



Dear Parents of GUMC Kids,

We are so glad to have your child move to their next grade level at GUMC Kids on **Promotion Sunday, August 8th!**

For those of you who are joining us as parents in Elementary Kids Quest or Preschool Stepping Stones for the first time, we want to welcome you and give you a few pointers for making your child's transition as smooth as possible.

- **Make church a family priority.** Regular attendance at church will help your child adjust to the environment, feel more connected with his/her class and adult mentor, and learn the importance of commitment to a church family.
- **Participate.** We need lots of volunteers to help in our children's ministry. As a parent, you are the first and most influential Christian example in your child's life. Serving in a children's ministry program is a visible example to your child that church is a priority worthy of your time and energy. It's also a great way to spend quality time with your child and to get to know his/her church friends! While our Hamilton Nursery is overseen by paid staff each Sunday, we depend on parents to volunteer to teach our Elementary Sunday School classes. Please contact us if you are willing to serve as a Sunday School teacher.
- **Take your child to worship.** Children are part of the family of God and are encouraged to go to worship. If your child has not attended worship before, you may find the tips on the enclosed information sheet helpful. It is a good idea to bring your child into the sanctuary at a time when he/she can explore and ask questions. Be sure to talk with your child about worship each week. The Hamilton Nursery is open during our worship services for younger children (ages birth- prekindergarten).
- **Special needs.** If your child has a special need, please alert us to that so we are able to be best prepared.

It is our goal in children's ministry at GUMC to provide a safe, fun, positive, and exciting atmosphere where children can be nurtured in their Christian faith and grow in the grace and love of God. We look forward to watching your child grow physically, intellectually, and *spiritually* during his/her years in Elementary Kids Quest and Preschool Stepping Stones! You can find the listing of room assignments for each age, as well as a worship schedule, on the enclosed attachment.

Please feel free to contact us anytime if you have any questions, concerns, or if you would like more information on volunteering.

Many blessings,

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## **Worship Schedule through September 12, 2021:**

**9:00am-9:45am:** Traditional Worship in Sanctuary

**10:00am-10:45am:** Sunday School for all ages

**11:00am-12pm:** Contemporary Worship in Sanctuary

## **UPDATED Worship Schedule beginning September 19<sup>th</sup>:**

**8:30am-9:15am:** Traditional Worship in Sanctuary

**9:30am-10:30am:** Sunday School for all ages

**10:30am-11:00am:** Fellowship time in Mike Wilson Fellowship Hall

**11:00am-12pm:** Traditional Worship in Sanctuary

**11:00am-12pm:** Contemporary Worship in Owings Life Enrichment Center (OLEC)

## **Preschool/Nursery age room assignments:** (Hamilton Nursery)

**The Hamilton Nursery is open during all worship services and Sunday School.**

**Lambs (birth until walking):** Room 221

**Doves (walking through 2 years old by August 15, 2021):** Room 220

**Whales (2 years old by August 15, 2021):** Room 224

**Lions (3 years old by August 15, 2021):** Room 214/216

**Eagles (4 years old by August 15, 2021-prekindergarten):** Room 233/234

## **Elementary age room assignments:** (Children's Education Wing)

**We will only have one Sunday School hour for Elementary children each week. Elementary children are encouraged to attend Worship with their families before or after Sunday School.**

**The Huddle (Room 240):** All elementary age children begin the Sunday School hour in this room (top of the ramp past the sanctuary). After large group time, we will break into small groups in the following rooms. Please pick up here:

**Kindergarten & 1<sup>st</sup> Grade girls:** Room 260/262

**Kindergarten & 1<sup>st</sup> Grade boys:** Room 256/258

**2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade girls:** Room 240 (The Huddle)

**2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade boys:** Room 259

**4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade girls:** Room 257

**4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> Grade boys:** Room 261

## **Sunday School Information:**

Adult, Youth, and Children's Sunday School classes will now be meeting between worship services each week. If you need help connecting with an adult Sunday School class while your children are in Sunday School, please let us know. There will also be a time for gathering in the Fellowship Hall or quiet reflection in the Narthex during the Sunday School hour. We could always use adult volunteer teachers in our Elementary classes and Special Needs' Sensory room if you desire to serve while your child is in Sunday School. Please let us know how we can help you connect while your children attend Sunday School!

# Germantown UMC Tips for Bringing Children to Worship

Germantown UMC invites and encourages children of all ages to attend worship. While we hope for appropriate behavior, we do not mind the noise (and possible commotion) that comes with having young children in worship. Children are *part of this* faith family and are welcome in worship. To help in this transition, try some or all of the following:

## 1. Bring your child to church on a day other than Sunday morning.

Go on a tour of the church facility and locate the sanctuary, the Sunday School rooms, as well as the bathrooms. Let your child explore the sanctuary, see how it feels to sit in the pew, and leaf through the Bibles and hymnals. Look around the chancel area (front of sanctuary) and talk about what will happen during the service.

## 2. Take home a worship bulletin and go through the service at home.

Show your child that there are times to sit, to stand, to sing, to pray, and to listen. Help your child learn the Lord's Prayer and practice it at home. Prepare offering envelopes and let your child put money in the envelope; explain why the offering is important. You may even encourage "playing church" at home.

## 3. Read the Bible and pray at home.

If you have not done so, purchase an age-appropriate Bible for your child and read the stories. Let your child handle the Bible and encourage questions. You can explain that the Bible is where we learn God's story and how we are part of that story. If you let prayer be a part of your everyday life, not just something you do at church, your child will understand its importance.

## 4. Sit near an aisle, near an exit.

If your child needs to go to the bathroom, is feeling overly stimulated, or having a disruptive day, *don't be embarrassed*. Walk your child out of the sanctuary until he/she can work off a little energy, and then come back in. This is much easier if you don't have to crawl across a row of other people in the pew! Little ones also like to sit up front because they are able to see more easily. We have a room with a live stream of the service available in the Hamilton Nursery if you need to sit in there for a few minutes.

## 5. Be prepared with a worship notebook or bag.

Our church provides materials for children to use during worship, but you are welcome to bring your own. Worship bags are located in the narthex. Ask an usher if you need help finding one. We also have children's bulletins and sermon sheets on the table outside of the sanctuary. Coloring pages or blank paper for doodling are great to have in your bag. Coloring and doodling is not disrespectful, and can actually help your child listen more attentively. Encourage your child to draw pictures of the sermon or songs. Please, no markers – they may stain the pews.

## 6. Teach basic church etiquette.

Speak to people before and after worship and teach your child how to greet others. If your child is shy, don't force it, but practice at home and let your child see you greeting others. If your child can read, lead him/her through the bulletin, showing them the order of worship. It may be helpful to mark the hymns in the hymnal before the service begins so your child can find them independently. Let your child put the hymnal and Bible away after use, and be sure to take your bulletin with you, rather than leaving it in the pew. Meeting other people and taking care of the church facility helps a child feel that "this is my church!"

## 7. Get to know the ministers.

Introduce your child to the minister after worship and participate in other church activities so that the minister becomes a familiar face.

## 8. Don't give up!

It may take a while for your child to become comfortable in worship. The best way for this to happen is to attend worship on a regular basis. There may be days when it doesn't go well, but don't let this stop you from coming the following week. Practice may not make perfect, but it helps a lot!