

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO PARENTING IN THE PEW @ UBC

At University Baptist Church, we welcome and encourage children to participate in our Sunday morning and evening services. It's a joy to have your kids in the worship service! This guide is intended to help you better understand why we encourage children to participate in our corporate gatherings with their parents and to equip parents as you seek to help your children engage with you each Sunday.

WHY PARENT IN THE PEW?

Scripture instructs us to teach the testimonies of God's wondrous works to the next generation "so that they should set their hope in God and not forget the works of God, but keep his commandments" (Ps 78:7). At its most basic level, including our children in the worship service exposes them to the works of God and trains them in his word—this is a glorious task!

- It teaches children to do the very thing God made them for – to worship Him!
- It teaches children discipline and self-control. Sitting still and listening for a long period of time is not easy, but it is a valuable discipline.
- It gives children the opportunity to hear the truths of God's Word and the gospel. Children can understand and are listening more than we give them credit for.
- It allows our children to watch the people of God and learn from their example as they worship God.
- It gives our children a better sense of awe of God.

Keeping your young children with you in the worship service may seem like an overwhelming task. It's not easy, but it is possible. And the fruit it can bear is worth it. So what are ways we can set our children up for success?

AT HOME

1. Practice regular times of family worship. This will help your children get used to coming to church to worship. Family worship is as easy as reading the Bible, singing a hymn, and praying with your children about what you've read in the Bible.

2. Read the sermon text with your children before Sunday. Use the sermon card to know what text of Scripture will be preached on Sunday. This will better prepare your children, and you, to hear from God's Word.

3. Be prepared for Sunday. Sunday morning should begin Saturday night. Lay their clothes out beforehand, pack a bag with activities and a snack, and set expectations about the service with your kids.

4. Have a good breakfast. Don't come to church on an empty stomach! We all get antsy when we're hungry! 😊

AT CHURCH

1. Use the restroom. Take a trip to the restroom before the service starts. This will help prevent your children from squirming or asking to use the restroom during the service.

2. Find a good seat. Sit in a place appropriate for your children's age and conducive to the level of attention they need. Don't be afraid to sit on the ends close to the front,

the back, or in the balcony if you need to exit with children during the service.

3. Bring coloring books, paper, and use the bulletin.

Children’s bulletins are available to help younger children participate during the service. It’s also perfectly acceptable for your children to color or draw during the service. It’s remarkable what children are absorbing even when it seems like they’re not paying attention.

4. Model participation and engagement.

Your children will follow your lead. Sing loud, open your Bible, say “Amen!”, take notes, and stay off your phone. Let your children see what it looks like to be engaged in the worship service.

AFTER CHURCH

1. Talk about the service with your children. Discuss the songs we sang, the missionaries and churches we prayed for, and what the sermon was about. Encourage your children to ask you questions about the service.

2. Pray for your children. At lunch, pray that the Lord would use the service to work in the hearts of your children, and that he would continue to use sitting under the Word to open their eyes to the beauty of the gospel.

Parenting in the pew isn’t easy, and there’s no guarantee that every Sunday will be easy and smooth for your family. But that’s not an excuse not to do it. Consistency and prayer are essential. Over time our children can learn to participate and engage in all parts of the service as they grow. Our prayer is that you will be blessed to see how the Lord can use the worship service to work in the lives of your children.

SUGGESTED READING

Books

Parenting in the Pew by Robbie Castleman

Family Worship by Donald Whitney

Let the Children Worship by Jason Helopoulos

Articles

[“Children in the Church Services”](#) from Truth78

[“Let the Children Worship in Church”](#) by Jason Helopoulos

[“Children in Worship—Mom-Tested Tips”](#) by Kevin

DeYoung

[“10 Ways to Make the Sermon Much Less Boring”](#) by

Deepak Reju

Bibles

ESV Big Picture Bible

The Beginner’s Gospel Story Bible by Jared Kennedy

Big Picture Story Bible by David Helm

QUESTIONS?

Please contact Stephen Martin (smartin@ubcfayetteville.org) or Leah Martin (lmartin@ubcfayetteville.org) for any help you may need.