

# Welcoming Children in Our Worship

## 1 ~ Jesus Welcomed Children

### Jesus and the Children

A good place to begin our exploration of the place and ministry of children in our community is with the Holy Scriptures. In particular, the Gospels afford us a wonderful glimpse of the place of, and reverence for, children in Jesus' world. Let's take a look...

*When Jesus was at home he asked them, "What were you arguing about on the way?" But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest. Jesus sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, "Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all." Then he took a little child and put him among them; and taking the child in his arms, he said to them, "Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me." -- Mark 9:33-37; compare this with Matthew 18:1-5 and Luke 9:46-48.*

In this brief passage, we hear the Gospel telling us several important things about Jesus, children, and our regard for both Jesus and children:

1. When Jesus was at home in Capernaum, children were a part of his world.
2. Jesus took children in his arms. In other words, he held them; he embraced them.
3. A measure of our welcome of Jesus (and of God!) is that of our welcome of children in Jesus' name.

We learn a great deal about Jesus and children from this text. A little further in Mark's Gospel, there is a second encounter between Jesus, his followers and children:

*People were bringing little children to Jesus in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." And he took them in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them. -- Mark 10:13-16; compare this with Matthew 19:13-15 and Luke 18:15-17.*

Again, we hear the Gospel telling us several important things about Jesus and children; we also hear the Gospel challenging us to address several questions:

1. Jesus thought it important that children be allowed to come to him. How might we foster a climate in which children can "come to Jesus?"
2. Jesus says that little children possess the kingdom of God. Do we acknowledge that truth? If so, how? If not, why not?
3. We must learn what it is to "receive the kingdom of God as a little child." In other words, we must learn from our children. How do we learn? How do children learn? By example? Whose?
4. Jesus embraced children and blessed them. How do we bless our children? How do they bless us?

The notion that we might receive as much from our children (blessing, teaching, example etc.), as we offer them, often seems strange to us. Yet, that is a witness of the Gospels.

## **The Stewardship of God's Children**

A final Gospel story is instructive. It's the story of the feeding of the multitudes. Read it for yourself in John 6:1-15. Go on, now... Go get your Bible!

Now, compare the text with that of the three other Gospels (Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:32-44; Luke 9:10-17). This is the only parable that is recorded in all four Gospels. It must have been important to our forebears! Now, notice that John includes an important detail neglected by the others... Have you got it?

John mentions that the offering of five barley loaves and two fish --that was poor peoples' fare, back then-- was the gift of a child--a young boy! In other words, children serve, in their own way, as they are given opportunity. They, like us, are stewards of God's marvelous gifts. The feeding of the multitudes was made possible through a child's offering of his gifts --an act of gracious ministry and wonderful stewardship--and by the community's willingness to receive them!

So... what opportunity for service do we allow our children? How do we honor their gifts? Where do they learn to make the most of what God has entrusted to their care? Do we --parents, godparents, teachers, worship leaders, pastors-- provide our children with as fine a witness as we are able as concerns our faith and all of the good gifts that God has entrusted to our care? Prince of Peace Lutheran Church offers her people a community in which to address these questions.

## **2 ~ Children Are Welcome at Prince of Peace**

### **Baptism: Adult Promises**

In Holy Baptism, children are made members of Christ's church. At the time, adults (parents, sponsors and members of the congregation at large) promise to nurture our children in their faith. Of course, we promise to "place in their hands the Holy Scriptures and nurture them in faith and prayer so that they may learn to trust God..." (ELW, page 228) That's in large part what Prince of Peace's Sunday School, Confirmation Ministry and Youth Group are all about. But that isn't the whole story! Even before we make any promises about matters of learning, we are asked to "live with them among God's faithful people and bring them to the word of God and the holy supper". Christian nurture includes worship: We must faithfully bring our children to the services of God's house. The question then becomes "how?" How do we bring our children... *faithfully*? How do we make it easier for them, for us, for all to be nurtured in God's house?

### **Where Are Our Children?**

In recent years, some major changes have been occurring in the church's ministry with children.

Increasingly, the church observed that there were few young people in worship. Moreover, the church grew aware of the separateness of Sunday School and worship. In many quarters, worship had become what adults did during Sunday School, while Sunday School had become what children did during worship. Thus it was, that when church school days were finished (grade 8, or so), youth ended their relationship with the church. Worship, for them, was an alien world, uncharted and unfamiliar: it's not easy to feel "at home" in a room full of strangers who are supposed to be your "brothers and sisters;" it's not easy to sing a hymn when your voice is changing and you've never sung the hymn before; it's not easy to "belong," if for a dozen years people have been pounding it into your head that you don't!

## **Worship, Learning & Serving**

Some years ago, John Westerhoff, a leading Christian educator, suggested that we had lost our youth because of this gulf between worship and Sunday School. Westerhoff called on teachers and worship leaders to work more closely together to include children in the worship life of the congregation and to understand that children have gifts to give in worship. Having adults and children worshipping together is necessary, he suggested, if the "Body of Christ" is to be whole.

## **Cradle Roll**

When a baby is born into the Prince of Peace family, a card of welcome and congratulations is sent. Over the next three years, monthly mailings bring helpful information about the child's growth, along with suggestions and ideas for parents to guide the faith development of their son or daughter.

## **Baptismal Families' and Sponsors' Books**

At the time of baptism, we commend to families and sponsors one or other copies of *Your Child's Baptism: New Life*, Dan Erlander's *Let the Children Come: A Baptismal Manual for Parents and Sponsors*, Elaine Ramshaw's *The Godparent Book: Ideas and Activities for Godparents and their Godchildren* and Nancy Marrocco's *Homemade Christians*. (See the list of resources at the end of *God's Children* for other interesting items.) The idea is that sponsorship begins with baptism, even as parental responsibility begins before birth. They don't end there!

## **Christian Education**

At the current time we are changing the way we teach the children of Prince of Peace. As we understand the needs of the families of the congregation, we will begin a Christian Education experience for the entire family in the near future.

## 3 ~ Children Are Welcome at Worship

### Jesus Loves You

Dennis Benson, in *Children as Partners in the Church* (believed to be out of print), tells of a service in which a wonderful act of ministry took place:

*While his parents listened to the sermon, a young boy busily colored a picture of Jesus and wrote in crooked letters across the page "Jesus loves you." Despite his mom's embarrassment, the boy insisted upon giving the picture to a man sitting farther along the pew. A few weeks later, the man stopped the boy's mother and remarked that he was so thankful for the boy's gift of the picture. He shared that he had been struggling with his wife's death and that when he received the boy's picture he felt God come into his heart.*

A grieving man experiences relief from his pain through the innocent, guileless attention of a child. The youngest among us have a place in the ministry of the Church: not only, however, as the object and recipient of ministry --and of God's love-- but, as we understand here, as the bearer of that ministry --and of God's love!

### Faith: Caught... Not Taught!

According to John Westerhoff, children's presence in worship is not only important, it is necessary if, together, we are to become the whole people of God.

Westerhoff's premise is that faith is "caught," not "taught." What better way for children to know what faith is all about than to be part of a community that laughs together, cries together, struggles and worships together--a community that lives and shares its faith with all of its members and sojourners.

When a child is baptized in our midst and made a member of the Church of Christ, the adults of the congregation promise to be active in nurturing that child's faith. We need to work together to do just that--to nurture our children in their faith, and to be nurtured by them in return. Children give us the gifts of boundless energy, enthusiasm, trust and a fresh point of view; adults can share the gifts of acceptance, experience, and the wisdom of the Church through the ages.

### Worshipping Together

If we believe that faith is "caught," not "taught," and if Sunday morning is the time that is important to us as a worshipping community, then adults and children need to be together at this time. Worship is one of the basic ways in which people are formed in their faith and learn what it is to be a Christian. Moreover, children learn worship by worshipping with the congregation. They learn that they belong to Christ and are welcome in his church. They participate in the proclamation of God's Word and in the sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion. They "learn" God's kindness, favor, love and forgiveness. Children need to worship regularly, from their earliest years. We all learn best by doing, and understand more clearly that which is concrete rather than abstract... that which is caught, rather than that which is taught!

### Receiving the Gospel

Dennis Benson, author of *The Ministry of the Child* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1979; believed to be out of print.), tells this story from his own experience:

*A woman in the congregation phoned to let Pastor Dennis know that lumps had been found in her body, and she suspected the worst. He worked late into the night, Saturday, searching for the right text, prayers and words to sustain her until the news came. She sat third row from the front as usual.*

*Somehow the worship seemed heavy. The warmth he wished to project evaporated. As he launched into his third point on the theme of "hope" a young toddler came down the aisle. The child paused at the third row, turned, then climbed up on the seat beside the woman. He didn't say anything. He just snuggled in. Her arm encircled him. He responded with a hug. He sat with her only for a minute or two, but when he returned to his parents, warmth and hope once again lived in her eyes. She had received her gospel --her good news-- for the day.*

## **Children and Baptism**

Baptism is about belonging. When we are baptized we become members of the church family, the Body of Christ in the world. From the days of the early church, the children of believing parents have been baptized and nurtured in the family of God. This acknowledges that children, too, are part of the covenant relationship with God. When these children are older, they will make their own profession of faith in Christ, affirming the faith into which they were baptized.

Those of us who were baptized as infants cannot remember our own baptism. But, as we experience the baptism of others, we come to understand the importance of this act in our own lives. Baptism is a sacrament--an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace given by God. In the sacrament of Holy Baptism all who are gathered have the opportunity to experience afresh the reality of God's grace--God's love and forgiveness freely given. It is thus very important that children have an unobstructed view of this magnificent faith drama.

The baptism of children and infants clearly indicates that baptism is God's action. God's love is always with us and will never let us go. God's love toward us is unmerited. It does not rest on any act of ours--even our penitence--for God loved us from the foundation of the world.

Baptism marks the formal beginning of the Christian faith journey. It is here that the community of faith gathers in celebration of God's bountiful grace, pledges support of the newly-baptized, and shares the gifts of the kingdom. Children must be afforded the opportunity to affirm the wonderful gift of their baptism, on an ongoing basis, together with the whole people of God.

## 4 ~ Children Are Welcome at Our Table

### **Katie's Party**

*A pastor was visiting a friend--a pastor in the Niagara area--one day, in his church, some years ago. His wife was there, as was mine. As the four of us chatted, our friends' daughter, Katie, wandered up to the sanctuary, where she could be seen miming the actions of Holy Communion. Katie was only four or five years old at the time. As she paced along the broad step, she could be heard uttering the words "a little drink" over and over again. Later, came the words "Jesus' bread. Jesus' bread. Jesus' bread." Then there followed a really good imitation of her father's post-communion blessing --to his slight embarrassment-- with arms uplifted and outstretched in a grand, almost theatrical, orans / embrace.*

That was many years ago. What was clear, then, was that communion had become a very large part of the reality of Katie's world. Perhaps that was not surprising, as Katie communed every Lord's Day. What was not clear was what Katie understood by "communion." Did she "understand" as you and I might? Yes? No? Does it matter?

### **Children and Communion**

*John joined his parents in making their way to the altar. The five-year-old looked at the basket of bread and asked: "Is this for me?" "Sure," his pastor replied, thinking to herself "we wouldn't sit you down at table, at home, and not give you food."*

Families wouldn't think of withholding affection or nourishment from a child because the child could not yet "understand" what it means. From ancient times, the Church has embraced infant children with the gift of Holy Baptism for just that reason. In the same way, the church has learned that it cannot withhold the broken bread of God's love, or the precious blood of Jesus, from its children. We are stewards of those marvelous gifts. Good stewardship involves sharing the richness of those precious gifts with our children.

### **Jason's Story**

*Jason was four years old. It was his first communion and everything was ready. Jason's family had just moved into New Hamburg, so he was new to the parish and had not previously partaken of the Sacrament of Holy Communion.*

*The table had been set. A little procession was forming in the narthex. A big "Come, Walk With Us" banner was hanging in the nave.*

*Upon their arrival at the church, Jason and his family experienced the centrality of Holy Communion in the life of this community. Jason would watch for "the parade" and listen in wonder to the many voices singing together at the Sunday celebration. When the sermon got a little long, he turned around at his seat, kneeling on the floor, and used his pew as a table to draw some pictures with the crayons he'd gotten on his way in to worship.*

*When it came time for the offering, Jason was interested as the offering was collected and brought forward. Jason watched with wide eyes as the pastor prepared the table and, together with the people, rehearsed the old, old story and began to gather the people to the table. As the pastor offered the bread to him, he said "The body of Christ, given for you, Jason." He eagerly took the bread, as he had been shown, in the "Jesus' cradle" he had created with his overlapping, cupped hands. Then the assisting minister -- a neighbor whom he knew from the street where they'd moved -- offered him the cup. He helped Jason to take the base of the cup in his own hands while steadying it for him. "The blood of Christ, shed for you," he said.*

The holy meal was new to Jason, but, as he took part in the celebration, he felt loved and special and a part of a great, extended family. He didn't understand what it meant... or did he? A little? A lot? Does it matter?

### **Making All Things New**

In 1997, following upon several years of study, prayer and contemplation, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America approved *The Use of the Means of Grace: A Statement on the Practice of Word and Sacrament*. This document speaks of Holy Communion as the *meal of the baptized*--children included! Wonderful! Slowly, cautiously and carefully, we are coming to reclaim the place of children in the worship life of the whole people of God. Reformer Martin Luther would be proud! For more information, see *The Use of the Means of Grace Statement* at <http://www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Worship/Learning-Center/The-Use-of-the-Means-of-Grace.aspx> to read and download it to your computer.

At Prince of Peace, when a parent and a child express a desire for the child to commune, they meet with the pastor. Together, they decide if the child is ready to begin the educational process to receive Holy Communion. The important thing is that the child is the one who begins to see the Sacrament of Holy Communion as a part of their faith that they would like to grow and take part. This step of faith is important for us to acknowledge and help the child to act upon as they grow in their relationship with Jesus.

As in Jesus' day, adults in our congregation are asked to accept and welcome the children in our midst, to openly receive the gifts they offer, to visit with them before or after worship, to acknowledge their presence and worth as part of the church of the present, the here-and-now, as well as of the church of the future.

## 5 ~ Hints for Welcoming Children

Here are some suggestions for worship which *embraces* children. These are practical ways in which parents (grandparents, godparents/sponsors, guardians...), teachers, worship leaders and children--together with the whole people of God--can live out their baptismal promises, together, with God's help.

### Hints for Everyone...

- Get to know children by name. Ask them how *their* week has been!
- At the appropriate moment, prior to the gathering rite, or during the Prayers of the People, allow children to contribute the names of people who should be remembered in the prayers of the congregation. Encourage them to acknowledge their own need for prayer and their own concern for others!
- Children love to join in a heartfelt "Amen!"
- During the liturgy, call attention to what is going on: "Now we are praying... going to sing... going to welcome a new baby into God's family... about to share in the family meal..."
- Call attention to any liturgical action or movement: "Pastor Bill is blessing God for our good gifts... Pastor Bill is telling us how to follow Jesus... we are being sent from here to do God's work..."
- If a child doesn't have a good view of a baptism--or of some other action, for that matter--move quietly forward, with the child, to stand along an adjacent aisle or to take up a place in a front pew.
- If small children want to walk up and down along a half empty pew, let them. Older children may be encouraged to stay in their seats.
- Create opportunities for children to move during the service--during the sharing of the Peace or the singing of hymns, for example. It cuts down on the fidgeting, because they are involved.
- If you observe a family "on overload," help them out and invite one of their children to sit with you.
- Pass the offering plate *to* children, not *past* children.
- A smile of encouragement accomplishes more than all the "shushing" in the world.
- Remember, at the celebration of Holy Baptism, Children are always welcome to sit in the front pews so they can see better.
- On a baptismal Sunday, children can make "welcome cards" using the paper and crayons to be found in the narthex.

### Hints for Adults and Young Adults

- Recognize your role as models for children in worship. Adults exhibiting a wholesome, hearty attitude will demonstrate to children the importance of worship.

### Hints for Families, Parents, Godparents and Grandparents...

- Get "pocket-sized" or regular sized copies of the *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* for your children. They're available from Augsburg Fortress at <http://www.augsburgfortress.org/>.
- Allow your children to hold their own copies of the ELW or of the Sunday Bulletin from early on --even if it is upside-down! Children should be invited to cradle their prayer-books and hymn-books from early on.
- Be sure that everyone has something for the offering. Remember the story of the feeding of the multitudes? Allowing the boy to serve brought blessing to the whole community!
- Arrive in time so that you can sit together as a family, where all can see. Children often have an opinion about where they want to sit. (Yes, it's often up front! There is a lesson there somewhere...) Be open to their wishes. You can do worse than to leave the back pews open for latecomers!
- Ask your children if they need a drink or to use the toilet before you leave for church. Check with them again, just before worship.



- If your children are particularly active, bring a book, crayons or a toy to entertain them quietly. We also have worship bags in the Narthex for your children to use during worship. Rag dolls, stuffed animals and so-called "quiet toys" are especially well suited to the worship environment.
- Young children may stay quiet and interested for some time if allowed to use the pew as a desk for drawing. Check the Lessons in the Bulletin prior to worship starting and encourage your child to draw the story...
- At Prince of Peace, the Response for the prayers of the church is always the same. The pastor prays, "Lord in your mercy" and the congregation responds, "Hear our prayer". This is an opportunity to help your child to participate in the worship life of the congregation. Encourage them to be part of the Prayers of the Church!
- Teach your children some of the simple liturgical responses and actions. Thus...

**P** The Lord be with you.

**C** **And also with you.**

- Introduce children, as Luther taught, to making the sign of the cross in remembrance of their baptism. Instruct them to look for the + signs in the *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*
- Teach your children, from early on, to make a "cradle for Jesus" (overlapping hands, cupped) to receive the bread of Holy Communion.
- Teach your children, when they are ready to eat the communion bread and drink from their communion cup to take their time so that they savor the gift of forgiveness that God is giving them in the meal..
- After worship, talk to your children about the service. The lessons they touch upon in Sunday School are drawn from those used at worship. By sharing experiences we all learn more.
- Take advantage of the opportunity to pray with your children at home before meals and before bed to help them to know that prayer is important at home as well as in church.
- Children who play musical instruments or sing are proud to share their talent. Let our Organist, Garnet Snyder or Choir Director, Margy Williams, know of their interests! There may be an opportunity for your child to share his/her gifts with the congregation.
- For a celebration of Holy Baptism, older children can learn the congregational responses and to speak the articles of the Apostles' Creed.
- In anticipation of a celebration of Holy Baptism, parents can talk about the promises they and other parents and sponsors have made in Holy Baptism.
- When Holy Baptism is celebrated, parents and sponsors can talk with children about the symbols of baptism: water (new life, cleansing, birth and rebirth); candle (God's presence, light for the world); sign of the cross (death and resurrection; becoming part of the Body of Christ in the world); oil (royal priesthood, God's own people).
- Invite children to observe the preparation of the table at Holy Communion. They may also help to bake bread for communion. We would welcome their gift!
- Talk with children about their experience of Holy Communion -- *the people and the event!* Tell them what Holy Communion means to you.
- At worship, when your child asks a question, answer it briefly. This is infinitely less disturbing than saying "shhh" (or ignoring him or her!), and infinitely more welcoming!
- If your children wiggle don't be upset--adults wiggle too!
- Encourage children to draw what they hear or experience at worship.
- Restless infants and young children may need to be carried or walked up and down the side aisle or across the back of the church. The movement and colors of the windows may prove calming, and the parents can still participate in worship.
- Food may help to counteract restlessness. Consider a small plastic bin of orange sections, apple slices, raisins or dry cereal.

### **Hints for Worship Ministers...**

- Include the experiences of children in sermons, Prayers of the People, etc.
- Shake children's hands as they arrive for or leave from worship. Bend down to their eye-level to speak to them or to offer them communion.
- Make eye contact with children when you serve them Holy Communion. Kneel if necessary.
- Allow children their own copy of the Sunday Bulletin if they wish one.
- Allow children to assist the ushers in taking up the offering or in presenting the gifts of bread, money, etc.
- If you have the opportunity, involve your children (grandchildren, etc.) in greeting at the door of the nave. Allow Trinity's children to "welcome" children who are guests in our parish and to "show them the ropes": "Why don't you take John and show him *our* church."
- For festivals and special occasions, children can help decorate the worship space.
- Children love a parade and may be invited to participate in seasonal processions bearing noisemakers, banners of their own manufacture, streamers, as at Easter, for example.

### **Hints for Teachers...**

- Emphasize Communion and Baptism as a regular part of the Sunday School curriculum. Tell your children what Holy Communion means to you. Remind them of their gracious adoption in Holy Baptism. Remember, it's "Word *and* sacrament."
- Remind children that the Word they hear at Sunday School is the same Word they heard (will hear) at worship. "Do you remember when pastor Bill said...?" "Do you recall when Ms. Nickle read about Jesus and the woman at the well...?"
- Don't neglect your own worship life. Remember, you, like the rest of us, serve as a role model for our children.
- Include the experiences of children as illustrations in Sunday School lessons, etc.

## 6 ~ Resources for Welcoming Children

The following works emphasize the inclusion of children in the whole life of the church.

1. **1.2.3. Church** by Gail Ramshaw (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1996). A helpful little book which makes church part of the world of children and children, part of the world of the church.
2. **Arts and Crafts for Lent: From Mardi Gras to Passiontide With Prayers and Blessings for Family, School, and Church** written and illustrated by Jeanne Heiberg (New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1997). A treasure trove of ideas to unite family, school and worship.
3. **Best of Blessings: Lent, Holy Week, and Easter** Edited by Ginny Arthur (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1998). Helpful "popular worship programs for children of all ages, and children and adults together." Eight reproducible program units. A wonderful gift from our Anglican sisters and brothers.
4. **Blessings and Prayers** Edited by Gabe Huck (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1994). Marvellous introduction to many historic liturgical and devotional texts. Beautifully illustrated by Judy Jarrett.
5. **Celebrating the Church Year with Young Children** by Joan Halmo (Ottawa/Collegeville: Novalis/Liturgical Press, 1988).
6. **Child of God: A Book of Birthdays and Days in Between** (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1997). A book for keepsakes relative to a child's journey and growth in faith.
7. **Come, For All Is Now Ready** by Marty Tuer & Fred Ludolph (Winnipeg: ELCIC, 1994) Illustrated by Christine Selbstaedt. Excellent family introduction to Holy Communion.
8. **Gathered and Sent: An Introduction to Worship** by Karen G. Bockelman with illustrations by Nicholas T. Markell (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1999). The leader's guide and participant's book, together, afford an excellent introduction to the shape of the liturgy. The latter may be read and studied as a stand-alone volume. Highly recommended as background material for parents, teachers and congregational leaders!
9. **The Godparent Book: Ideas and Activities for Godparents and their Godchildren** by Elaine Ramshaw (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1993). Wonderful!
10. **Homemade Christians: A Guide for Parents of Young Children** by Nancy Marrocco (Ottawa: Novalis, 1995).
11. **Including Children in Worship: A Planning Guide for Congregations** by Elizabeth J. Sandell (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1991).
12. **An Introduction to the Liturgical Year** by Inos Biffi (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1995).
13. **Let the Children Come: A Baptismal Manual for Parents and Sponsors** by Daniel Erlander (Daniel Erlander, 1996).
14. **Making Disciples: A New Approach to Confirmation** Coordinator's Guide; Confirmand's Journal; Mentor's Guide; Mentor Support Video in a programme by William Willimon (Inver Grove Heights: Logos Productions Inc., 1990, 1997). This programme contemplates a mentoring process for confirmation youth. At Trinity, we have adapted the material from a several-month endeavour to a three-year journey. The program makes extensive reference to the "developmental assets" model of the Search Institute mentioned above.
15. **Sharing the Banquet: Liturgical Renewal in Your Parish** by Paul MacLean and Douglas Cowling (Anglican Book Centre, 1993). Written in an anecdotal style. The authors give many practical suggestions for seasonal celebrations which anticipate and encourage the participation of children in the liturgy.
16. **Sunday Morning** by Gail Ramshaw (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1993). A magnificent book that takes families through the liturgy of the Church. Beautifully illustrated by Judy Jarrett.
17. **A Walk Through Our Church** written and beautifully illustrated by Gertrud Mueller Nelson (New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1998). While this book contemplates a Roman Catholic context, the book translates well to the Lutheran environment to the point of suggesting new and wonderful possibilities.

18. ***The Welcome Table: Planning Masses with Children*** by Elizabeth McMahon Jeep et al (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1982).
19. ***The Whole People of God*** (Winfield, BC: Wood Lake Books). An ecumenical Sunday Church School curriculum, for all ages, based upon the Sunday readings of the Revised Common Lectionary, the lectionary of the ELCIC. ***The Whole People of God*** [<http://www.joinhands.com/>] may be secured from Sperling's at 1(888) 838-6626 or directly from the publisher. Not available from Augsburg Fortress.
20. ***Winter: Celebrating the Season in a Christian Home*** Crafted by Peter Mazar and friends (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1996). Terrific collection of ideas and suggestions tied to the winter calendar.
21. ***Winter Saints*** by Melissa Musick Nussbaum with brilliant, marvellous illustrations by Judy Jarrett (Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1998). Offers a story for each day of Advent and Christmas, together with suggested morning and evening prayers. Lovely!
22. ***Your Child's Baptism*** by Bernadette Gasslein (Catholic edition - Ottawa/Collegeville: Novalis/Liturgical Press, 1994) and Bernadette Gasslein, Jim Taylor and Thomas Harding (Protestant edition - Winfield: Wood Lake Books, no date; c. 1997). Helpful pamphlet for distribution to parents, grandparents and sponsors.

Adapted for Prince of Peace from *God's Children: Welcoming Children to Worship*