

Frequently-Asked Questions

Should my 2 (or 3 or 4 or 5) year old child be in the Nursery or the Church during the services? Children are welcome in either place. The 9:00 am Eucharist is informal and designed to include children. There are times, however, when children are restless or disruptive, making it difficult for their parents to worship. At these times, the Nursery is available for use during part or all of the service. Some parents choose to bring their children in from the Nursery at the Offertory so that they can receive Communion or a blessing. Although the 11:15 am service is more adult-oriented, children are welcome to attend. The Nursery is available for part or all of this service too.

What are the Children's Bulletins? Children's Bulletins (along with pencils and crayons) are available in baskets in the back of the Sanctuary before Sunday services. Based on the Gospel and other readings of the day, these bulletins contain age-appropriate pictures and puzzles for children to color or solve. Because of children's limited attention spans, some parents find this a helpful way to keep children busy during the adult sermon, choir anthems, or other times when young ones are restless during the service. Other parents prefer that their children do not use the bulletins but rather sit attentively through the entire service.

When is my child old enough to receive Communion? As noted in our weekly bulletins and in accordance with the practice of the national Episcopal Church, "all persons" are welcome to receive Communion at St. Timothy's, regardless of age or denomination. This statement often raises another question:

Should a child take Communion when they don't understand what it means? The answer to this question lies in the fact that Communion is a sacrament, an "outward and visible sign of an inward and invisible grace." There is an element of mystery to all Sacraments: Although an identifiable act takes place on the outside, God does something on the inside, something that we cannot completely understand or comprehend which is given to us by the grace of God. The truth of the matter is that none of us fully understand what takes place! In any case, there is not a right or wrong answer to the question of when a child should begin taking Communion. Some parents choose to have their children wait until 2nd grade, the traditional "First Communion" age, but more and more of our families allow children to take Communion as soon as they are able and willing. Although it is a valid argument that waiting until the age of 8 or 9 allows the child to comprehend the solemnity and importance of this rite, children might feel excluded. Equally important, if parents decide to allow them to take Communion at an earlier age, parents must be prepared to answer their questions. And, if your child spits out or otherwise rejects a wafer, it is important that it be consumed. The clergy at St. Timothy's are always willing to talk to children about Communion. In response to the concern of many parents, we offer a Holy Eucharist Preparation course for 2nd and 3rd graders in January each year. See Judy Gardner for details.

When does Confirmation take place? In the Episcopal Church, Confirmation is the occasion when adults reaffirm the vows made for them by their parents at the time of their Baptism. This takes place during the Bishop's annual visitation to St. Timothy's. Confirmation preparation usually occurs in the 9th and 10th grades.

What can I (as a parent or other adult parishioner) do to help with the Children & Youth Programs? Besides bringing your child to church on Sunday mornings, there are a variety of other ways that you can help out with the Children & Youth programs on either a regular or occasional basis:

- Deposit Snacks in the container in the Gathering Space—Kids get hungry learning about God.
- Help with special events such as Family Sunday, the Christmas Pageant (December 19), and Vacation Bible School (June 13-17).
- Pray for St. Timothy's ministry to Children and Youth.

The Children & Youth Programs and ministries for children and youth is an enormously collaborative effort. In sum, we need you! Please contact Judy Gardner or Christopher Richardson and let them know the talents and gifts you wish to share!