



**Assisting Parents  
in Bringing up their Children  
in the Training  
and Instruction of the Lord.**



# THE PARTNERSHIP POST

**December 16 - 20, 2019**

### Pizza Orders

Pizza and Soup order forms were given to students today! Orders can be collected until January 10th. CPTA is looking for help assembling the pizzas on Saturday, Jan. 25th. Please visit <https://signup.com/go/reNAtgg> to sign up to help!

### Christmas Caroling



We could still use 1-2 more drivers for caroling on the afternoon of Wednesday, December 18. We'll be taking 2 larger groups in buses to some of the larger facilities, but we'll also be taking 2 or 3 smaller groups to homes and other smaller facilities. If you are able and willing to drive, please contact Mr. Steinmetz by tomorrow (Tuesday). If you'd like to go along, but not drive, please also let Mr. Steinmetz know. Thank you!

### Midweek Advent Worship

**As always your children and yourself are welcomed to worship with Mt. Calvary at 4:00 and enjoy a fellowship meal afterwards – the meal is provided by Mt. Calvary. The Advent supper at Mt. Calvary on Dec. 18 will not be pot luck. Mt. Calvary will supply the meal.**

During the season of Advent, we prepare for the coming of Jesus. Join us at our midweek Advent services on Wednesdays  
**Bethel's service** is at 11:30 am (potluck lunch right after).  
**Mt. Calvary's service** is at 4:00 pm (supper right after).  
**St. Luke's service** is at 6:30 pm (supper from 5:00-6:00)  
 Bring your family to receive food for your body and for your soul!

We encourage all our SVLS families to attend Advent worship. One of the services is at Mt. Calvary at 4:00 p.m. If your family will be attending this service, you will be able to pick up your child(ren) from the 7 – 8 grade classroom.

### Cheer Practice and Pictures

A team Cheer will have a practice next week on Tuesday, Dec. 17th. This will also be the day for Cheer pictures.



*The SVLS Children's Christmas service will be held at our K-8 campus on Thursday, December 19, at 2:00 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. Preschool will participate in the 6:30 service. Come join us for The Story of God's Love, as told by our school children! The children are welcome to dress in church clothes for the 2:00 service, but they may also wear their school clothes. However, we ask that they wear their church clothes for the 6:30 service. Thank you!*

THIS WEEK'S HOT LUNCH MENU-salad served every	
<b>Mon</b>	Cheese Ravioli +Garlic Bread
<b>Tues</b>	Grilled Chicken Sandwich +Chips
<b>Wed</b>	French Toast Sticks + Sausage Link
<b>Thurs</b>	Grilled Ham & Cheese Sandwich +Cheesy Potato Bacon Soup
<b>Fri</b>	Noon dismissal

### School Board Update

The SVLS School Board met on December 10 for its monthly business meeting. Some highlights of the meeting are as follows:

- The 2020-2021 school year calendar was approved. This document will be published and released in January.
- SVLS families will be invited to the General Board meetings from this point moving forward. The dates, times, and locations of those meetings will be communicated to you at least 30 days prior to the meeting.
- The dates of the School Board meetings have been added to the SVLS Google Calendar.

### WPCP Application Presentation

On Wednesday, January 8, at 6:00 p.m., Mr. Ben Priebe from FVLHS and Mr. Phil Punzel from St. Peter (Appleton) will be coming to SVLS to give a presentation on the Application process for the Wisconsin Parental Choice Program. If your family might be eligible for this program for next school year, you are encouraged and invited to attend. The presentation's purpose is to show you, the parents, where you can find the application, what information you need to complete the application, and to answer questions about income eligibility. The presentation will run for approximately an hour. Childcare will be provided.

### After School Transportation

Just a reminder that if your child(ren) will be going home in a way that's different from the normal routine, please send a note to their teacher(s) indicating what's going to happen. Unless we have written permission from you (note or email), we can't release your children to an unauthorized person or agency. With regard to busing, children can only ride the bus home if they are bus eligible. To find out if your children are bus eligible, please contact Lamers for Menasha and Kimberly school districts (920-832-8800), or contact Pastor Szep for Mid Valley busing.

### Divine Call for Kindergarten

*Dear Members of Our Shepherd of the Valley family, It is with great joy that I am writing you. After time spent in prayer and talking with Jacob, I would like to announce that I am accepting the call to teach Kindergarten at Shepherd of the Valley. Please keep our school in your prayers as School Board will be meeting to decide how to fill my current position at Shepherd of the Valley. I also ask you to continue to keep my family in your prayers as we transition to both parents working full time.*

*I look forward to my new position at Shepherd of the Valley and serving God's little lambs in a different way.*

*Yours in Christ,  
Ashley Steinmetz*

### FVL Winter School Baseball Camp

The FVL baseball staff is holding a winter baseball camp for three evenings in January: 1/12, 1/19, & 1/26. This camp is open to boys in grades 3-8 and takes place at The Warehouse in Appleton. Grades 3-4 will play from 4-5 PM; grades 5-6 will play from 5-6:30 PM; and grades 7-8 will play from 6:30-8 PM. Cost is \$25 per participant. Registration is online; a \$5 late fee will be assessed for registration received after 1/5/2020. Please contact FVL Varsity Baseball Coach Joel Kramer ([jkramer@fvlhs.org](mailto:jkramer@fvlhs.org)) with any questions. Listen to WHBY 1150 AM for any weather cancellations. Visit <http://fvlschools.org/about/youth-sports/winter-baseball-camp> for more info and to register.

### 2020 Junior Foxes Summer Baseball

Registration is now open for the 2020 JUNIOR FOXES baseball season for boys ages 13-14 (grades 7 & 8). The season runs from the end of April through the middle of July. The teams play in the [FVYBL league](#) with other local schools. Registration is open until 3/1/2020. The cost is \$145, plus \$15.75 to purchase a new hat. (If your athlete already has a hat from last year, he does not need to purchase a new one.) Visit <http://fvlschools.org/about/youth-sports/foxes-summer-baseball> for more info and to register. Contact Coach Dennis Plaster ([920-851-7048](tel:920-851-7048) or [dplaster88@gmail.com](mailto:dplaster88@gmail.com)) with questions.

**Christmas bread begins December 20<sup>th</sup> at noon.  
School Resumes January 2nd**



*From all of us here at  
Shepherd of the Valley*

<p><b>Worship at Bethel</b> 920-725-1822-English 920-840-5490-Espanol Sunday Worship-English 8:00 &amp; 10:30 am Los Domingos Misa- Espanol 12:00pm</p>	<p><b>Worship at St. Luke</b> 920-788-4408 Wednesday at 6:30pm Sunday at 9:00am</p>	<p><b>Worship at Mt. Calvary</b> 920-731-4001 Thursday at 6:30pm Sunday at 9:00am in Menasha and 6:30pm in Stockbridge</p>
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## Teaching Young Children How To Worship

Laura K. Selenka

When I offer encouragement to parents who are attending church with young children, I share a little artistic interpretation that I indulged in myself when I was in their shoes. It is my belief that human nature is constant and predictable; it crosses generations. When Jesus said, “Let the little children come to me,” he completely understood what he was saying. Sure, the classic artwork depicts perfectly behaved youngsters gathered peacefully around our wonderful Jesus. But I know in my heart that somewhere in that crowd were siblings scuffling over who could sit closer. There was a boy who had found a stick and was pretending it was a galloping horse. Someone was crying. Someone needed to go potty.

Children are not, and have never been, perfect. Jesus did not limit his invitation to well-behaved,

clean, quiet children. Jesus, knowing the true nature of children, did direct adults to bring them into his presence. We parents have been commissioned to lead and teach even the youngest children how to be with Jesus, how to worship our loving God.

That commission flavors our own perspective on the worship service. Mindful parenting is hard work. But rather than trying to “get through the service,” we can look for ways to teach our children how to be a part of the worship service.

For insight into age-appropriate behavior as it relates to worshiping with toddlers and preschoolers, I’ve spoken with Cindi Holman, WELS National Coordinator for Early Childhood Ministries. Holman has a master’s degree in Early Childhood and 27 years of classroom experience. Just as important, she’s a mother and grandmother, who

has experienced many a worship service from the back row.

“My heart is with parents. It can be discouraging and exhausting,” Holman says about worshiping with young children. “Remember that you are training a young worshiper. You are privileged to teach; you are who God chose for this job.”

Although statistics on attention spans vary slightly, according to Holman, we can generally calculate that our young children can focus on one activity for 3 to 5 minutes per year of age. For example, a two-year-old probably can remain attentive to an activity for 6 to 10 minutes before likely wanting a change. “This doesn’t mean they can’t sit for an hour,” Holman explains. “A change could be as simple as moving from the pew to sitting on your lap.”

Knowing Holman’s calculation for attention spans may help when packing quiet activities and books for a service. Bring things that are novel, rather than the most-used favorites. Many churches

helpfully provide a children’s bulletin, crayons, or returnable activity bags. Often these bags contain coloring pages

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(Teaching Young Children How to Worship . . . cont.)

and items that subtly connect children to the service theme. “If your church doesn’t provide these items, maybe this is your calling; maybe you’re the one to start it,” Holman encourages. However, shifting your child’s focus can still be as simple as following the natural rhythm of the service. Encourage standing and sitting along with the congregation.

Familiarity is important to young children. Holman suggests arriving early to walk around and show them important parts of the worship facility. Visit the baptismal font and tell them what it was like to welcome them into God’s family. If your building is blessed with artwork or stained-glass windows, talk about the Bible stories that are represented. Preschoolers love to share their knowledge and often will only need prompting to retell Bible lessons they’ve learned. My church’s Moms’ Group once hosted a tour that included playing the organ! Holman suggests, in future services, if your little one needs help holding it together, you can redirect him or her with a soothing game of Can You Find the Statue of Jesus? or Do You See the Bible on the Altar?

Just as toddlers react to familiar nursery songs, they will react to our worship music when it becomes familiar to them. I used to sing parts of our liturgy to my babies at bedtime, along with more typical lullabies. Holman suggests asking your pastor ahead of time for hymn numbers and Bible readings. “A lot of pastors would be thrilled to give parents that in advance,” she explains. She encourages using that information in the days leading up to the service, building familiarity, so when the day

arrives, you can whisper, “You know this song—sing along!” or, “Listen to Pastor read the story about Jonah and the big fish!”

Holman says that home devotions and family prayers provide more opportunities to teach familiar routines. Try instructing, “We can talk to Jesus. This is how we sit and what we do with our hands.” It



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may also help to have a routine to prepare for the service. Let children help pack a special bag. Let them choose something special to wear. “These activities also highlight that church is a special place,” Holman explains. The more we bring church into our homes, the deeper children will connect with it. It is exciting for them to recognize an item at church that they also have at home, such as an Advent wreath.

Noisy behavior can be minimized by having advance conversations with little ones who typically respond well to being recruited as helpers. Holman suggests explaining that “we need to be quiet in church to make sure we help others hear about Jesus.” She recommends stating your expectations in the positive, rather than threatening what will happen if misbehavior occurs.

Sometimes we parents need to remember how sensitive and reactionary our little ones are to our emotions and stress. Holman suggests coming into worship prepared for naughtiness, having realistic expectations. Show up knowing that things may not go as planned, and be ready to calmly work through problems as they arise. Have a plan of action.

When children need to be taken out of a service to address a distraction they are causing, Holman suggests keeping it short. “Use the cry rooms or nurseries wisely,” she says. “Tell your child, ‘This is a place where we can find our calm and return.’” Remember that the younger children are, the more immediate your response should be to teach them that their behavior has been unacceptable. Holman strongly encourages positive reinforcement of good behavior, using a verbal thank you or praise. For example, “I saw that you worked so hard to stay quiet today! You were so helpful to other people who were learning about Jesus!”

Holman says it is important to “look for things to celebrate.” When little ones spontaneously respond to the minister, it is clear that they are listening even when we don’t think they are. Holman likens it to the way adults can multitask. As embarrassing as those moments can feel, Holman would assess, “A toddler singing means she’s connecting!”

The more preschoolers and kindergarteners are able to read, the more they will be able to participate in a worship service. As children are gaining reading skills, that is a good time to wean them from the other activities. Holman concludes, “It won’t last forever; though in the midst, it feels eternal. Our goal as parents is to work ourselves out of a job.”

*Laura Kiecker Selenka is a freelance writer in Oshkosh, Wisconsin, where her family has graduated out of the “Back Pew Club” at Martin Luther but still delights in the joyful noise coming from behind.*

