



Frequently Asked Questions

Updated 12/17/17

1. Why does the Avondale Presbyterian Church (APC) have “My Special Worship Service” at 11:00 am each Sunday?

Answer: It is an extremely sad fact that many families with special needs individuals and/or a loved one with dementia don't attend church because they have never found it to be a comfortable, stress-free setting. APC understands this and welcomes all God's children of all ages and abilities to worship Him on Sunday mornings. This is an inclusive worship service where we welcome families to worship together in the Sanctuary. Worshipping together helps strengthen families and forms friendships. This service is now in its second calendar year.

2. Why is attending Worship Service stressful for these families?

Answer: Worship Services are traditionally quiet and reflective, especially during the Sermon and the serving of Holy Communion. Many parishioners do not respond well to having distracting movements and/or loud sounds during these quiet times. If people want to talk during the “My Special Worship Service” – they are welcome to talk. If people want to dance in the aisles during this service – they are welcome.

3. What is this service like?

Answer: This **half-hour service** follows the following format:

- Welcome and Call to Worship
- Music – Praise Songs
- Prayers of Concern and Thanksgiving
- Scripture Reading (New Testament)
- Ten Minute Message that is interactive with parishioners.
- Offering and Prayer
- Benediction

Directly after the service there are light refreshments and an opportunity for fellowship.

4. What's different about “My Special” Worship Service?

Answer: There are several differences.

- A. First of all, the service is one-half hour not a full hour.
- B. Scripture Readings are from the International Children's Bible.
- C. It is an interactive time for everyone because everyone's voice matters.
- D. The environment is loving, understanding and supportive.
- E. It fosters an opportunity to connect with other Christian families.

5. Who can attend this service?

Answer: Anyone and everyone who desires something different from a traditional worship service, wants to have a more interactive worship experience, or wants to dance in the aisles if the Spirit so moves them.

6. Do parishioners have to be Presbyterian?

Answer: No. If you want to explore faith in a whole new, fresh way, you are welcome.

7. Who will lead this service?

Answer: There will be at least one ordained Ruling Elder officiating. One of our Elders has a 23-year-old daughter with an intellectual disability.

8. Can my child be him- or herself during My Special Worship Service?

Answer: Absolutely! In Mark 10, blind Bartimaeus began shouting when Jesus walked near him. The crowd wanted Bartimaeus to be quiet because he was a distraction. But Jesus welcomed the distraction of this blind beggar and healed him.

And what about the children in the marketplace found earlier in the same chapter? The disciples tried to stop people from bringing their children to Jesus. Again, they were a distraction. But Jesus said, "Let the children come to me; do not hinder them, for to such belongs the kingdom of God." (Matthew 19:14 – New International Version)

9. Is APC able to welcome worshippers in wheelchairs?

Answer: Yes. Parking for the physically challenged is available at both the front and back entrances to all worship areas that are all wheelchair accessible. There is an elevator on all levels and the bathrooms meet ADA Standards. Personal sound systems for the hearing impaired are available in the Sanctuary. Let us know if you have a special request.

10. What is the goal of this Worship Service?

Answer: The goal is to help children and adults with physical, mental, cognitive and developmental differences (and their caregivers, friends, and relatives) grow in understanding of God's great love, while reaching out to parents who would like to become part of a church family. Your loved ones will find a warm, welcoming atmosphere so that each member may learn and grow in his/her walk with God.

11. Do I need to get dressed up to attend this service?

Answer: Absolutely not! We want you to come worship our Lord Jesus Christ with us. Whatever you decide to wear is fine. We want you to be comfortable.

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