

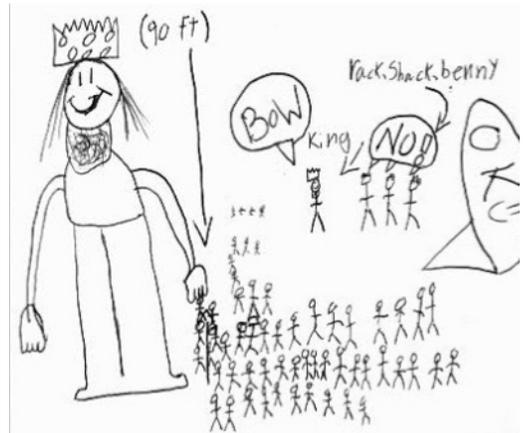
# Family Worship Sunday

\*nursery and preschool available for those who prefer

We love your children and students. In fact, we look forward to spending time with them each Sunday morning. But we realize that they need more than we can give them.

God knows this too. That's why he commissions parents to take the lead in raising children to know, love and follow Christ. (Deuteronomy 6:6-9, Ephesians 6:4; Psalm 78:1-8)

One way we share the faith-shaping privilege with parents is to create times for families to worship together. Kids benefit from watching adults worship God. Kids learn how to listen, how to apply truth and yes, how to act, by watching parents.



Below are several helpful tips that will make your time of worship as a family a joy, not a headache.

## Tips for Younger Children

- **Talk about what will happen** in “big” church during the week leading up to the service.
- **Arrive early.** Coming in late will only increase your stress and who needs that?
- **Sit toward the front.** When kids can see what's happening it helps them stay engaged. You can choose an aisle seat to help with a smooth exit if the need arises.
- **Meet the people sitting nearby.** This models good manners for your kids and is generally a neighborly thing to do.
- **Come prepared.** Bring quiet snacks (unwrapped or in a baggie), soft toys and cups with lids. You might also bring a favorite book for them to enjoy.
- **Talk in church.** Quietly whisper to your kids, helping them understand what is happening during the service.
- Kids struggle to sit still. **Allow children to sit or kneel on the floor** and use their chair as a desk.



## Tips for Older Children & Students

- **Talk about your expectations** before arriving for service.
- **Expect your children to participate** during the service. For example: standing when others stand, singing or clapping with the music, etc.
- Encourage children to **bring their own money** for the offering. This helps them anticipate worship and meaningfully participate. Don't simply hand your kids money for the offering. How special is a gift that is given without consideration?
- **Limit bathroom breaks.** Sometimes this “emergency” is a tactic to break up boredom.
- **Illustrate or outline the message.** I love seeing the points my son hears in the message and illustrates on his bulletin (his artwork is on display here). This helps him stay engaged and gives us a way to discuss the sermon on the way home.

