



THE RHYTHM OF OUR WORSHIP

for Christ Church NYC Parents & Kids



“And as for me, this is my covenant with them,” says the Lord: “My Spirit that is upon you, and my words that I have put in your mouth, shall not depart out of your mouth, or out of the mouth of your offspring, or out of the mouth of your children’s offspring,” says the Lord, “from this time forth and forevermore.”

-Isaiah 59:21

**A PARENT'S
GUIDE TO
HELPING THEIR
CHILDREN
PARTICIPATE IN
OUR CHURCH'S
WORSHIP
GATHERING**

At CCNYC we are grateful to be a multi-generational church. We aim at nothing less than the fulfillment of God's promise that his Spirit, which is upon us, and his words that he has put in our mouths, will be in the mouths of our offspring and their offspring after them, from now to eternity (Isaiah 59:21).

As such, we love the children in our church, we consider them to be a blessing from God, and we want to help them share and delight in the life of God's people – including when we assemble together for worship.

There are several ways your children might connect with the church's worship gathering.

- Children of all ages are welcome to remain with their parents for the whole of the worship service.
- Alternatively, during the school year children are welcome to participate downstairs in Children's Sunday School where there is singing, activities, and Bible teaching which is aimed at helping children to know God's grace and love in Jesus.
- Seedlings (Nursery: 0–2 years old) There is a nursery downstairs for babies and toddlers. Parents can check their children into the nursery before the service and pick them up afterwards.
- Sprouts (Preschool: 2.5–4 years old) Our preschool class consists of a short lesson with free play. During the lesson, the children will sing songs, pray, listen to a Bible story, and complete a craft. Parents can check their preschoolers in before service and pick them up afterwards.
- Branches (Kindergarten–5th grade) After checking in your child, he or she remains with you in the sanctuary. After the passing of the peace, the service leader will dismiss the children, who will meet their teachers in the back of the sanctuary. During Sunday school, the children grow in their knowledge of and love for God through prayer, song, Bible stories, and fun activities. When the service is over, you can pick up your children downstairs.
- As a parent you are welcome to take advantage of these different opportunities for CCNYC Kids. You are also welcome to combine these different opportunities. For example, in order to help begin teaching and showing your children the importance of worshiping with the rest of the church and learning to hear God's Word preached, consider having your young children sit with you for the whole of the service once or twice a month. And/or you might consider occasionally bringing them back upstairs with you after the sermon.



Whether you decide to keep your children in for the whole or only part of the service, here are a few suggestions for how you might go about helping them participate in the rhythm of our worship.

- Begin by reading through the fuller *The Rhythm of Our Worship – A Guide for Worship at CCNYC*. This will help you to personally better understand what worship is and why we do what we do here at CCNYC. The better you understand it and live it out, the more equipped you will be to guide your children in their worship. (Available on the Welcome Table.)
- Another resource that you might find helpful is the excellent short article by John and Noël Piper, *The Family Together in God's Presence*.
- Talk with your children about worship during the week. Help them to understand why we do what we do when we gather for worship.
- Look through the Worship Service bulletin together before Sunday. These are emailed out the Friday before, so take time to read through it as a family. Ask them if they recognize the songs or explain to them the confessions/creeds we might be reciting together.
- Encourage them to sing, profess, and listen with the rest of the church, as well to stand and sit when others do.
- Make sure you, too, are worshipping. Sing the hymns, pray, voice the confessions and professions, and actively listen and respond to the sermon. Children will learn what it means to participate in corporate worship by copying you. More is caught than taught.
- Look for ways to connect the church's rhythm of worship with your own family's devotional practices at home. The more that practices like Bible reading, singing, and confession permeate your own household in a gospel-shaped and gospel-centered way, the more readily you and your family will be to engage with the church when it gathers together for worship. (For ideas on how to do this, check out our bookracks downstairs which have excellent resources for Family Worship.)
- Give particular attention to helping your children listen to God's Word being preached:
- Read and discuss the passage together several times at home during the week leading up to the sermon. In fact, consider making Sunday's preaching passage your family's devotional reading for the week.
- Give your child one or two questions that you want them to try and answer as they listen to the sermon.
- Make sure you discuss the sermon together at some point after church that Sunday.
- For more ideas, check out the book from Christopher Ash, *Listen Up! A Practical Guide to Listening to Sermons*. This is usually available on our bookrack downstairs.

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise."

-Deuteronomy 6:5-7



- Make sure you and your family get plenty of sleep the night before. Tired bodies make for drowsy hearts (and impatient parents!).
- Be intentional about what you do as you get ready for church on Sunday morning. Make sure you leave yourself plenty of time to arrive early for church so that you are not rushing in. Just as important, check your own heart and seek to begin the day with a joyful and expectant attitude for the ways God will be at work in you and your family as you gather with God's people.
- Above all, pray. Pray for your children and pray with your children before you come to church. Ask God to prepare each of your hearts, to give each of you a humble and joyful spirit, and then thank him for the privilege of being able to gather with his people in worship.
- Finally, relax! Children are naturally wiggly! Perhaps sit near the front where it is easier for your little ones to see and hear what is going on. They tire of seeing the backs of others' heads. Quietly explain the parts of the service, and feel free to whisper answers to their questions in the sermon. However, please do be mindful of others, and if you have to leave the service with your child, please feel free to do so, but please come back. As Jesus said, "Let the children come to me."
- If you're reading all this and you don't have children, thanks for taking the time to do so! You can be a wonderful encouragement to the parents in our church by remembering that the presence of children is a gift to the church, and they are a reminder that our congregation is growing. So please welcome our children and give a smile of encouragement to their parents.

If you have any questions about this article, please reach out to children@christchurchnyc.com



Christ Church NYC

111 E 87th St, New York, NY, 10128

Sunday Worship 10AM

Children's Programs for ages 0-5th grade



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