

SUGGESTIONS FOR THE CONGREGATION

Remember, we promised as a community at their baptism to help them grow in the Christian life.

What You Can Do:

- Smile at them. Wink at them. And be grateful for the children we are helping to raise.
- With the permission of the parents, invite a child with whom you are acquainted to sit with you during worship on occasion, even when the children's parents are present.
- During the passing of the peace, greet children as well as their parents. Say your name and ask for theirs. Or have a name tag on.
- Hand the offering basket to children, not over their heads.
- Baptized children may receive communion or a blessing. Just let the priest know which.
- During fellowship time, introduce children by name.
- Compliment children who've listened attentively during the service.

After the Service:

- On your way home and during the rest of the week, talk about the worship experience. "That's like what we heard at church last Sunday." "You remember the Gospel story you heard?"
- Pray meal prayers together. Pray morning and night prayers with your children. Include some of the hymns we sing at church or parts of the prayers used in worship in your family prayer life at home.



Picture of Soft Space Area in Nave

Kelsy Kolin is our full time nursery attendant. She is a mature, loving, honest, energetic and very responsible caretaker who has a passion for teaching children. She is also certified in babysitting, CPR and first aid. She has passed a background check and completed the required Diocese Safeguarding God's Children course.

CHILDREN IN THE CHURCH



*"Whoever welcomes one such child in my name, welcomes me."
Matthew 18:5*

A Guide for Parents and Saint George's Congregation

Saint George's Episcopal Church
801 East Commerce Street
Milford, MI 48381
(248) 684-0495

www.stgeorgesmilford.org
office@stgeorgesmilford.org

CHILDREN IN WORSHIP

RELAX, FAMILIES ARE IMPORTANT AND WELCOME HERE!

Let the suggestions contained in this flyer help you relax and appreciate the children who are present. Remember, the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs.

We have a commitment to help children worship. Perhaps they won't always understand what is going on or being said, but they understand more than we give them credit for and by our attitude, they can understand that this is a place where they are loved and accepted.

If you are here for the first time, please know that we have the following options:

- **The Soft Space** is located on the left side of the nave (worship space) as you enter. It has soft rugs, toys and pillows. Feel free to spread out with your children here.
- **The Cry (or Noisy) Area** is located in the fellowship hall. The service may be heard by speaker here. Feel free if you need to take a walk with your child; if your child needs to cry.
- **The Nursery** is located off the fellowship hall. Infant and toddler care is provided at the Sunday 10:00am service by one paid attendant and one volunteer parent. Ask the greeter to direct you if you need to use the Nursery for your child during the service.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PARENTS

The formal worship service can provide an excellent opportunity for parents to be involved in the spiritual nurturing of their children. Talk with your children about the service. Explain what is happening. Help them catch your enthusiasm and excitement about being part of the church.

Before The Service:

- Prepare the children before hand for what will happen at church. Make a point of knowing the Gospel story beforehand and telling it to them so they have something to anticipate.
- On your way to church in the car, begin to shift the family into a peaceful mode.
- Talk about what people or events need our prayers and might be included during the Prayer of the People.
- Arrive at church plenty of time to take the children to the bathroom and get settled before the service begins.
- If your children are older and able to focus on the service sit in the front pews. Children who can see what's going on will feel more included in the service.
- Introduce your children to people who are sitting nearby.
- Allow your children to speak for themselves when adults engage in conversation.

- Share the songbook with your child at eye level and encourage them to sing along.
- Teach and encourage the child to participate when capable as enjoining and the **Lord's Prayer**, making the **sign of the Cross**, or saying the responses such as **"And also with you"**, passing the peace with **"the peace of the Lord be with you"**, and **"Amen"**.
- Allow your children to participate in the offering by sharing either some of their pennies or by "putting their hearts" in the basket as it comes around.
- Children learn worship etiquette by participation. Teach your children what to watch for, what is taking place now, and when to respond in unison.
- Baptized children are invited to receive the Communion if the parents feel comfortable with their child's safety chewing the host.
- Carry quiet toys or books in a bag for diversions for small children.
- Remember that is hard for small children to sit still for long. Allow small children to sit or kneel on the floor and use the pew as a desk if necessary.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help from other parents!