

## Tips for Worshiping with Children

We welcome you and your child in worship! Children learn how to participate in worship by being in worship. However, many parents worry about how their child will behave or how engaged he/she is in worship. We offer these tips to help you discover the sacred moments in the midst of what sometimes feels like chaos!

- Relax! God put the wiggle in children—don't feel you have to suppress it in God's house.
- Pick up a worship bag for your child in the basket outside the Sanctuary as well as a children's bulletin for your age of child (or both!). These have coloring books and crayons as well as other activities. Please return it to the basket after worship.
- Sit closer to the front. It is easier for children to see what is happening and stay engaged.
- Save the Children's Bulletin your child received when entering the Sanctuary for use during the sermon.
- Use a gentle touch: an arm around your child's shoulder or your hand in his/hers gives reassurance and appropriate attention.
- Explain quietly the parts of the service.
- Sing the hymns, pray and voice the responses. Children learn good behavior in church by copying yours.
- Encourage them to come to Children's Moment and ask them to participate in the message. You are welcome to accompany them if it makes them more comfortable.
- Allow your child to help pass the offering plate and put money into it.
- Allow your child to serve with you as an usher or greeter.
- Following the service, ask your child how he or she experienced God in worship today. This helps set the expectation that we do encounter God in worship.
- Always remember that the way we welcome children in church directly affects the way they respond to church, God, and Christ. Let them know that they are at home here at Coats United Methodist Church.
- Nursery (birth - preK): Your child is welcome in worship, but we also understand that sometimes parents need their youngest children to go to the nursery. We provide a loving, caring environment for them to experience God's love while they are away from you. You can take them to the nursery before worship or even during and our paid/trained care providers will welcome them with loving arms!
- Remember, that we are helping grow people who love God and love to worship God for a lifetime. That takes time. Take a deep breath. It's going to be okay – and sometimes the sacred jumps out at you!