



How do we
welcome and
guide the
youngest
among us in
our services?



worshipping
together

Children

Children are valued members of our community. They belong in worship.

Just like adults, children learn by doing and experiencing first-hand. It is important for children to participate in worship.



Whether they understand everything that happens in worship or not, children absorb what is around them and develop a sense of belonging.

It is tough for children to sit still for long. We have materials in the sanctuary to help occupy young and old alike, as well as times during worship where we encourage people to move about.

Parents

- Help your children find things to do at the stations around the sanctuary.
- Get settled with your children before the service. Sit near the front where children can see what is happening and feel more involved.
- Explain what is happening. Whisper instructions to help them learn “worship etiquette.” During prayers, practice stillness and silence.
- During “Story For All Ages,” feel free to come forward with your child.
- Mothers with nursing children are welcome in the service. We have rockers in the back of the sanctuary and Hearth Room, as well as a Nursery down the long hall.
- Talk about the service on the way home. Look for opportunities to relate what was said and done in the service to something that happens at home or school during the week.



All of Us

- Greet children. Be as intentional about learning children's names as you are about adults' names.
- With parent permission, occasionally invite a child to sit with you during worship.
- Encourage children to be respectful in worship, but not absolutely still.
- When children share, respond to them as participants in worship—not as performers.
- Laugh with children, not at them.
- Be understanding if parents need to take younger ones out and then return during worship.
- Be patient with the learning process—it won't always be smooth.
- Open yourself to what you can learn from our children as well as what you might be able to help them learn.



Worship is...

- A time set apart to consider things of worth and value
- A time for the gathering of our church community
- A time to come home to ourselves

Together, let's make Oak Ridge Unitarian Universalist Church worship services a welcoming place for all.

