



Worshiping with Children

Singing

Worshiping with a child is something we're called to do together! Having a collection of tricks to pull out as you worship makes it more interesting, fun, and satisfying for children. Compiled here are several strategies for parents (even those who can't carry a tune in a bucket!) to help draw children into worshiping with song.

- ◆ As soon as children are comfortable with three digit numbers, they enjoy the responsibility of being the “keeper of the hymnal.” Invite your child to assist you in finding and turning to the correct page for the family to sing.
- ◆ Invite children to create a bookmark to bring along each week, with which they can find and mark the hymns you will sing together in worship. Bookmarks can also help readers keep track of what line they're singing.
- ◆ As the introduction to a hymn is being played, tell your child something you like about it. (I remember when my father leaned over to me in worship and whispered “this is my favorite hymn.” I paid attention to the words in a new way as we sang, and the memories of he and I singing it together in the years after will last a lifetime).
- ◆ Younger children enjoy standing on the pew, being as tall as everyone else and singing in the middle of the music (rather than hearing it somewhere above them). When children get too tall to stand on the pew, try sitting beside your standing child or leaning down to them so your voice is nearer to your child's ear.
- ◆ Don't sing all the time. Occasionally, hum or 'la-la,' even whistle a hymn together. (Yes, in the sanctuary!) This is especially welcome by early or non-readers. They can participate and begin learning the tunes without the words. It also serves as a reminder that worship is meant to be enjoyable and celebratory!
- ◆ Emphasize repeated phrases or choruses in a hymn with a nudge and wink, encouraging young readers to sing at least those phrases even before they can read all the verses.
- ◆ Invest in a hymnal to keep in a worship bag. With your child, underline important words. Write the date of each time you sing each hymn. Add star stickers or dog ear the ones you really like. Encourage your child to make notes or draw in the margins. Add some notes or drawings of your own.
- ◆ Write a key phrase in a hymn you just sang on a piece of paper or a page in your child's “worship journal.” Encourage your child to illustrate or write about it during the rest of worship.

Adapted using ideas from the *Worshiping with Children* blog:
www.worshipingwithchildren.blogspot.com

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