

Children in Worship

As followers of Jesus, we remember how Jesus welcomed little children and told the disciples, "Do not stop them. To such belong the children of God." We wish to be a welcoming and caring place, both for children and adults.

As part of most worship services, we provide a children's time, and we welcome participation in it by children of all ages. Most of the younger children--from toddlers up to 5th or 6th graders--come up front to interact with the children's sermon giver.

We encourage all youth, as they progress in their faith and comfort levels, to participate in worship service in many ways: reading scripture, sharing personal reflections, playing music or singing, acting in skits, assisting in childcare, and sharing other unique talents.

To enable young children's parents and guardians to be more fully present in worship services, we strive to provide graduated levels of care options:

1. A cry room adjacent to the sanctuary for the care of young children by their own parents or guardians. The room is equipped with an audio speaker to enable listening to the service. (notes: the room is not fully soundproof; to avoid noise when entering, we ask for those using the room to enter & exit it using the hallway instead of the sanctuary entrance)
2. A nursery on the lower level, staffed with a volunteer caregiver. Children up to age five may stay in the nursery for the entirety of the service. But we do encourage young children to start out in the worship service and stay through passing the peace or children's time after which a second childcare provider escorts the young children downstairs who are going to the nursery.

Adults who are unable to be present during portions or all of the worship service can later listen to what they missed, as we make audio recordings and publish them online as a podcast.

Around the age of five, children may receive an activity kit to acknowledge the transition into a new stage of participation in church life. The kit contains items for quiet drawing, coloring, and other activities. The kits serve as a recognition marking the end of being cared in the nursery and moving into fuller participation with adults in the worship service.

We strive to support each other and our children in worship by being patient, kind, loving, calm, forgiving, and joyful as a community alive with the Spirit, knowing we are all children of God.

(adopted approximately 2006)

