

# ALL SAINTS C H U R C H

## CHILDREN IN THE WORSHIP SERVICE

*Train up a child in the way he should go;  
even when he is old he will not depart from it.*

Proverb 22:6

All Saints Church is a community of believers that practices Covenant Renewal Worship. An important emphasis is families worshipping together, with a particular emphasis that children should be a part of our weekly service. The practice is an outworking of our commitment to covenant succession. We should remember that as we believe in the Triune God's promises to His people, our children's participation in both the service and the communion are evidence of His blessings to us.

Although children's participation in our worship service is a blessing, there are times that the parents and congregation need to work together in this endeavor.

### CONGREGANTS WHO ARE NOT PARENTS OF YOUNG CHILDREN

Please be patient and give grace to those families that are endeavoring to train their children to be an active part of the church service. All congregants can be an encouragement that will help the parents continue to seek how to raise their children in God's ways and include their children in the church service.

### PARENTS WITH INFANTS

Parents with babies need to remember that this is only a stage of life and that the babies have basic needs and cannot understand how to behave during services. Therefore, it is up to parents to strive to provide their needs and monitor their behavior. This could include such things as:

1. Tracking their feeding so that they may be fed close to the service.
2. Monitoring the infant's disposition. If the baby is becoming restless and unhappy, quietly leave the sanctuary. The chapel is a designated area for child care.
3. If the baby begins to cry, quietly leave the sanctuary.

When the parent believes that the baby is calm/content, return to the service.

### PARENTS WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

Parents should train young children how to behave during the church service. This can be a long process, but once again, it is just a stage of life. What is planted in the child at this age can have many rewards as the child grows. This could include:

1. Practice sitting quietly at home. This may include a quiet time where children look at books, draw, etc.
2. Talk to the children before church about how to behave at church (i.e. no running in the sanctuary, stay quiet during the service, stand with the rest of the believers, generally participate in the liturgy, etc).

3. Monitor young children closely. This includes before, during, and after the service.
4. Provide help for the children. This could include having a special bag of items that are reserved for church time (children's bible, a small notebook for drawing, a small stuffed animal, a snack, etc.)
5. If a child becomes disruptive, quietly remove the child from the sanctuary. Take time to talk to the child and remind them how they should behave. If needed, discipline the child. When the parent believes that the child is ready, quietly return to the service.
6. After the service, talk to the children about the service. Discuss what they remember and their behavior. Remember to acknowledge children's good behavior in words and even celebrate when they make improvements.

## **PARENTS WITH OLDER CHILDREN**

Parents should continue to monitor their children as they get older. This should include:

1. Discuss the expectations for church. This would include staying in the service unless absolutely necessary, listening and participating in the service.
2. Parents should provide expectations regarding behavior after the service.
  - a. Enjoy the time to interact with church family and friends.
  - b. Encourage engaging with adults.
  - c. Encourage older children to respect the church property.
  - d. Set limits on where the children are permitted to go.
    - Stay out of mechanical/electrical spaces and rooms
    - Don't climb in or seek out interstitial spaces, such as above ceilings, mechanical shafts, etc.

All Saint's Church believes that God has called us to be united together to participate in the worship of our Lord and Savior. This includes all members of the Church, even the youngest child. The above guidelines are given in the hope that they will support this endeavor.