

**Christianity is about relationships—a relationship with God through Jesus, and relationships with others as part of God’s family, the church. Relationships are sometimes hard and sometimes fun, but always worthwhile.**

**At home**

The more you can read bible stories with your children, pray with them, sing worship songs, listen to Christian songs and hymns, watch Christian DVD’s, the more familiar and natural church will become. Model the Christian faith to your children. If your children see that you value your faith and church they are more likely to follow your example.

**We’re in it together**

If your child has been baptised (Christened) then the vicar asked the congregation, “People of God, will you welcome this child and uphold them in their life in Christ?” The congregation answered, “With the help of God we will”

Whilst the primary responsibility for bringing children up in the Christian faith rests with their parents, we at church are committed to supporting and helping you in this task.

If there is anything we can do to help you, please let us know.



**It takes a whole village to raise a child.**

*Ancient African proverb*

**Contact us**

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St Martin, Eynsford  
St Peter & St Paul, Farningham  
St Botolph, Lullingstone

# Your child and church

## A guide for parents and carers of younger children



We are so glad that you have decided to bring your child to church. As Anglican churches we exist to provide a spiritual home for all the members of our parishes - young and old. Jesus said, “let the little children come to me, and do not stop them, because the kingdom of God belongs to such as these”

This leaflet is designed to help you and your child make the most of your church. Its not exhaustive, but hopefully you will find some helpful tips and if we can do anything else to help you, please talk to the Rector or one of the church wardens.

## Types of service

The best services to bring children to church are:

9.30am All age Communion services at Eynsford which have a Sunday School every week

1st & 3rd Sundays 10am Morning Worship altogether at Farningham  
2nd & 4th Sundays 10am Communion services with special activities are provided at back of church

Families preferring a more traditional service may enjoy the welcoming 11.00am service at Lullingstone (with a Sunday School on 4th Sunday)

## Before coming to church

- Have breakfast together in as relaxed a way as possible.
- Talk about the fact that you are going to church and why as positively as possible.
- Leave plenty of time to get to church—rushing doesn't help children (or adults) arrive in a good frame of mind.

## Upon entering church

- Take a service sheet for your child, even if they can't read—children often like to be included.
- Sit at the front where your children can see.
- With small children, sit by the aisle so you can get out without disturbing others.



## As you wait for the service to begin:

- Say a prayer asking God to help you worship him, learn how to follow Jesus, and live as a Christian.
- Talk quietly about the service, what is going to happen and why we do it.
- Look at the church building - its full of things that point to God. You might play count the crosses, or number of animals. Look at the colours (they change throughout the church year). Talk about the pictures and stained glass you can see.



## During the service

Try to help your child engage with the service. Here are a few ideas:

- If your child is old enough to read, help them follow the words.
- There is a large amount of repetition of the same words week by week. The more often you can come to church, the more of the service your child will learn by heart. Encourage them to join in. Just saying “amen” is a good start.
- Try not to say “sshh” to your child. The sound carries around church and its unlikely to make your child quiet. Try strategies such as whispering in their ear, “We are trying to be quiet so that we can hear what the rector is saying”.
- Whisper questions in their ear, or point out things for them to look at. During Communion point out what is happening with the bread and wine. Point to who is speaking.
- Bring some Bible story books to look at and give them a small snack to eat quietly. Try to avoid toys that can be used to make loud noises.
- Most importantly, don't panic! The more wound up you get, the worse your children will behave. A small amount of noise is quite acceptable. If your child is getting really noisy, take them outside, calm them down and then come back in again.



## Bear with us

We do not always get it right. Church is made up of different individuals with different ideas and ways of doing things. If someone does something to upset you or your child, don't take it personally and talk to the rector or one of the wardens about it.

## More ideas

See our website for books and resources you might find helpful.