
- making sure that books, activity sheets, paper and crayons are available for children during worship.
- welcoming children to our observance of communion.
- On “Shalom Sundays,” all ages worship together (no Worship & Wonder) on the last Sunday of every month.
- providing a rocking chair and blankets for parents and kids to sit on together.

THE PRESCHOOL CHILD

The Preschool Child comes to worship with:

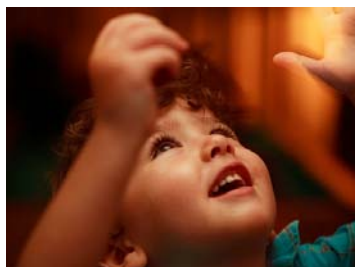
- a rather limited attention span.
- seemingly endless energy.
- a growing curiosity about everything.

What can parents do to make the preschooler’s experience, and their own, more relaxed and enjoyable?

- sit where the child can have a clear view of the front of the sanctuary.
- prepare your child for the different parts of the worship service, explaining special events ahead of time and answering questions that need an answer right now in a quiet whisper.
- allow the preschooler to bring a favorite stuffed animal along, and utilize the activities from the children’s table when boredom sets in.

What can everyone do to help parents and children relax and enjoy worship?

Let parents know its ok! Expect that worship will be a little noisier with young children in attendance. Lend a hand when you can so that everyone can have a richer, fuller experience worshipping together.



THE PRIMARY CHILD

The School-age Child brings some new abilities to worship:

- greater capacity for attentive listening.
- an increasing ability to read.
- the ability to organize and memorize information.

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

- helping in the memorization of the Lord’s Prayer and closing Peace Song.
- reviewing the bulletin with your child to identify new or difficult words and those parts where the congregation responds by reading and speaking.
- inviting the child to follow the reading of the scripture lesson in the bible.
- finding hymns in the hymnal and going over the words.
- encouraging your child to listen to the children’s message or prayers for answers to questions or important thoughts.

For this age group, some parts of the regular worship bulletin will be more meaningful because they can be read.