

## Suggestions for the Congregation

- Remember the commitment we made as a congregation at the time of each child's baptism to help and encourage that child to become a disciple of Christ.
- Introduce yourself to the child who is sitting by you. Make him/her feel welcome and important.
- During the greeting time, greet the children as well as their parents.
- Hand offering plates to children, not over their heads.
- Ensure that children have bulletins of their own in which to follow along.
- Be understanding when parents need to take younger children to child care, the restroom or the Narthex and then return to worship.
- Have patience with the learning process. We are all children of God.
- Compliment children who have listened attentively during the service.
- If you experience difficulty in hearing or focusing, let the child know gently.



## Families are Important at Trinity!

We value our children and believe that it is important to incorporate all ages into worship and the life of our congregation.

### 10:00 AM WORSHIP HOUR

#### **Phish Phood (5<sup>th</sup> – 8<sup>th</sup> grade)**

Begin the morning in worship with their families and are excused to go downstairs to the Phish Tank, just off Fellowship Hall, near the kitchen.

#### **The Vine (K – 4<sup>th</sup> grade)**

Begin the morning in worship and are excused after the children's message. They are escorted downstairs to the Covenant room off the atrium.

#### **Early Disciples (2.5 – 5 years)**

Preschool children may be dropped off before worship in the Rainbow Room which is on the lower level of the education wing. Follow the stairs in the atrium.

#### **Nursery (birth – 2.5 years)**

The nursery is located on the office level behind the reception area.

#### **Family Worship (last Sunday of each month)**

Children kindergarten age and up stay in worship during the entire 10:00 AM hour. Thematic worship packets are offered each week and activity stations are offered as appropriate. Efforts are made to include elements of worship that interest and engage children. This is a great opportunity for both parents and the congregation to teach our children about worship!

All are  
welcome



# Worshipping with Children and Youth



A Guide for Parents  
and the Congregation

## Worshipping with Children and Youth at Trinity

Trinity encourages children to attend and participate in worship together with their families. We are committed to helping children learn how to worship, which they can do only if they are present.

As adults, we have a call to demonstrate the Christian faith effectively. Young ones may not remember or completely understand what is said in worship, but they can understand that Trinity is a place where they are loved and accepted.

To involve children in the life of our church family and worship takes extra time and effort from everyone. The end results are well worth the sacrifices. Our hope and prayer is that we, as a church family, will see our children continuing to worship and serve God throughout their lives. Take the time to pray for them. Let them see Jesus through you.

It is important to grant grace to young ones who wiggle and squirm or youth who may seem distracted and disinterested. We also should encourage 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 desire is that people of all ages learn to glorify God through worship.



## Suggestions for Parents

- ✋ Worship is the most important thing you can ever train your child to do. Children are at church for the same reason as adults—for the privilege of worshipping God. Let children know that Sunday is a special day!
- ✋ Sunday morning starts on Saturday night. Lay out clothes and gather together everything you'll need.
- ✋ Set the alarm early enough to allow a relaxed pace. Allow time to transition from getting to church to being in church.
- ✋ Pick up a Children's Worship Packet as you enter the sanctuary. Have your child notice how the materials in the packet relate to the content in worship.
- ✋ Sit as a family toward the front of the sanctuary. Children who can see will feel more a part of the service.
- ✋ Go over the order of worship before the prelude to identify what will be happening. Find hymns, readings, and Scriptures, and then mark them. Children like to be ready!
- ✋ Worship WITH rather than BESIDE children. Stand smaller children on the pew so that their ears, eyes, and mouths are near those of other worshippers as they sing, pray, and read together.
- ✋ Help young readers use hymnals and Bibles. Children who cannot yet read can hum or "la" along with the melodies and sing repeated phrases and choruses within songs. Point out words for young readers and even nonreaders who can pick out repetitive words.
- ✋ Have children participate in the offering by sharing their allowance or other money they might have earned rather than loose pocket change. Doing so communicates that we are honoring God with a tithe, and not a tip from our leftovers.

- ✋ Whisper comments, instructions, and questions: "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?"
- ✋ Children are welcome to participate in Communion at the decision of their parents. Since Communion is a sacrament, we encourage children to understand its importance and meaning before participating.
- ✋ Prepare for corporate prayer by praying with your children at home. Have them talk openly and honestly with God, not just parroting Christian phrases.
- ✋ On the way home, hear what people did, enjoyed, and wondered about.



Resources used for this brochure:  
Parenting in the Pew, Robbie Castleman  
"Worshipping with Children" brochure,  
First Presbyterian Church of Berkeley