



Northminster GAIT

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Children and Worship – Children can Experience Faith (as seen in the May Newsletter)

In the church, young and old belong together to share in the worshiping community with each other. John H. Westerhoff III has suggested that it is critical that three generations be involved together in the faith community. Too often the church separates the generation in its programming and worship or completely ignores the older as well as the younger generation. The older generation is the generation of memory. The younger generation can be the generation of vision, but only if there is memory, which is provided by the older generation. The middle generation is the generation of the present, which confronts memory and vision with reality. (Westerhoff 1983, 53-54).

There are several different views about how churches welcome children into the faith community. Some observe infant baptism; others practice the dedication or presentation of young children. Whatever a particular denomination believes, how children are involved in congregational worship services is an indication of how the members follow through on the statements they made during the infant dedication or baptism service.

As a denomination that celebrates infant baptism, the baptism is considered to be a sign of belonging to the church, of welcome into the family of God. The words of the sacrament emphasize this belonging: "God has made you members of the household of God, to share with us in priesthood of Christ." (PCUSA Book of Common Worship, 1993)

The experience that people have as children eventually will contribute to their behavior as adults. If children develop a sense of belonging with the family of faith, they may be more likely to want to maintain and increase their relationship and identity with the church and with God. If children feel unwelcome and out of place, they may want to sever their ties with the church.

In worship, children can develop their identity with the people of God. This feeling becomes a foundation for future participation in the ministry of the church and for a relationship with all Christians throughout the world.

When children are meaningfully involved in congregational worship, they can realize through experience the positive potential they have as children of God. Favorable messages about a child's behavior may be interpreted by the youngster as affirmative statements about self and thereby reassure the child of God's love and care.

In Matthew 18:1-4, Jesus refers to a child to illustrate the characteristics needed to enter the kingdom of heaven. Here is an expanded list of the important qualities of children: joy, honesty, receptivity, tenderness, awareness, affirmation, complete involvement, motion and rhythm, clear communication, expression of feelings, energy, generosity, acceptance, simplicity, enthusiasm, creativity. Adults would be wise to bring these unassuming and genuine features to other roles in the church, such as fellowship, learning, and mission. Adults need to be willing to learn these attributes again from children, to be receptive to the childlike spirit that opens individuals to the gospel. When children worship with the congregation, adults may see this childlike nature in action.

Next month – the final installment: What Children Can Contribute to Worship

-Rev. Dr. Stacey D. Jones

Faith Statement submitted by the 2008 Confirmation Class: Daniel Vigil, Clair Rogers and Garrett Johnson

Over the past weeks, we have learned many things in confirmation. Some of things we have learned are what the Bible says about certain topics and what the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America believes about those topics. One of the main topics was the trinity.

God the father, we learned, is the creator of everything and is lord of all. Also, he loves you and me. Jesus Christ is God's son and our savior. We believe he died to save us from sin and was raised from the dead. He is fully human and fully God. The Holy Spirit, the final part of the trinity, is our spiritual guide and helps us do the right thing.

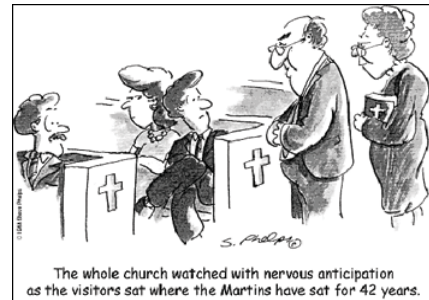
Another topic we learned about is the Bible. The Bible is the word of God and helps us to get closer to God. It tells us how to live a good, Christian life. The Bible can be interpreted many ways and this leads to the different denominations.

The third major thing we learned about was worship. The purpose of worship is to praise God. Attending worship helps the Holy Spirit work in our lives.

The two sacraments, baptism and the Lord's Supper, are two very important things we also learned about. The Bible says many things about baptism. It says when you are baptized you are turning away from sin and your sins are washed away. Also, it says that baptism is when you are accepting god into your heart. Lastly, the Bible says that it is a formal entrance into the community of Christ. The Bible says that communion is when we remember the Last Supper. More importantly, though, we are celebrating Christ's resurrection from the dead.

The final thing we learned about was mission. Mission can be evangelism or reaching out to people in need. It should be a natural outcome of faith.

We learned we are saved by grace through faith which leads to good works.



An open letter to the members of Northminster Presbyterian Church,

Even a tradition as time-honored as worship has gone high-tech.

When I felt a recent need to reconnect with a church community, I turned to my computer's search engine, much as I would for information on any subject. I chose your church based on Pastor Stacey's photo and the sermons posted on your Web site. I was drawn in by her smile and the words used to define your community of faith.

I came to you at a very difficult time in my life. I had judged myself harshly for things I had done and felt others were judging me, too. In fact, in one email exchange with Pastor Stacey, I wondered whether I was worthy enough to worship among you. She assured me that all who believe are worthy.

I approached your church cautiously, attending Maundy Thursday services before jumping into full church mode. From the second I entered the church, I felt such peace, comfort, and fellowship. You are as warm towards visitors as you are towards long-standing members. Though writing has been a big part of my professional life, I cannot find the words to express how much that meant to me. In this high-tech world in which we live, I needed some high-touch. Many of you went out of your way to introduce yourselves and to shake my hand during the sharing of the peace. The power and comfort of those simple gestures defy description.

I worshipped among you from nearly two months. Now it's time for me to move on. I have relocated for a new job and will soon have a new church home. Whenever I return to Ames, I will worship with you. Until then, please know that you played an important role in reaffirming the spirit of a lost, confused and pained Soul. I considered closing this letter by encouraging you to continue the type of outreach efforts that touched me. But then I realized you don't need a reminder. It's what you do and will continue to do. You make all people feel welcome. You make a difference. You are the very definition of Christian goodness.

May God's peace be ever with you,

Pam Reinig

Thank You!

Submitted by Michelle Rogers

On May 18th, we said than you to all the Christian Education teachers from the past year. The list included: Jan Beran, Rebecca Brandau, Brent Brewer, Susan Cross, Greg Daley, Holly Helmer, Cherrie Hug, Chris Jones, Stacey Jones, Mary Jo Larsen, Chris Lawrence, Pat Long, Michele Rogers and Lori Sulzberger

Thanks again to all of you for giving of your time to further the education of NPC

VBS

VBS is quickly approaching. Please remember to check our board in the gathering space for a list of donations we need as well as a sing up sheet to volunteer. If you need help remembering the job descriptions, please see Stacey. VBS will be August 3rd through the 7th from 5:30pm – 8:30 p.m. We will provide dinner. We are very excited and look forward to this great ministry opportunity.

Accolytes for June

The upcoming schedule for candle lighters is as follows:

June 1 Andrea Daley and Emily Helmer

June 8 Daniel Vigil and David Vigil

June 15 Ben Sulzberger and Ben Perrin

June 22 Brad Johnson and Lucas Johnson

June 29 Steven Lawrence and Natalie Lawrence

July 6 Nick Johnson and Garrett Johnson

THANKS EVERYONE FOR HELPING WITH OUR WORSHIP SERVICES. YOU'RE DOING A GREAT JOB.

E-mail From Jan Padgitt

JESUS

Jesus had no servants, yet they called Him Master.

Had no degree, yet they called Him Teacher.

Had no medicines, yet they called Him Healer.

Had no army, yet kings feared Him.

He won no military battles, yet He conquered the world.

He committed no crime, yet they crucified Him.

He was buried in a tomb, yet He lives today.

Feel honored to serve such a Leader who loves us.!

Happenings in June

Anniversaries:

June 9th, Rick and Kristi Perrin

June 15th, Guy and Holly Helmer

June 22nd: Don and Doris Goering

Birthdays:

June 4th: Gary Greiner

June 8th: Virginia Clayton

June 14th, Thomas White

June 16th Maggie Larsen

June 19th, Jeff White

June 20th, Garret Johnson

June 21st, Mary Jo Larsen

June 25th, Sylvia Kleppin

June 28th, Rick Perrin

E-Mail from Arlene Jutting

Sand and Stone

Two friends were walking through the desert. During some point of the journey, they had an argument and one friend slapped the other in the face. The one who got slapped was hurt, but without saying anything he wrote in the sand: "Today my best friend slapped me in the face." They kept on walking until they found an oasis where they decided to take a bath. The one who

had been slapped got stuck in the mire and started drowning but the friend saved him. After he recovered from the near drowning, he wrote on a stone: "Today my best friend saved my life." The friend who had first slapped and later saved his best friend asked him: "After I hurt you, you wrote in the sand, and now you write on a stone. Why?"

The friend replied: "When someone hurts us we should write it down in sand where winds of forgiveness can erase it away. But when someone does something good for us, we must engrave it in stone where no wind can ever erase it."

Learn to write your hurts in the sand and to carve your benefits in stone.

Do not value the things you have in your life but value WHO you have in your life!



GAIT Deadline for July is Monday, June 23rd!! Please e-mail your articles to rpcykp@msn.com or put them in the GAIT editor's box next to the church office