



Transitional Worship

Helping Children move from Children Worship & Wonder to
Sanctuary Worship

Purpose: Transitional Worship was designed to provide the setting and opportunity in which older children can ask questions and explore the parts of sanctuary worship in a less formal setting. It serves as a rite of passage, following “Graduation” from Children Worship & Wonder and preparing children and youth for full participation in Sanctuary Worship.

Setting: A room set up with chairs and a communion table (should appear similar to your sanctuary)

Worship Resources: Similar to what is used in the sanctuary, i.e. hymnals or projected music and bulletins

Personnel Required: Worship leader – this person should be comfortable with children and in leading worship
Musician

Timeline: Several months ahead of time invite the worship leader and musician
Several weeks ahead of time send out invitation letter to children (see below)
Four Sundays that coincide with Children Worship & Wonder Orientation Sundays

Plan:

1. Invite qualified worship leader from your congregation to lead the children in Transitional Worship.
2. Send invitations to the children and their parents, explaining Transitional Worship and inviting them to participate. (3-4 weeks prior)
3. During each of the four Sundays of Transitional Worship, older children leave the Sanctuary when the younger children leave for Children Worship & Wonder, but move to their Transitional Worship space.
4. Transitional Worship progresses each week with much discussion between the worship leader and children. The worship leader should take time to answer any questions that may arise.
 - a. First Sunday – Move through the worship order discussing each part. Introduce the bulletin and how to follow along. Make comparisons between Sanctuary worship and Children Worship & Wonder, i.e. “What do we call this part in W & W?”
 - b. Second Sunday – Move through worship order again. Concentrate on finding songs in the hymnal and how to sing a multi-verse hymn.
 - c. Third Sunday – Move through worship order again. Focus this week on the scripture and sermon. Suggest ways children can become engaged in the sermon time, i.e. following along with scripture, writing questions or comments to discuss with the pastor, etc.
 - d. Fourth Sunday – Move through worship order again, but this time with the children taking leadership, including reading scripture, leading songs, serving at the Table, etc. Parents may be invited to participate with their children on this Sunday. Conclude with a celebration of transition into sanctuary worship. Encourage parents to continue the dialogue that was begun with the children in Transitional Worship.





Sample Invitation “Transitional Worship.” A special time of orientation for children leaving Children Worship & Wonder and transitioning into the service of community worship.

Dear [Child’s name],

Congratulations on growing into such a fine young person. Your friends at [name of your church] are very proud of you and want to offer all the support we can as you continue to grow in your life of faith.

During the month of [] you are invited to attend a very special worship, designed just for you. This special worship is called “Transitional Worship” and it is a time for you and other Children Worship & Wonder graduates to learn about the worship that takes place in the sanctuary of our church.

Singing, praying, Bible reading, hearing God’s stories, alone times, giving offerings, feasting, and blessings are all part of worship in the sanctuary. In sanctuary worship some things are done in the same way as in Children Worship & Wonder and some things are done in a different way.

Transitional Worship will help you get ready for the differences. During the [# and dates of Sundays] you will learn how to use the hymnal and the pew Bible. You will learn how to follow the bulletin. We will talk about things you can do to help you listen closely to the sermons. We will share communion, which is very much like the feast in Children Worship & Wonder. We will talk about and practice the many ways you might help to lead worship, if you wish to do so. You might decide to take a turn at helping to lead worship by reading scripture or saying prayers. Perhaps you will want to serve as a greeter and help to handout bulletins and welcome visitors or even sing in the sanctuary choir.

If you want to participate in the [#] Sundays of Transitional Worship please leave worship at the end of the children’s message, on [date] but instead of following the younger children to the Children’s Worship room, come to the [name of place for your transitional worship].

See you Sunday!

Love in Christ,

