



And Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them, for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs." Matthew 19:14

At First Congregational UCC, as Jesus did, we welcome children of all ages as integral members of the body of Christ, and we welcome the sounds and activity that accompany them. We are pleased to offer The Pray Ground – a space for children, those with special needs, and caregivers to worship with us more comfortably. You can learn more about The Pray Ground on the back of this flyer.

We also understand that it takes a village to raise a child. A few tips for engaging our families with young children include:

- Greeting/learning the names of the children who sit near you in worship.
- Offering to read or color with one child during worship, especially if another child in the family is especially fussy or upset.
- Helping preschoolers and elementary-aged children follow along with the liturgy, locate the hymns, etc. (Children learn to worship by participating!)
- Inviting children to serve alongside you in worship as greeters, ushers, etc.
- Recognizing that certain conditions or disabilities don't present physically, and some children (and adults) may make noises or act in ways that seem strange or upsetting, but are perfectly normal for their situation.
- Celebrating that God put the wiggle in children, and that children's "mode of being" in worship is intrinsically more vocal and more physical than that of most adults.



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The Pray Ground

The space in the back of the Sanctuary is designed especially for children ages 3-10, recognizing that young children are often more engaged in worship when they can see what's going on. It may also be suitable for older children and adults with special needs. The Pray Ground has comfortable seating, quiet toys, books, and art supplies to keep participants engaged. The rules for The Pray Ground are posted. Caregivers, please guide your children as they learn to follow the rules. Adults are welcome to join the kids on The Pray Ground to help them follow along in worship, play quietly, or simply spend time with our children.

The Nursery

Children from birth to 3 years of age are always welcome in our nursery, staffed by our childcare staff. The nursery is located upstairs and we ask that you take a Child Information Card with your child on their first visit. You are also welcome to keep children of any age with you in worship, if you'd prefer. We trust our families to work out the best options for them and their child(ren) on any given day.

Activity Bags

Located just outside the front doors of the Sanctuary and in a basket near The Pray Ground, these bags contain books, crayons, small toys, and other things designed to keep little hands occupied.



*Flyer language and concept borrowed with permission
from Grace Lutheran Church in Apple Valley, MN.
You can learn more about their Pray-Ground at graceofav.org/prayground.*

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