

FROM THE CHAPLAIN

Dear Parents:

Children are welcome and encouraged to worship in this Chapel.

We know that it can be a challenge to bring a young child into worship. They giggle, poke, fidget and talk. But they also sing, pray, give – and learn that worship is the highest duty and greatest joy of all Christians. We welcome you and your children whole-heartedly!

If you have questions, comments, or would like information about nursery watchcare, children's church or any of our other educational programs for children, please ask an usher or contact me after the service.

Your Chaplain

***“Whoever welcomes this little child
in my name welcomes me;
and whoever welcomes me
welcomes the one who sent me.”***

Luke 9:49



GARRISON:

CHAPLAIN POC:

EMAIL:

PHONE:

Prepared by the IMCOM-Europe Religious Support Office

CHILDREN & WORSHIP PARENT'S GUIDE



A RESOURCE FOR PROTESTANT FAMILIES

U.S. ARMY CHAPLAINCY—FOR GOD AND COUNTRY

WHAT CHILDREN CAN UNDERSTAND

3 to 5 Year Olds

Preschool children come to worship with a short attention span, great energy, and a growing curiosity about everything! They often spend time climbing on, off, & under the pew, sticking their fingers in the communion cup holders, and drawing on the bulletin. At this age, they can be assisted with finding the page numbers of hymns and Bible verses, can sing along with everyone else (maybe using their own words!), and can bow their heads in prayer. They can greet or be greeted by others and help pass the offering plate.

6 & 7 Year Olds

These children come to worship with increasing abilities to read and listen, though they still find lots of good reasons to wiggle! Early elementary kids usually love to participate where they can: sitting and standing with the rest of the congregation, and praying collectively. They can often follow the hymns and praise songs in the hymnal or on the screen. They can read a lot of words in the Bible and are beginning to recognize elements of Baptism and Communion.

8 to 12 Year Olds

Older elementary children come to worship with great reading skills and the ability to follow the order of the service. They can sit still for most of the service, but will take the chance to run up the aisle if it arises. Most kids this age can read a bulletin, find the Bible lesson, and follow along as Scripture is read. They can sing hymns and praise songs pretty well and understand a lot of the sermon. They can pray with the congregation and may be able to memorize the Lord's Prayer and Doxology. They understand why we collect the offering and may want to serve as an Usher.

All children are part of Christ's church, and they – just like the adults – are called to worship God. They don't participate the same way adults do, but they grow in understanding with each worship service, and that participation helps them learn that they are valuable members of the family of faith.

PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

- * Explain expectations at home and discuss consequences. Be consistent with discipline if behavior is not appropriate.
- * Visit the restroom and get water before worship, never during unless it is an emergency.
- * Teach your child to use a quiet whisper to talk to you during worship.
- * Make a bag or kit for your child to bring to worship that includes paper, crayons, a small Bible or Bible storybook, and Bible games, puzzles, or coloring pictures found online.
- * Arrive in time to find a good place to sit. Sit near the front to provide younger children with a better view of the platform.
- * Express your gladness at having children in worship. After the service, be sure to welcome the other children near you.

WORSHIP AND LEARNING

Children learn to worship by worshipping. They may also

Come to know the Lord's Prayer and other parts of the service by memory.

Build a fund of memorable, shared experiences of Christian community from which they may draw when they are older.

Hear stories from the Bible read and interpreted; and begin to see Christian worship as one place where God may speak to them.

Witness the drama of Baptism and Communion as signs of God's kindness and favor.

Discover that they are valued as persons by God and by God's people.

Celebrate that they belong to Christ and are welcome in Christ's church.