

Visiting Churches

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Teenagers sometimes balk at going to worship, and that resistance can become even stronger during the summer when churches shift into a lower gear programmatically. Instead of going head-to-head with your teenager, visit other churches during the summer to expose them to other traditions while keeping the conversation going about why you believe worshipping as a family is important.

For

Teen Family

Season

Summer

Prepare in Advance

Gather information about location and worship times (available through Internet websites and your local phone book) of churches you plan to visit.



Activity Plan

1. Say this prayer aloud to begin.

God, thank you for places to worship you. Guide us as we visit another church. Amen.

2. Identify a church your family would like to visit. Consider these ideas for choosing a church:
 - Find another church nearby that's in your denomination or faith tradition
 - Choose a church in your community that may have other teenagers from your teenager's school
 - Pick a Christian church that's different from your denomination
 - Visit a church with someone you know, such as an extended family member, friend, or neighbor
 - Find a worship service from a different faith tradition, such as Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim, Jewish, or something else
 - Look for a worship service that's in a different format from the one you typically attend. For example, consider a traditional service, a contemporary service, an outdoor service, a jazz service, or some other type of worship service
3. Gather information about when the church has a summer worship service. It may be helpful to confirm the time by calling the church since some churches don't update their websites for the summer and have different summer worship times.
4. Go to the worship service together as a family.
5. Afterward, talk about your experience of the worship. What did you really enjoy? What made you uncomfortable? How did this experience compare to what you typically experience at your church? Were you able to pray? Do you feel strengthened in your spiritual journey?
6. Keep talking about going to church with your teenager from time to time. Listen to their perspective. Notice what pushes your buttons (and reflect on why that is). Encourage your teenager to bring a friend with him or her when you visit a church. Talk about why you value worshipping together as a family.