

dwell<sup>®</sup>



# DIVE


Dear Family,

Your middle schooler is very much a part of our worshiping community. Biblical tradition and Reformed conviction teach us that children and youth are members of the covenant community.

Worship is one of the basic ways people learn what it means to be a Christian. Your child learns to worship as he or she worships with our congregation Sunday after Sunday. Through worship, our hope is that our young people will


- learn that they belong to Christ and are welcome in his church.
- come to know, through repetition, certain patterns, prayers, and other frequently used responses that shape our community (depending on the worship style of our congregation).
- build memories of shared experiences of Christian community.
- be enriched by the beauty of music and art as creative expressions of human praise to God.
- hear stories from the Bible read and interpreted, and begin to experience worship as one place where God may speak to them.
- witness and participate in the drama of baptism and the Lord's Supper—both visible signs of God's grace.
- discover that they are valued by God and by God's people.


Encouraging your son or daughter to attend worship regularly may not always be easy, but it is an essential part of their growth as Christians. As we begin a six-week focus on worship; consider starting (or continuing) a conversation with your child about the importance of worship in his or her faith formation.


**Session 1: Come, Now Is the Time to Worship** Psalm 95:1-7; Hebrews 10:24-25, Acts 2:42-47 (Through worship God calls us and forms us as his people.) 

**Session 2: Confession of Sin and Assurance of Pardon** Isaiah 6:1-6; Psalm 51; Psalm 32 (When we gather before the holy God we experience our own sinfulness, confess our sins, and receive God's forgiveness.) 

**Session 3: Hearing the Word and Responding** Nehemiah 8:1-12 (When we gather together to worship we hear God speak to us through his Word and the pastor's message.) 

**Session 4: The Sacraments in Worship** Joshua 3:1-4:8 (Through the sacraments, God shows us and assures us that we are his redeemed people.) 

**Session 5: Blessed to be a Blessing** Genesis 12:2-3; Numbers 6:24-26 (In worship we receive God's blessing so that we might be a blessing to others.) 

**Session 6: Life as Worship** Romans 12:1-2; Colossians 3:17 (Corporate worship shapes us to worship God in all of our living.) 

## Pass It On

### **Here are some ideas for how you might engage your child in a faith discussion:**

- Share with your child why you feel it's important for him or her to attend worship services. If you don't worship together as a family (whatever your family unit might be), are there changes you could make so that you are able to experience worship together? (Session 1)
- King David wrote Psalm 51 after he messed up pretty bad. Read it together, then tell your child about a time you messed up in your life (try to think of an example from middle school or high school—and make sure not to overshare!). Express how grateful you are that God is a forgiving God, and talk about the assurance you have that all your sins are forgiven—as are your child's! (Session 2)
- Read Deuteronomy 6:4-9 and consider together some specific ways you might live out verse 7. Ask your pastor, youth minister, or children's leader for some ideas. (Session 3)
- If you're not sure what the policy of your church is for baptized children and youth receiving the sacrament of communion, check with your pastor or an elder. If your child isn't yet participating in communion, consider talking with your child to see what his or her interest level is in partaking (or what questions he or she has about it). Perhaps it's time to encourage your child to consider making profession of faith (if he or she hasn't already). (Session 4)
- Write your own blessing or use the Aaronic blessing (Num. 6:24-26) to extend God's blessing to your child each day for the next week. Consider making it a part of your morning or evening ritual. (Session 5)
- Copy Romans 12:1-2 on a large piece of paper and decorate it with your child. Tape it to the door you use most often when leaving your home as a reminder to your whole family to offer their lives as worship to God. (Session 6)

Sincerely,

P.S. Check out [www.NurtureKidsFaith.org](http://www.NurtureKidsFaith.org) for more faith-building ideas for home!

(Parts of this letter are adopted from the pamphlet "Worshiping with Children" Reformed Church Press, 475 Riverside Drive New York, NY 10115 USA. All rights reserved. Used by permission.)

## Psalm 95:1-7 (NIRV)

Come, let us sing with joy to the LORD.

Let us give a loud shout to the Rock  
who saves us.

Let us come to him and give him thanks.

Let us praise him with music and song.

The LORD is the great God.

He is the greatest King.

He rules over all of the gods.

He owns the deepest parts of the earth.

The mountain peaks belong to him.

The ocean is his, because he made it.

He formed the dry land with his hands.

Come, let us bow down and worship him.

Let us fall on our knees in front  
of the LORD our Maker.

He is our God.

We are the sheep belonging to his flock.

We are the people he takes good care of.

## My Prayer

God, my great God,  
the whole world belongs to you.

I adore your name.

I'm amazed that . . .

God, my great King,  
You are in charge of everything.

I confess that sometimes . . .

God, my Maker,  
you take good care of me.

I ask you to . . .

God, my Rock,  
I know you are the One who saves me.  
Thank you for . . .

God, my Shepherd,  
please lead me and guide me, all of my days.

Amen.

## Memory Challenge Cards (NIV)

Copy these Scripture Memory Challenge cards onto cardstock, and then cut them apart to distribute to the group. Consider punching a hole in each and attaching it to a key ring or small carabineer.



### Psalm 95

- <sup>1</sup> Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord;  
let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation.
- <sup>2</sup> Let us come before him with thanksgiving  
and extol him with music and song.
- <sup>3</sup> For the LORD is the great God,  
the great King above all gods.
- <sup>4</sup> In his hand are the depths of the earth,  
and the mountain peaks belong to him.
- <sup>5</sup> The sea is his, for he made it,  
and his hands formed the dry land.
- <sup>6</sup> Come, let us bow down in worship,  
let us kneel before the LORD our Maker;
- <sup>7</sup> for he is our God  
and we are the people of his pasture,  
the flock under his care.

—Psalm 95:1-7



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### Psalm 95

- <sup>1</sup> O come, let us sing to the LORD;  
let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation!
- <sup>2</sup> Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving;  
let us make a joyful noise to him with songs of praise!
- <sup>3</sup> For the LORD is a great God,  
and a great King above all gods.
- <sup>4</sup> In his hand are the depths of the earth;  
the heights of the mountains are his also.
- <sup>5</sup> The sea is his, for he made it,  
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- <sup>6</sup> O come, let us worship and bow down,  
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Dive Year 3, Unit 1, Session 2



Dive Year 3, Unit 1, Session 1



Dive Year 3, Unit 2, Session 4



Dive Year 3, Unit 2, Session 3



Dive Year 3, Unit 2, Session 6



Dive Year 3, Unit 2, Session 5

# Planning Template for Worship Service: Gathering

## **Preparation for Worship or Prelude**

What \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Call to Worship**

What \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Greeting**

What \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Song or Prayer of Adoration and Praise**

What \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Holy Ground

## Approach with Caution!

“You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.”

—Revelation 4:11, NRSV

**I know my transgressions.**

—Psalm 51:3, NRSV

**My sin is ever before me.**

—Psalm 51:3, NRSV

**Create in me a clean heart!**

—Psalm 51:10, NRSV

**Wash me! Cleanse me!**

—Psalm 51:2, NRSV

# Planning Template for Worship Service: Gathering (cont.)

## **Call to Confession**

What \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Prayer of Confession**

What \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Assurance of Pardon**

What \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Passing of the Peace**

What \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Who \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Prayer or Song of Thanksgiving**

What \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Who \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**The Law**

What \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Who \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

How \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Spontaneous Skit of Nehemiah 8

It was a very special day and all of the PEOPLE *assembled together in a certain spot and sat down.*

And the PEOPLE *said* to EZRA (the teacher of the Law), *“Bring out the Book of the Law!”*

So EZRA *brought out the Book of the Law and stood on a high platform that had been built for this occasion.*

To the right of Ezra *stood . . .* (say first names of student[s], encouraging them to move into place).

And to the left of Ezra *stood . . .* (say first names of student[s], encouraging them to move into place).

EZRA *faced all the people* – all the men, all the women, and all the children who were able to understand. And when EZRA *opened the book*, all the PEOPLE *stood up.*

And EZRA began to *read aloud from the book—and he read from daybreak till noon. . . .*

(Encourage “Ezra” to read Deuteronomy 6:4-9 aloud, while the “clock” walks around the scene in a circle a couple of times— holding a wall clock [or drawing of a clock] and adjusting the time to mark its passing from 6:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.)

While Ezra read, all the PEOPLE *listened attentively to the Book of the Law.* The PEOPLE *were all ears* (encourage “Ezra” to read Deuteronomy 6:4-9 a second time as the “people” hold up their “ear” cards. After “Ezra” finishes verse 9, continue the narration below).

When Ezra was done reading, EZRA *said, “Praise the LORD! For our LORD is a great God!”*

And all the PEOPLE *lifted their hands and shouted, “Amen! Amen!”*

Then all the PEOPLE *fell to their knees in worship of God.* All the PEOPLE *put their faces to the ground.*

(Pause for 20 seconds or so as the “people” have their faces to the ground and then for ROUNDS OF APPLAUSE as the skit concludes!)

# Planning Template for Worship Service: The Word

## Prayers for Illumination

What \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Scripture Reading

What \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Sermon

What \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## Responses to the Sermon

What \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



As you read the story below, place the container of objects next to you (with a lid so the students can't see the objects until you pull them out). When prompted in the story, pick up the appropriate object, hold it in your hand and look at it for a moment, then pass it to the student next to you. With hand gestures (not words), indicate that the student should pass it to the person next to him or her, continuing until the object has been passed all away around the circle and back to you. Place it in front of you and then move on to the next part of the story.

**Listen to this story from long ago.**

**Listen for how God was faithful to the Israelites.**

**Listen for how the people remembered God's faithfulness.**

**Joshua was up early and on his way . . .**

*(pass around cell phone or alarm clock, beeping)*

**and all the people of Israel were with him.**

**When they reached the Jordan River . . .**

*(pass around bowl of water or play the sound of running water)*

**they stopped and spent the night.**

**Joshua gathered all the people and said to them:**

**"Sanctify yourselves. Tomorrow God will work miracle-wonders among you."**

*(pass around hand sanitizer or soap and washcloth)*

**Then the leaders walked through the camp, shouting out these orders:**

**"When you see the priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant, start moving.**

**Follow it so you'll know which way to go. But make sure you keep a proper distance between you and it, about half a mile—be sure now to keep your distance!"**

*(pass around a section of yellow caution tape or a sign that says "Danger: Keep Away")*

**Then Joshua spoke up with another announcement:**

**"Attention! Listen to what God, your God, has to say. This is how you'll know that God is alive among you—he will completely drive out all the people who are now living in Canaan! The Ark of the Covenant of the Lord of all the earth is going to pass before you into the Jordan River. When the soles of the feet of the priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant touch the Jordan's**

**water, the flow of water will be stopped—the water coming from upstream will pile up in a heap."**

**And it happened just as Joshua said it would! All the people left their tents to cross the Jordan, led by the priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant. When the priests got to the Jordan and their feet touched the water at the bank of the river, the flow of water stopped.**

*(pass around bowl of sand or stop water sound)*

**And there they stood; those priests carrying the Ark of the Covenant stood firmly planted on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan, while all Israel crossed on dry ground. Finally the whole nation was across the Jordan, with not one wet foot.**

*(pass around a dry sock)*

**The next thing Joshua did was pick twelve men, one from each tribe, and he said:**

**"From right here, the middle of the Jordan where the feet of the priests are standing firm, take twelve stones. Each of you, lift up a stone and carry it across with you. Don't set it down until we get to the place where we'll camp tonight. These stones will be a way to remember this day—to mark this occasion.**

*(pass around twelve small stones; when they come back to you, hold the stones in your hands as you finish the story)*

**"When your children ask you, 'What do these stones mean to you?' you'll say, 'The flow of the Jordan was stopped in front of the Ark of the Covenant as it crossed the Jordan—and we were able to cross the river. Just as the Lord our God dried up the waters of the Red Sea until we crossed over, the Lord our God dried up the waters of the Jordan until we crossed over. These stones remind us that the hand of the Lord is mighty. These stones remind us that God is faithful.'"**

—Joshua 3:1-4:8, 24 (adapted from *The Message*)

# Planning Template for Worship Service: Sacraments

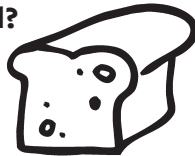
The Lord's Supper is a sacrament that reminds us that we belong to God and are saved by Christ's sacrifice for us on the cross. It's a feast of remembrance, communion, and hope. Choose one option from each category below to plan your own celebration of the Lord's Supper.

## What kind of mood would you like the sacrament of communion to evoke?

- emphasis on the past - Christ has died! (*somber mood*)
- emphasis on the present - Christ is risen! (*joyful mood*)
- emphasis on the future - Christ will come again! (*hopeful mood*)

## How will the "body of Christ" be served?

- one loaf of bread
- cubes of bread in a serving tray
- wafers placed on tongue
- other idea \_\_\_\_\_



## How will the "blood of Christ" be served?

- one common cup
- individual cups of juice in a serving tray
- chalice of juice
- other idea \_\_\_\_\_



## How will the people partake?

- walking forward to front of sanctuary
- in a circle around the communion table
- sitting in pews/chairs
- other idea \_\_\_\_\_



## What type of music, if any, will there be?

- choir, praise singers, or congregation singing
- instrumental music
- other ideas \_\_\_\_\_
- song ideas \_\_\_\_\_



## Do you have any other ideas for the celebration of the Lord's Supper?

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# Planning Template for Worship Service: Response

## **Call to Discipleship**

What \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## **Blessing or Benediction**

What \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Who \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

How \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



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**Year 1**

**Unit 1** What Do I Do When Things Fall Apart?

**Unit 2** What's the Covenant All About?

**Unit 3** Who Is God?

**Unit 4** Who Is Jesus?

**Unit 5** Who Is the Holy Spirit?

**Unit 6** What Is the Church?

**Year 2**

**Unit 1** What Is Being a Christian All About?

**Unit 2** What's with All the Rules?

**Unit 3** Can't We All Just Get Along?

**Unit 4** Who's Number 1?

**Unit 5** Does What I Do Make a Difference?

**Unit 6** What Do I Say When I Pray?

**Year 3**

**Unit 1** Worship

**Unit 2** Justice

**Unit 3** Prayer

**Unit 4** Stewardship

**Unit 5** Bible Reading

**Unit 6** Missional Living

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