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To: Leigh Meekins
Subject: Ministry With Children - February 2010



Ministry with Children

"...for it is to such as these that the Kingdom of God belongs." Mark 10.14b

February 2010

Children's Moments: Liturgy versus the Current Reality

What are your thoughts on Children's Moments? As part of my ministry, I have the opportunity to attend various United Methodist Churches, and find myself curious as to the reason for and placement of Children's Moments. These moments are the topic of debate in many congregations whether the conversation centers on the theological implications or why the children are jumping around instead of listening. Liturgically, there is no explicit placement in the Order of Worship for Children's Moments [*United Methodist Hymnal*, p. 3-5], yet about half of the churches that I visit or contact offer Children's Moments within worship.

I talked with the Reverend Barry Bennett, Associate Pastor at Victory Memorial UMC in the Oklahoma Annual Conference about how their congregation includes children in worship. We discussed the realities of worship in the current climate, and the need to not have a "let's laugh at the kids" moment. This congregation has found a way to "bring children forward, bless them, and share with them what is going to happen in *Godly Play*". The children participate in *Godly Play* and return to the sanctuary after the sermon. He poses these questions that we should all ask ourselves. "How do we visibly show that children are a part of the church in the midst of worship? How do we bless these children that Jesus proclaimed that it is 'such as these that the Kingdom of Heaven belongs?'"

Pastor Danyelle Ditmer who serves Atkins First and Bell's Chapel United Methodist Churches in the Arkansas Annual Conference offers another faithful way to include children in worship. She writes lectionary based children's moments that make the word "real" for children. These moments with the children come after the first reading and before the sermon, and offer children the opportunity to better understand what is happening in the text. She posts these on her blog [Little People Big Word](#)."

As you think about how we faithfully include children in worship,

This monthly e-newsletter addresses topics of concern for those engaged in ministry for children.

How do we visibly show that children are a part of the church in the midst of worship?

For Further Reading

Papa, Do You Love Me? by Barbara M. Josse - This award winning book captures the universal love between a father and child. [Available at Cokesbury](#)



Growing Compassionate Kids by Jan Johnson - This simple book illustrates

Advocacy Days at Children's Week 2010

FLUMC Advocacy Days at Children's Week:

A Time to Speak Up!

WHEN: April 11-13, 2010

WHERE: Trinity United Methodist Church, Tallahassee

BY: Florida Annual Conference

WHY: The Florida Conference will provide resources and training to prepare you to address your state representatives. and coordinate your meeting with a representative. Training to help you reach the children in need in your local church area will also be provided.

Pray and plan now for your participation at this event. Our 'little ones' need your voices 'to speak up' for them!

For more information, please contact:

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"Speak up for the people who have no voice, for the rights of all the down-and-outers. Speak out for justice! Stand up for the poor and destitute!" Proverbs 31:8 The Message