

Why We Welcome Kids in the Corporate Worship

from South Side Baptist Church (<http://ssbaptist.org/>)

- Most importantly, it is the biblical pattern. Everywhere in Scripture it is assumed that children were a part of the gathered congregation (Exod 13:14, Josh 8:35, Joel 2:15-16, Eph 6:1-3, Col 3:20).
- We want to train them to be a part of the congregation, showing them, this is what we do as a family and church family. We do not want to effectively raise “unchurched” kids. It is good for them to see their parents and others worship the Lord. Corporate worship will then be normal, rather than strange. The stats for kids who fall away from the faith after leaving the house are discouraging and we believe “sending kids to their rooms” during the worship hour is part of the cause. So, teach by example to pray, sing, and listen, understanding that much of the faith is as much caught as taught.
- The Word of God is powerful. It will reach their hearts in ways we, nor they, will even recognize. The cumulative effect of Christ-centered sermons and gospel-centered songs is incalculable. A child who grows up at SSBC will sit in some 650 corporate worship services. “Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word about Christ” (Rom 10:17). We also need to expect more out of our kids. It is amazing how much kids absorb. As they are exposed to the Word, God will do His work.
- They will see the gospel displayed in the ordinances, communion and baptism.
- They will experience a sense of awe, likely not happening in children’s church and hear the whole counsel of God taught, including more heavy themes of Scripture.
- Family life today is hectic. In our age of family fragmentation, this provides togetherness by doing something valuable together and there is nothing more valuable than worshipping together.
- You should see the range of the congregation when we gather, from those ending their earthly tenure, to those just beginning their earthly tenure, and all in between.

Tips

- Sunday morning worship begins on Saturday night. Have plans for breakfast and clothes.
- Fully engage in corporate worship. Sing. Read. Listen. Take notes. You are modeling.
- Feel free to quietly explain parts of the service to your children.
- Consistently have family worship at home so that corporate worship will be continuous with what they experience at home.
- Sit toward the front so they can easily see everything.
- Take them to the bathroom before the service.
- Try not to get up during the service since this distracts others. Often they get antsy and do not actually need to use the restroom, especially if they went before the service begins.
- Relax! We understand there will be wiggles. It will be an adjustment at first, but it will get easier with training and time. If a 6 year old will not obey their parents for an hour a week, more than “children’s church” is probably needed.
- Ask questions about the service on the way home.
- Read the passage for the upcoming Sunday ahead of time at home. These are typically in the bulletin and since we mostly work through books you will have an idea of where we will be. Kids will light up when hearing familiar words and themes.
- Bring a pen and grab a children’s sermon note sheet on your way into the auditorium.
- Pray that God uses the corporate worship service to grab your child’s affections for Jesus.
- Persevere! It is not easy, but nothing worth doing is.