



Should you bring your children to church? **Yes please!** Children not only have a special place in Jesus' heart, they are very special to us here, too. At Emmanuel we are committed to creating a church where everyone, from the youngest to the oldest, will feel welcome and comfortable and able to participate as fully as possible

This leaflet offers, I hope, some helpful thoughts, and practical suggestions, about ways in which you, your children, and your family, can become a valuable part of the church family here at Emanuel. It's a great joy for me to welcome you, and your children, as you do so.

The opening part of our services are 'Family Worship' times when the whole church worships together before children leave to go to their own groups (except 'All Age Worship' services (first Sunday of the month) when families remain together for the whole service).

All children are encouraged to attend 'Heroes' or Crèche (all volunteers are DBS cleared). Parents are welcome to stay, for several weeks if necessary, until children are confident enough to stay on their own.

Our crèche is a comfortable and warm place for parents to take children if they become unsettled during our services. Here you will be able to follow, through our large window, what is taking place in our worship area, as well as being able to listen to the service through our PA link.

We have several activities taking place throughout the week for parents with children. Please have a read through our welcome leaflet for further information. Also, please take the opportunity to speak with me, a Churchwarden, a member of our welcome team, or one of our stewards, who would love to help you.

With every blessing in Jesus' precious name

Revd Paul A. Carr (Team Rector)

we couldn't possibly ...

Yes you could - you'll find lots of parents do.

We have plenty of room for buggies around our church building and in the designated seating for young families in our worship area.

but church isn't for babies and children!

Yes it is!

The church is God's family and we would be a poor family if babies and children weren't welcome. The sooner you get started the easier it will be. There is less for active toddlers to get used to if they start young - you will be surprised how quickly they will get used to being in 'Gods House.'

what will they get out of it?

Do your children understand all you say to them?

No, but they soon get the feel of it. In church, they will gradually learn the same way: by the sound; the songs; the smell; the feel of things; by the people they meet; by what they see you doing. They will learn as they do with everything else. Children, just as much as adults, need: a time to think; a time of quiet; a time to pray; a time to sing; a time to praise God; and a time to meet with others who think the same.

what if they let me down?

Don't be embarrassed. We've all been there!

Children have a more natural attitude than adults. They don't feel that Christianity needs a special voice or behaviour and they come to learn that grown-ups need 'special quiet' to pray & listen to God.

when shall we come?

Family worship on Sundays at 10.30 am is a good place to start, but you are welcome to attend any service at Emmanuel. Don't forget we have an 'All Age Worship' and/or Parade Service on the first Sunday of every month when children remain in church for the whole of the service. At other times during the month, children are invited to attend their own groups. For those with younger children, our crèche is always available.

preaching and quiet times

Adults, as much as children, need times of quiet.

We enjoy learning from the Bible at Emmanuel and we like this to be a quiet time in the middle of our service. This allows adults (whilst the children are in their own groups or the crèche) to be able to concentrate on the sermon and enjoy some quiet reflection and prayer afterwards. With prayers, this usually lasts for about 30-40 minutes. Communion involves the whole church family, so please take your children to the front of church to receive a blessing.

what shall we bring?

Nobody can expect a small child to be still and quiet during a church service. Bringing some toys along to church can help to keep your child occupied.

Babies and Toddlers: Bring soft toys without bells, rattles or wind up wheels. Bring them a drink or a snack. Who knows, they may even go to sleep!

Two Years and Upwards: We have activity bags available, but why not create your own bag kept only for church? This way, they discover the contents afresh each time. This is easier than trying to collect odd items in the Sunday morning rush. Put in slippers; books with pictures; scrap paper; pencils; crayons; dolls or teddies; a blanket; comics; or a quiet toy. Don't forget there are lots of lovely toys in the crèche!

what else do I need to consider?

Sit near the end of the row (or in the area set aside for families with young children) so that your child can stand in the aisle to watch and sing. Encourage your child to take part in the service and explain to them what is going on: stand when everyone else does; sit; sing and so on.

Remember to help older children to read from the service sheets or the PowerPoint. Children learn a lot of these skills when they start school. Don't worry if you feel you are paying more attention to your children than the service - it does get easier with time (most parents would tell you this). Should they want to go exploring, explain that you will show them at the end.

If they become unsettled you can take them into the lobby or crèche and, once they have calmed down, bring them back into church again. You will find people more than willing to help - many of us have been parents with small children in church at one time or another.

don't be put off!

All children go through difficult phases so, please, keep trying. Emmanuel church is for you, and for everyone, young and old alike.

bringing your child to church is an act of worship in itself

Bearing in mind that your aim is to integrate your child to become a member of God's family:

- We promise to make you, your children and your family, welcome.
- We aim to ensure that the church family of all ages can all enjoy their time at Emmanuel.
- We don't always get things right - please bear with us - and do let us know if we don't.

Emmanuel is a church that seeks to be

a praying Church

Where individual and corporate prayer is a priority.

a Church of preaching & teaching

Where God's word brings us to a closer relationship with the Lord Jesus, which enables us to be Active Christians able to demonstrate Biblical morals and ethics in our daily lives.

a Church of praise & worship

Where we bring people of all ages into the presence of God (using contemporary and traditional styles) through which the Holy Spirit may flow in His refreshing power.

a Church where God's gifts are given & used

Where the Church family of all ages are encouraged and empowered to develop the gifts the Holy Spirit has given them and where we allow Him freedom to do His work.

a Church of compassion, concern & care

Where we seek to minister to, and care for, the needs of those in our church and community.

a committed Church

Where meeting together every Sunday, and regularly throughout the week, is a priority.

a family Church

Where we are committed to making everyone, from the youngest to the oldest, feel welcome.

a growing Church

Where we are committed to growing:

Spiritually: Through maturing in our faith and becoming active disciples of Jesus;

Numerically: Through developing new and meaningful relationships to bring others into the Church family;

Financially: Where we are committed to resourcing the mission and ministry of Emmanuel and the wider church.

a Church with a vision

Where we seek to find new, and more effective, ways of serving God and sharing the love of Jesus in words and actions.

a Church who are outward looking

Where we play an active part in the life and community of Billericay and where we are committed to engaging with the mission of the Christian church, at home and abroad, through active participation and through regular financial support.

a witnessing Church

Where our life and actions reflect the new life we have found in Jesus.

a Church in partnership

Where we recognise our involvement in the worldwide Church

Jesus' Church

Where HE reigns supreme!



bring your children to church!?

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