

## **Preparing for a Successful Sunday Morning Gathering Experience**

As we move into modified in-person gatherings as a church, we want the experience to be positive for everyone involved – including our kids! As we are unable to have any groups of kids meet in a separate space, all children will remain with their families for the gathering. Below is a list of ideas to help you set yourself and your kids up for success.

### **1. Create a special ‘Church Bag’ with quiet toys & activities**

You know your child best, and so what goes in your ‘Church Bag’ will be unique to your family. I would suggest that at least a few of the items are special to the ‘Church Bag’ and do not get taken out except for at church, to keep them novel and interesting to kids. A few ideas are below, but you will find many more online!

- Coloring book
- Sticker book
- Pipe cleaners
- Dry erase board
- Small bin of Legos
- I Spy book
- Magnets & cookie sheet
- Blank notepad
- Lacing cards
- Fidget sticks like ‘Bendeez’
- Silly putty
- Word search
- Wikki Stix
- Melissa & Doug Water Wow books
- Lift-a-flap board books
- Etch-a-sketch
- Snacks
- Clipboard & paper

### **2. Have kids engage their bodies actively before the gathering to expel energy**

Mornings can be busy, but kids that have had a chance to run around, stretch their bodies, and play before coming to church may have an easier time participating in quiet activities during the gathering.

### **3. Verbally prepare kids with your expectations for the church gathering**

A few days before church, sit down with your kids and explain your expectations for their behavior during church. Share that everyone will be wearing masks and you will be sitting on a special blanket as a family during the message. Make it clear what you expect them to do AND why it’s important.

*Suggested verbiage:* “Church is important because it is a time for Christians to gather together, worship God, and learn more about Him. It is also a time for people that don’t know about Jesus yet to hear the good news that He came to save us! But if people are loud and rowdy during church, someone might miss that important message.”