

Divine Service Guidelines for Children's Service

Children's Services are now recommended to be held twice a year, rather than quarterly as in the past. This change allows for greater flexibility in scheduling and planning within local congregations.

When planning a Children's Service, it is important to use the special **Children's Service Divine Service Guide** provided by the Faith Arc Team. This guide replaces the regular Sunday Divine Service Guide for that day and should be used as the primary resource for the service. The purpose of a Children's Service is to:

- Provide children with a message that is clear, memorable, and meaningful to their lives.
- Make children feel seen and valued by placing them at the heart of the congregation.
- Foster connections between generations within the congregation.
- Reinforce the importance of the divine service while deepening their understanding of Christ and the Bible.

Planning

- To build excitement and ensure the entire congregation is prepared for these special services, it's important to announce them well in advance. Ideally, consider setting and sharing the dates at the beginning of the year.
- Where possible, involve the children in congregational activities such as ushering, greeting, or participating as a choir.
- The person delivering the children's message should be someone who can effectively communicate and connect with children. This could be a dedicated Sunday school teacher, a young adult, or another individual who is willing to thoughtfully prepare for this important role.

Liturgy for Children's Divine Service

1. **Opening**
 - The service begins as usual with the invocation, opening prayer, Bible verse, and response hymn.
 - The officiant introduces the theme and shares brief thoughts (no more than 5 minutes).
2. **Children's Message**
 - The designated speaker begins in front of the altar, addressing children seated in the front rows.
 - The **Children's Divine Service Guide** includes a special section (15–25 minutes) designed for children by the Faith Arc Team.
 - This segment may include interactive discussions, props, skits, demonstrations, or simulations. Dialogue and questions with the children are encouraged.
3. **Transition to Holy Communion**
 - Priests sit with the congregation during the children's message.
 - The segment concludes with a congregational hymn, allowing the officiant to return to the altar.
 - The officiant summarizes the children's message and transitions to Holy Communion (no longer than 10 minutes).
 - The service continues with the standard liturgy.
4. **Post-Service Fellowship**
 - Lunch or refreshments are encouraged to celebrate the Children's Service and foster intergenerational connections within the congregation.

New Apostolic Church USA

