

Gather

Preparing for and participating in Worship



"I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go the house of the LORD.'" – Psalm 122:1

It is important to gather regularly with the family of God. Through gathering we fully experience God's love (Eph. 3:17-19). Sometimes the difference between enduring and enjoying Sunday is preparation and simple practices of participation

PREPARE

"Tune my heart to sing thy Grace."

Throughout the Week

- **Learn the Songs:** Become familiar with the words and tune of the songs we will sing; they are posted on our Facebook page and we have a Spotify playlist at hbcaltontn.com/gather



Your kids may not be able to learn all the words, so start with the chorus. Identify words they don't understand and explain. Also try making up motions to songs.

- **Read the Scripture:** Find out what passage the sermon will be based on and meditate on that scripture. Use GROW guide to help you – hbcaltontn.com/grow
- **Share Life:** Gathering is more than sharing an hour on Sundays, it's sharing life. Use the church prayer list to contact, visit, and pray for others.

Parents – Lead your family to pray for others and have kids write a card for those on prayer list.

Saturday Night

- **Layout clothes:** Take the guess work out of Sunday morning prep.
- **Gather Bibles:** And notepads and other supplies



"Sunday Morning Church is a Saturday Night Decision." – Dean Inserra

- **Get Offering Ready:** Help kids participate and develop a good practice by giving them money to put in the offering plate. (2 Cor. 9:7)

On the Way

- **Rehearse Memory Verses:** We memorize scripture at Heartland, take advantage of car rides by reciting memory verses.
- **Talk about Expectations:** Take a few moments to be reminded of why we gather. Talk about what you're looking forward to doing.



Remember the goal is not just good behavior; the goal is worship. We go to church to learn about God & honor Him.

- **Prepare Your Heart:** Take your cares to the Lord, focus on Him and trust Him completely.

PARTICIPATE

"We don't gather at the church; we gather as the church." – Gloria Furman

Before the Service

- **Greet Others:** Focus on building relationships and welcoming guests. Intentionally sit with others and invite others to sit with you.

- **Preview Bulletin:** Get to know the worship elements and timing. Learn how to connect outside the worship gathering.

Parents: Get children their own bulletin, help them different parts and follow along.

- **Minimize Distractions:** Silence phones, use restroom, etc.



Avoid giving kids devices and activities that can distract them from worship; help them participate in all aspects.

During the Service

- **Sing:** Don't worry about your singing voice, make a joyful noise. Some people close their eyes to help focus on words and worship.

Parents: Keeping kids close, holding hands, and other actions can help them engage

- **Contemplate Meaning:** Think about the meaning of the words being sung or taught.

- **Take Notes:** Taking notes during the sermon helps you stay engaged and retain the message.



Kid's sermon notes pages are at Kid's check-in desk. Help your children take notes, drawing things they hear, noting words they don't understand, etc.

- **Respond:** Feel free to go to the altar to pray

"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old, he will not depart from it." Prov.22:6

Parents

- Your children learn by watching you. As you sing to the Lord, when you listen intently, they are watching and learning.

- Use transitional moments to communicate, help them know how to participate, how the next part helps us worship, etc.

- Try using snacks strategically: at times when all are sitting, when quiet focus is needed, and appropriate foods for your worship setting.



Helping kids keep area clean can also help them grow in reverence of God, the gathering, and others.

- Helping kids participate in worship gathering can take time and effort: be consistent and positive. Your effort is worth it and is helping your child become a life-long worshipper.

- Keep a journal just for Sundays: This is helpful for both yourself and your kids, to be able to look back and track your growth and faith.



It will be awesome for your kids to look back one day and see what they wrote or drew in their worship journal.

POST WORSHIP

"Don't just go to church, BE the Church."

Questions

- **Start the Conversation:** don't wait and hope someone else says something.
- **Talk in specifics:** What's one thing you saw, heard, or did in the gathering today? What did you think about one particular point or song? And other directive questions.



Utilize Take Home Sheets to guide discussion with kids. Use the activities & teaching summaries to ask questions.

Reflection

- **Ask yourself:** What do you need to put into practice.
- **Go Deeper:** Is there anything that you need to study or discuss more?

Share

- **Tell others:** what impacted you in the worship gathering.
- **Use Heartland's Facebook Page:** For tutorials visit hbcaltontn.com/nextsteps



Encourage your children to share what they learned and experienced. Get the habit of sharing what God is doing.

"Oh, magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together!" Psalm 34:3

*cover image made by freepik.com & Family by Adrien Coquet from the Noun Project



Heartland Baptist Church

Gather. Grow. Go. / Alton, IL / hbcaltontn.com