

## Engaging in Worship as a Family

Parents, first and foremost, we recognize the challenge it can be to lead your kids in this season. But we want to encourage you: you are the mom/dad that God has given to your child. God created you to be the primary spiritual influence in your child(ren)'s life, which may sound daunting, but God knows what he is doing. Don't allow the feeling of being overwhelmed overshadow the incredible opportunity to love your kids and point them to Jesus. The most important thing for you in this season is to be intentional with your kids. Below

There are a few options to consider when thinking about worshipping with your family or in a group with other families. If you decide to meet in a group with other families, it is important to ensure that every adult in your group is on the same page on their comfort level with kids engaging with one another. Have an open dialog and set clear boundaries. If you are leading kids through the Kids Service, here are some important steps:

- Look at the activity guide ahead of time and select a couple of activities to do with the kids.
- Prepare any materials needed ahead of time.
- Engage in the service with the kids.
- Have fun! A huge win is the kids walking away knowing they are loved by God and by you.
- Two important ideas to try to help kids think about and remember are: (1) the big idea, and (2) memory verse.
- Pick a day that you're going to watch the service and treat it like you're getting up and going to church. Get ready, wear nice clothes, get donuts for breakfast that day, etc. (This can be done with individual families or families that decide to meet together as a group.

Now, here are a few different options for worshipping as a family/group with kids.

- Kids participate in full service with parents. This is an option that is difficult with kids younger than grade 2/3. In fact, it can be a challenge with kids of any age. However, we think there are ways to make it more feasible and an opportunity to learn and grow as a family. How is that?
  - Put away phones and tablets during the service if the goal is for everyone to engage.
  - Have everyone go to the bathroom before service.
  - Print or create (or have kids create) a sermon guide for the kids to follow like the one found [here](#) and have a conversation with your kids about their observations after the service.

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- A key: Parents will need to highly encourage participation not just in worship but in message time by actually discussing sermon questions with your kids.
- 2. Parents engage in Weekend Worship without kids and engage in Kids service with Kids.
  - Parents be diligent about picking out a time to sit down and fully engage in church. You know your family best, but we recommend you do it during a naptime or bed time for kids if that is an option.
  - For children, pick a day during the week and make that officially Kids Church day or time. The whole family watches the episode of Crossroad Kids TV & engages in discussion and an activity that is provided.
- 3. Hybrid approach (for family OR recommendation if meeting in a group)
  - Families: join together to sing together through the music portion of the gathering. Then, there are a few options:
    - The whole family engages in the Kids service(s) designed for your kids. Parents, we encourage you to sing and dance with your kids and actively engage in the service. It is important here to put away personal devices.
  - Group with kids:
    - If meeting in a group, and all adults are comfortable with kids engaging with one another, rotate each week which adult (or assign an older child/teenager if that is an option for your group) leads the Kids Service portion with the kids in a separate room with a separate device.
      - Important steps:
        - Look at the activity guide ahead of time and select a couple of activities to do with the kids.
        - Prepare any materials needed ahead of time.
        - Engage in the service with the kids.
        - Have fun! A huge win is the kids walking away knowing they are loved by God and by you.
        - Two important ideas to try to help kids think about and remember are: (1) the big idea, and (2) memory verse.

### FAQs:

- Q: "What if I have kids in more than one age group?"
  - A: Great question! First, there is no perfect answer. But here are a couple of tips: If possible, help your older kids see themselves as 'leaders'. If you have Preschool and Elementary students and you can

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only watch one service, begin by having everyone participate in the Elementary lesson. Generally, younger kids are extremely interested in what their older siblings are doing and LOVE to join. It seems less often that older siblings are equally excited. However, every family is different. Experiment and do what is best for you and your family. If at all possible, engage with both services and encourage your kids to do the same.

- Q: What if my kids do not engage or not watch Kids Church?
  - A: Haven't we all had those days that we simply want to stay in bed longer and not get up and get to church? Kids have those too! We highly encourage *you* as the parent to **lead the way**. You set the tone for your kids engaging in church. If you're excited about it, engaging with them, gently encouraging them to participate in the motions, response, discussion, games, etc., they will be more likely to engage.
- Q: Do I have to watch it on Saturday or Sunday?
  - A: No! Like we suggested above, choose any day of the week and make it special. Get dressed up, get donuts or make cookies that day, try your best to make it special.