

Baby and Toddler Praise Party



“From the lips of children and babies You have ordained praise” (Ps 8:2)

This was an event run by Carnmoney Presbyterian Church which they allowed us to attend and then write up as part of this resource.

Ethos:

It is important that we remember that church and creating a space to worship God collectively can be done by the smallest members of our congregation as well as the adults. It is important that we teach children from a very early age how important God is and the place worshipping Him has in our lives. This event is to help to do this in a small way.

(This was the first event like this tried by the church and so was an experiment but hopefully will be the start of a regular event)

Aims and Objectives:

- Help children to worship God
 - Sing
 - Story
 - Prayer
- To learn something about God
 - Have a Bible story as central to the event
 - *This event used one of the older children’s/youth groups and told the story using puppets*
- To have fun!
 - Have activities that the children will enjoy and that will be appropriate to their age
- To do ministry in an excellent way
 - Use the band, sound, visuals as they would be used in any worship event for older children, young people or adults
 - *The band for this event was led by the musical director of the church and was exactly the same as it would have been for church on a Sunday. This is so important to show the importance placed on the ministry with this age group*
- To include adults with the smallest children to create a sense of intergenerational ministry
 - Make sure that the event includes parents, grandparents and other significant adults who the children can have for security but also to see model worship

- *This event also included lots of helpers who were all wearing the same colour of t-shirt and looked like a team and stood out well if anyone had any questions or was uncertain*
- To use older children to make the event happen and so mentor them
 - Older children for an event like this can be anything from 5 year olds so see if there are roles that these primary aged children can play in the event
 - *There were 5 primary aged children used for the actions who stood on a specially organised raised area at the front so that they could be seen. They had obviously practised and were very enthusiastic.*
- To engage families on the edges of the church or parents who are only connected to parents and toddlers group to come into the church and discover something of worship in the church
 - Make sure there are activities for the parents to be included in but also a space where they can have a break from the children if they are old enough. Provide coffee/tea and some adult snacks
 - *The event in this church included many families from the Parents and Toddlers group who would not be connected in any other way to the church and so it was important make them feel welcome*
- Include lunch for the children
 - Enabling children to stay means providing food for them so have a rolling lunchtime where parents can bring children over a period of time to have something to eat. Make sure the food is healthy and tasty to again show excellence.
 - *This allowed people to stay much longer and enjoy the activities. Having the lunch running from 11:10 to 12:55 also allowed for different schedules to be accommodated.*
- Make the event free
 - The ultimate aim is that families can come for free and enjoy the time together without any cost or without cost being off-putting to anyone.
 - *The event was open to any eligible families for free although it was thought that there may need to be a cost in the future if it runs again. This was only possible because another event within the children's ministry had saved money and so was moved around.*

Programme:

9:45am	Checking in time (given a band of one of 3 different colours)
10:05am	Emergency procedure
10:15am	Praise time
10:25am	“The Miraculous Catch” (story with puppets)
10:40am	Activities start

	Group 1	Group 2	Group 3	Venue
10:45am	Pony rides/beach/face painting/balloon making	Jo-Jingles (nursery) NO PARENTS	Craft/Photo (P.1.)	
11:20am	Jo-Jingles (babies and toddlers)	Craft/Photo (Nursery)	Pony rides/beach/face painting/balloon making	
11:55am	Craft/Photo (babies and toddlers)	Pony rides/beach/face painting/balloon making	Jo-Jingles (P.1.) NO PARENTS	

11:30am-12:55pm	Picnic time
1:00pm	Back to the church
1:05pm	Praise time
1:20pm	Safe journey home
1:30pm	Ice-cream time (ice cream van available in the car park at the end)

Budget needs to include:

- Pony rides
- Beach
- Balloons
- Face painting
- Craft
- Photos
- Jo-Jingles
- Lunches
- Ice-cream van