



IGLESIA DE CRISTO
SUNSET
CHURCH OF CHRIST

Reasons to include children in our assembly

- Worshiping together is a transformative experience for all ages.
- Teaches children that the assembly is for them as they are forming a view of themselves.
- Prepares them for inclusion before the age appropriate rebellion of young adolescence.
- Our role as parents it to pass on faith in the context of community.
- The best way to teach anything is by example and opportunity for practice.
- The Bible has many examples of children being included in covenant community with worship and ritual.
- The weaker parts of the Body of Christ deserve special honor.
- Jesus insisted that we welcome children and become like them.
- We cannot put the comfort and preference of adults at a higher priority than the faith development of children.
- Participation of children allows them to think of faith-based questions they would not normally have.



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Ideas to make including children in our assembly easier

- Cultivate joy on Sunday mornings rather than expressing dread over aspects that you as the adult do not prefer.
- Prepare yourself and your children starting on Saturday night with a reasonable bedtime and continuing into Sunday morning with enough time for breakfast and conversation in the car about what to look forward to.
- Spend time in family worship at home to set the tone of normalcy for reading scripture, praying, and singing.
- Start while they are young even if they are wiggly they remain more teachable when they are very little.
- Teach them some common songs that they will hear so they are ready to participate.
- Whisper to your children instructions and reminders and ideas for how to connect with what's happening throughout the service.
- Use the time as a special way to connect with children by offering lots of cuddles and loving touch.
- Ask older children to help younger ones by finding the page in the hymnal or reading the Bible verses or looking at the bulletin.
- Ask other church members to sit with you to have some extra help redirecting children.
- Encourage children to participate as fully as possible through singing, bowing head during prayer, opening Bible during reading and listening for key words in the sermon.
- Being consistent in your expectations will help them learn more quickly.
- Encourage them to build a relationship with the preacher and worship leaders so they will feel connected to them during the service.
- Avoid distractions by sitting near the front and limiting activities such as books or electronic games that are not connected to the service.
- Talk positively about the service on the way home.
- Stop worrying what others think during the learning period for your child.
- Be wise to redirect or briefly remove children who are extremely distracting with the goal of reentering as quickly and frequently as possible.
- Affirm your children that they were an encouragement to you and to others by their presence.
- Be patient and offer grace to children with no expectations that things go perfectly well immediately.
- Be patient and offer grace to yourself knowing that your work to include them is impactful even if it is hard.