

# *A Parent's Tool Box*



*Discover tools for building  
a pattern of engaged  
family worship.*

*Covenant Presbyterian Church*

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The Children's Ministries exist to assist parents to nurture in children a love of Jesus Christ, a deep reliance on the gospel of grace, and a life of joyful worship and witness.

Recognizing that the family is the first place of training up the next generation, we desire to come alongside the family, as part of the bigger family of God to love, train, and encourage all of our kids that they might call on the Lord for salvation and then become fishers of men.

It's a tough job being a parent! And, many of us come ill-equipped to know where to begin when it comes to things like family worship and teaching our children to walk in the ways of God.

Knowing what a challenge this is, the Children's Ministries Team works hard to give you a variety of tools to have at your disposal, enabling you to make the most of our Sunday morning worship throughout the week!

## EARLY CHILDHOOD

Children ages 3 years old through Kindergarten may attend both Children's Church and Sunday School. The lesson taught in Sunday School and Children's Church is the same, but presented in slightly different ways each time, and with a different follow-up craft or activity. Here are some ways to help make the lessons more impactful.



- Notice that the Lesson Focus is in the bulletin. As you walk your child back to Children's Church you can casually mention, *"I noticed your lesson today will be about \_\_\_\_\_. I can't wait for you to tell me about it!"*

- Use the Discussion Starter displayed with the Lesson Focus in the early childhood hallway to talk with the kids during your car ride home, over dinner, or as part of family worship that week.
- Use the craft(s) as a point of discussion and review. Display the craft at home for the following week and refer to it, reviewing briefly the lesson, and creating expectation for the following week's lesson, "You learned so much about how God spoke through Moses! I can't wait to hear what you will study this week in Sunday School!"
- Use the *Master Plan* in planning family worship by reading and talking about the same stories and themes together at home. The lesson title, Bible truth, lesson focus, and memory verse for each week can be found on our web site.

([www.cov-pres.org](http://www.cov-pres.org) > ministries > Children's Ministries > Sunday School, or Children's Church, then click on *Master Plan*)



# ELEMENTARY AGES

Children 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup> grade join us for the worship service. Much change happens in a child as they progress through these years! Here are some hints to help make Sunday morning more meaningful for your elementary-aged child.

## At Home

- Read the “**All About Sunday**” e-mail to prepare yourself and your family for Sunday.
- Notice that the **songs** we will be singing are listed, and you can even print off the lyrics to the songs! Friday and Saturday nights during your family worship or bed-time routine, use these songs. Go over tough words, memorize the chorus.
- Look over the **Bible passage** with your child. Ask them what it tells us about the nature of God. Ask them what it tells us about the nature of man. Ask them to guess what the pastor might discuss.

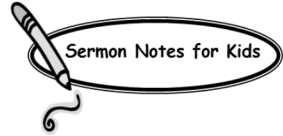
## During Church



- Remember that your child is watching you and learning how to worship the Lord from you! Let that encourage you to be fully engaged in Sunday morning worship.
  - Smile at your child during the service and tell him or her how happy you are to be worshipping together!
  - Have a “Sunday morning” bag for each child that includes things like a notebook, pencil, crayons, and Bible.
- Recognize that teaching a child to worship does NOT mean keeping them quiet. While it is important to teach our children respectful behavior, our goal is engagement, not silence.
  - Expect your child to participate by standing when the congregation stands, reading aloud when we read aloud, and to follow along in the sermon notes.
  - Pray for the worship leader, and preaching pastor throughout the week prior. As your child invests his/her heart in the service to come, he/she is more prepared to participate.

- Ask your child to try to remember at least one thing that stood out to him or her from the sermon.
- Use the Children’s Sermon Notes.

Pick up one or both of the Children’s Sermon notes. Look over them with your child as you settle in for worship.



- Offer help and encouragement when needed in filling them out.
- Point to similarities between the adult notes and the children notes.
- Use the questions and discussion points in the car ride home, over lunch, or during family worship.
- Teach your children, as they develop reading and writing skills, to date their notebook, record the title of the sermon, the Bible passage, and one to three “nuggets” from the sermon. They can then fold and tuck their sermon notes into their notebook.

## Sunday School

- Come to Sunday School Assembly from 10:00-10:15 a.m. and discover what your kids are memorizing.
- Have them help you memorize the same catechism questions, information, and verses that they are learning.
- Visit the Sunday School class from time to time. Introduce yourself to the teacher(s), and offer to help.
- LOOK AT THE SUNDAY SCHOOL PAPERS! Don’t let your kids simply make airplanes with them. These handouts are a treasure that can be used as discussion starters for family worship, for lunch time conversation, and for training your child to have his or her own daily devotional time.



- Help your child with Sunday School “homework.” Sweet times of prayer and conversation often result!
- View our Sunday School curriculum scope and sequence on the Children’s Ministry’s website.

# WEEKDAY FAMILY WORSHIP

Don't let the idea of leading your family in 2-4 times of family devotions a week overwhelm you! Here are some simple ideas to help you get started in this important practice that communicates to your children the centrality of the Gospel in everyday life. You don't need to do them all every day. Use these ideas as a resource until your "pump gets primed."

- Pick a consistent time. Many people find that right after dinner works well, or between dinner and dessert, while others enjoy breakfast time devotions.
- Keep it short, simple, and pleasant.
- Use the sermon notes from Sunday and review the theme of the sermon one day, ask some questions on another day, and on another day discuss how your family can apply the things learned into your lives.
- Memorize a Bible passage as a family, and use that as your theme for a few weeks.
- Keep a list of prayer requests and let the kids take turns praying for people, events, the church, and family.
- Sing a song or two. Use the lyric sheets from the "All About Sunday" e-mail, one of the church song books, or your VBS CDs.



- Work your way steadily through the Children's Catechism, memorizing the answer to each question. Take time to discuss each one, what it means and why it matters.

Family worship doesn't have to be overwhelming! Getting started and then remaining consistent are probably the most difficult aspects of the whole thing.

Please know that the Children's Ministries Team at Covenant Presbyterian Church is praying for God to be at work in you and your whole family!



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