

We Worship Leader Leaflet



This course is recommended for Grades 1-2.

INTRODUCTION

We Worship seeks to introduce to first and second graders the rich heritage that is ours in Lutheran worship. This course will help children participate and find meaning in Lutheran worship and feel valued as members of the church.

The course can be used in a variety of ways, including:

- special worship activities for one Sunday per month;
- classes beyond the typical 30 Sunday school sessions that coordinate with the school year;
- a series of evening events for families;
- developing outreach material for homebound members.

Martin Luther was primarily responsible for the development of Lutheran worship. He refined the worship forms of his day and kept much of what was good in the Catholic tradition while striving to produce liturgy that would have meaning for all worshipers. Since Luther's time, Lutheran worship forms have continued to evolve, reflecting changes in language and culture, but always striving to remain meaningful for all worshipers.

Through stories, craft projects, prayers, songs, and dance, your learners will explore the development of our Lutheran worship service and how that worship is linked to their everyday lives. Experiences in the Bible, *Lutheran Book of Worship*, and Luther's Small Catechism will help children understand the roots of Lutheran worship.

As you lead your students through this experience, remember that first- and second-grade children are concrete thinkers. Simple images or examples will help them understand difficult concepts.

Remember, too, that reading abilities will vary greatly. Many first graders will not be reading at all.

Get to know your students' abilities and tailor activities to those abilities.

Each session in this leader guide includes four basic parts:

- **Learning Focus**—the main teaching point for the session;
- **Background**—insight and direction about the session's content, the students' developmental readiness to learn, and room setup;
- **Heart of the Learning**—the learning core, including stories, games, puzzles, projects, catechism connection, and prayer time;
- **Response Activities**—designed to help learners apply the session content to their daily lives and respond.

SESSION 1

GOD'S FAMILY, THE CHURCH

LEARNING FOCUS

The learners will identify themselves as members of God's family and explore how worship celebrates membership in this family.

BACKGROUND

In this session, the learners examine the concept that the church is more than a building. It is the community of believers worldwide: God's family of families. Anytime a family reunites, the members talk about times shared together. Our worship is like a family reunion. Through hymns and creed, Bible readings and Lord's Supper, sermon and prayers, we retell the story of God's salvation. Whenever we reunite for worship, we add a new chapter to the story as we share our faith together.

For this session, provide a chalkboard and an art area. Floor and wall space are needed for the action poem, "Ways We Worship God," and "Dance a Psalm."

The activities in this session are well suited to first and second graders, who are in the stage of development known as *the age of the believer*. This is an ideal time for introducing the liturgies and rituals of the church. The children will soon discover that they can participate in worship by reading and/or memorizing portions of the service such as prayers, psalms, and hymns.

HEART OF THE LEARNING

We Are the Church

Preparation: Have a Learner Resource (LR) on hand for each student. On 3" x 5" cards, print the following words and place them in a shoe box: *steeple, me, you, people, walls, worship, praise, stained-glass windows, cross, Bible, organ, hymnal*. If you have many nonreaders, draw or paste pictures above the words. Also prepare two cards with the headings "Part of a Church Building" and "What God Wants in Church." Tape them to either side of a wall or chalkboard.

- Ask the class what the word *church* means to them.
- Hold up the box and explain that the word cards inside tell about the church.
- Point out the two headings you have prepared.
- Say that some word cards may fit under both headings.
- Invite volunteers to pick one word card at a time.
- Tape it under the heading the class chooses.
- Continue until all the cards have been drawn.
- Read aloud the action poem on pages 2-3 of the learner resource, comparing the words to those on the chart.
- Tell the children that many people today think of the church only as a building.

- Say that we use hymnals, Bibles, and organs in our church buildings, but that these things do not make "the church."
- Conclude by saying that in the Bible, the church is always people—God's family—and that each of them is a member of this family.
- Invite the children to celebrate their membership in God's family by learning the action poem.

God's Family around the World

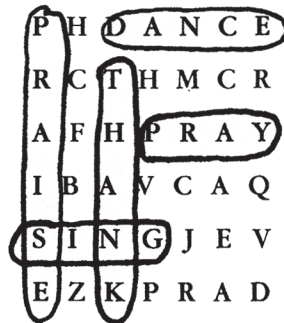
- Read aloud 1 Corinthians 12:12, 27.
- Tell the children that a Christian named Paul wrote these words to explain how all Christians are part of one body, God's family, and that each part of the "body" is important.
- Explain that Christians have different kinds of church buildings, worship in different languages, and have different skin colors, yet they all are members of "the body," God's family.
- Invite the children to say the phrases on page 4 of the learner resource.
- Conclude with the action poem, followed by a prayer giving thanks that each of the children is a member of God's family, the church.

RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

Ways We Worship God

Preparation: Gather five-foot long strips of newsprint or butcher paper, wide enough to trace outlines of the children's bodies. Also have construction paper, scissors, crayons or markers, transparent tape and, if desired, buttons, yarn, and glue.

- Ask the children to find the worship words hidden in the word find on page 5 of the learner resource. The answer is given here:

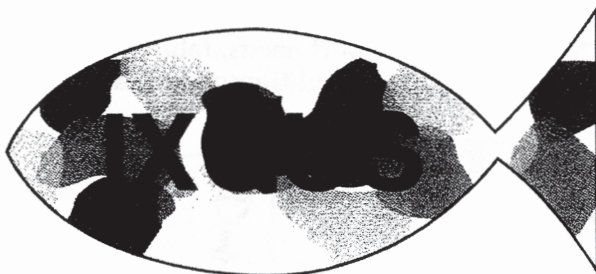


- Tell the children that we use these words in many ways in our worship.
- Reread 1 Corinthians 12:12, 27.

- Ask the children to look at the bottom of page 5 and name ways they could use their bodies to praise or worship God. Incorporate the worship words from the word find puzzle. Examples: *mouth*—sing a hymn or say a prayer; *hands*—fold in prayer, collect communion cups; *feet*—dance in worship, walk to the altar for children’s sermon.
- Write down each child’s responses on a separate sheet of construction paper and set aside. Be sure to get responses from each child.
- Trace around each child on the newsprint.
- Have each child draw his or her features and clothing on his or her body outline.
- Add yarn for hair and buttons, if desired.
- Tape each child’s worship response papers to his or her figure.

IXOUS Plaque

Preparation: Locate construction paper, white glue, paintbrushes, small dishes, pencils, and a permanent felt-tip marker. Protect the work area with news-paper. Cut or tear pieces of tissue paper into 1" to 2" squares. Pour white glue into the dishes and dilute with water. For each child, draw the outline of a fish on construction paper and print *IXOUS* inside with permanent marker.



ixous fish shape

- Explain that the fish was used as a symbol by believers in the early church, who put a fish-shaped sign by their doors.
- Add that they also greeted each other by drawing the shape of a fish in the dirt with their feet.
- Say that the letters *IXOUS* (pronounced IK-thees) stand for the first letters in the Greek phrase meaning “Jesus Christ, God’s Son, Savior.”
- Explain that the fish symbol is still used by Christians today to show their faith, often by displaying the symbol on a plaque. Tell the children they are going to make plaques to display.
- Distribute the fish shapes you drew on construction paper and ask the children to brush the

shapes with glue and cover them with pieces of tissue paper.

- When the glue dries, *IXOUS* will show through.

Dance a Psalm

Preparation: Locate a copy of *Lutheran Book of Worship (LBW)*. Cut 2" x 48" streamers of cloth or crepe paper.

- Point out Psalm 47 (page 237) and Psalm 100 (page 263) in *LBW*.
- Explain that these psalms were used in worship during Jesus’ time and are still used today.
- Distribute the streamers.
- Challenge the children to create dances using the streamers as you read the psalms aloud.



SESSION 2

GET READY TO WORSHIP

LEARNING FOCUS

The children will learn about parts of the worship service and actively participate in them.

BACKGROUND

Lutherans use a liturgy or pattern for worship in their services. It has two main parts: the Word and the Sacrament. First, we look toward the lectern and pulpit, where God’s Word is read and preached. Second, we center around the altar, where the Lord’s Supper is served.

The liturgy helps us organize our worship. It usually includes a confession of sin, praise and thanksgiving, study of God’s Word, prayers for ourselves and others, offerings for God’s work, and the Lord’s Supper. In each service we listen, sing, share the peace, and receive blessings.

In this session, the children will explore our worship, beginning with a story set in Jesus’ day. Provide a worktable for completing art and pencil and paper activities. Space to move is needed for the psalm. A cooking area and oven are used to make the worship sticks. Set aside a classroom altar area for use in this and future sessions.

Children of this age are joiners. They want to be part of the church community. By learning about

the elements of our worship service, the children will be able to more fully participate in worship and to sense more clearly their membership in God's family.

HEART OF THE LEARNING

The Lord Be with You

Preparation: Plan to dress in Bible times attire. Practice telling the story. Locate a copy of *LBW*.

- Say, "Welcome to Jerusalem, fellow Christians. I, too, am a believer. I'm glad you have come back in time to worship with me. In Bible times, worship began with this greeting: 'The Lord be with you.' Do you know the answer to this greeting? (*Invite the children to say, 'And also with you.'*) Worship continued this way: 'Lift up your hearts.' (*Invite the children to say, 'We lift them to the Lord.'*) Do you know that you use these words in your worship? (*Show the words on pages 68, 88, or 109 in LBW.*)

"In our Bible-times worship, we next sang a very old song of thanks and praise. It began with the words 'Holy, holy, holy Lord.' These words came from the song Isaiah the prophet heard angels sing in a vision. You sing the words today. When you do, you join with the angels of heaven in praising God. (*Show the words on LBW pages 69, 89, or 110.*)

"In Bible times, we continued the song by saying, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.' We used these words to welcome Jesus when he entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday. You use them in your worship to welcome Jesus in Holy Communion, the Lord's Supper. In this supper, God's family remembers Jesus and gives thanks for all that he has done. Would you join me in learning these worship words?"

- Invite the children to learn the action psalm on page 6 of the learner resource.
- Say that ancient Christians sang a psalm like this between the readings of the Bible lessons.
- Explain that we still follow this custom today and point out Psalm 118 on *LBW* pages 272-273.

Symbols of Worship

- Say that Christians still use many symbols that were used long ago to remind us of our faith.
- Read aloud the information on page 7 of the learner resource or ask a volunteer to do so, stop-

ping to talk about and complete the symbol activities. If possible, take a walk through the church building to look for cross shapes and the other symbols.

- Close by thanking God that our worship service today is built on worship services from long ago.

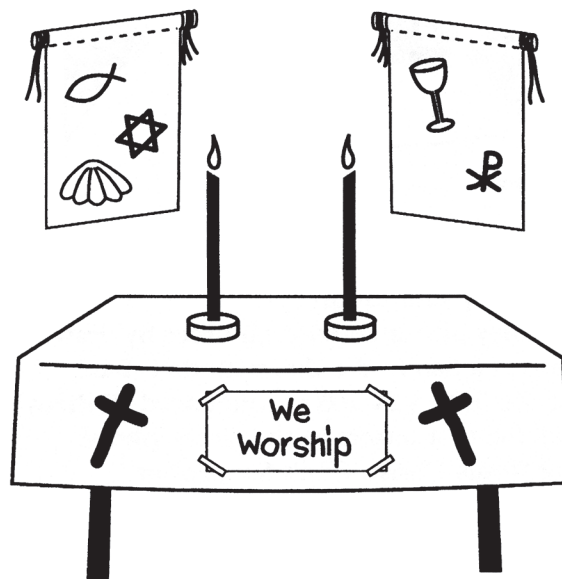
RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

The Worship Game

- Read aloud the background information and directions on page 8 of the learner resource.
- Play the game on pages 8 and 9.

Our Worship Center

Preparation: For an altar, place candles on top of a small table and find a piece of white cloth large enough to cover the top. For banners, supply 12" x 18" pieces of white cloth or paper, 1/2" x 13" pieces of doweling, yarn, and a stapler. Fold down the top of each banner 1" and staple. Insert doweling in this casing and tie yarn to the ends. To make a worship stole for each child, cut a 6" x 36" strip of felt or burlap and locate fabric scraps. If possible, provide samples of your pastor's worship stoles. Print the words "We Worship" on a piece of paper. Have ready fabric markers or puff paints, fabric scraps, construction paper, glue, and transparent tape.



Banner

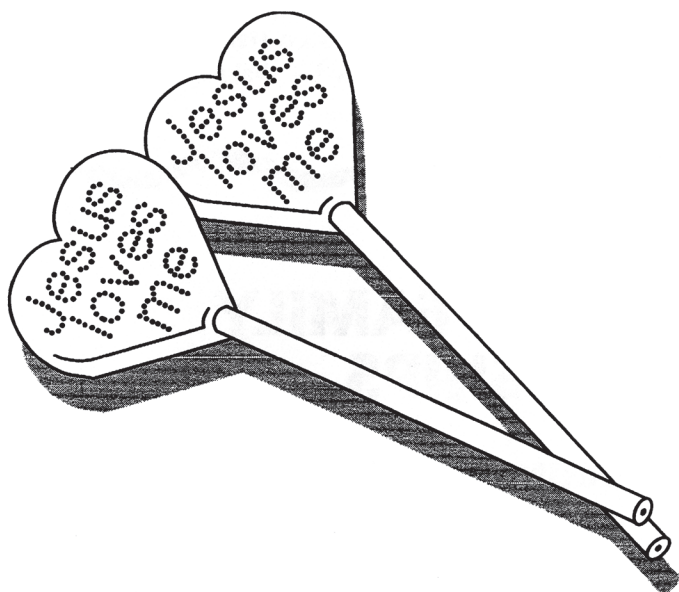
- Examine your sanctuary paraments and pastor's stoles. Compare the symbols on the altar, banners, and stoles to those on learner resource page 7.
- Invite the children to decorate the altar cloth and banners with some of these symbols.

- Cover the altar with the cloth and hang the banners.
- Invite the children to create worship stoles.
- Have the learners draw symbols on fabric scraps and glue to their stoles.
- Tape the stoles to a display wall under the “We Worship” sign.

“We Lift Up Our Hearts” Worship Sticks

Preparation: Plan to do this activity over two sessions as the hearts bake for 2½ hours. Make dough using ¾ cup water, ⅔ cup salt, and 2¼ cups flour, adding red food coloring. Provide heart cookie cutters, rolling pin, pencils, silver duct tape, toothpicks, cookie sheet, and waxed paper. Arrange to bake the hearts in an oven. Locate a copy of *LBW*.

- Roll out dough to a thickness of ⅜" on waxed paper.
- Cut out heart shapes.
- Use a toothpick to poke shallow holes in the dough to spell “Jesus loves me.”
- Make a hole with a pencil in the point of the heart for inserting the pencil handle after the hearts are baked.
- Transfer the cutouts to a cookie sheet.
- Bake at 250° for 2½ hours. Unless you have a program that accomodates this long wait, tell students you will complete the project next time after the hearts have baked.
- Insert the eraser end of a pencil into the hole at the base of the heart.
- Fasten the heart to the pencil with duct tape.



Worship sticks

- Read aloud *LBW* page 68, holding up the hearts at the words “We lift them to the Lord.”
- Use the sticks and the worship stoles from the previous activity in a worship procession to the altar created above.
- Say the psalm on learner resource page 6.



SESSION 3

I CAN TALK TO GOD

LEARNING FOCUS

The learners will explore how we respond to God in worship through praying, saying the creed, sharing the peace, and singing.

BACKGROUND

The liturgy helps us plan our worship. But more important than our worship planning is what we receive through worship. God is with us in worship, blessing us and giving us forgiveness, strength for our faith, power to love, and eternal life. Worship is our opportunity not only to receive God’s blessings, but also to show our love to God in return.

In this session, the learners will explore how believers respond to God in worship. The session focuses on four elements of our worship service: the creed, prayers, the passing of the peace, and hymns. Set up a work area for art and writing activities and a space for movement. An oven and area for baking are needed for “Prayer Pretzels.” Children of this age learn by observing those around them. As you model these worship elements, you provide an example of one way that members of the community of faith respond to God’s love. By listening carefully to the children, offering them your love and forgiveness, and praising their efforts at peacemaking, you demonstrate God’s love—the very reason for worship.

HEART OF THE LEARNING

Responding to God’s Love

Preparation: Have ready a bag of pretzels, Bible, *LBW*, and the learner resources.

- Gather around the altar created in Session 2.

- Distribute one pretzel to each child and ask the learners what the pretzel reminds them of.
- Tell the children pretzels were invented long ago to represent two arms folded in prayer.
- Explain that during Lent, the 40 days before Easter, people wanted to remember to pray and the pretzels helped them to do this.
- Invite the children to eat the pretzels.
- Say that praying is one way we show our love to God in worship.
- Invite the children to fold their arms “pretzel-style” as you give thanks for God’s love.
- Tell the children that the next activities will help them learn more about God’s love.
- Read aloud Matthew 6:9-15.
- Ask the children if these words remind them of anything they have heard during worship.
- Explain that Jesus taught this prayer to his disciples, so it is called the Lord’s Prayer.
- Tell the class that members of God’s family all over the world pray the Lord’s Prayer.
- Point out the Lord’s Prayer on *LBW* page 71.
- Say that the creed is another way to show our love to God.
- Read the background information and directions on page 10 of the learner resource.
- Invite the children to complete “My Creed.”
Answers: “I believe in *God*. I believe in *Jesus*. I believe in the *Holy Spirit*.”

Sharing God’s Peace

Preparation: Gather pencils and crayons or colored pencils.

- Read the opening paragraph on page 11 of the learner resource. Work together to fill in the blanks. Answer: “And *also* with *you*.”
- Read the next paragraphs, then let the children complete the peace puzzle as directed. Circulate as children work, offering help as needed and commenting positively on their efforts and results.
- Ask the children to close their eyes and think about a person they love.
- Ask them to silently thank God for this person.
- Close with the Lord’s Prayer, inviting the children to join in if they know the words.

RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

Prayer Pretzels

Preparation: Have ready an oven and the materials listed on learner resource page 12.

- Invite the children to make pretzels by following the recipe on page 12 of the learner resource.
- While pretzels bake, let children complete their prayers on page 12.
- Share the pretzels with another class.

Dance a Hymn

Preparation: Locate music or a recording of “Earth and All Stars!” (*LBW* 558) or be ready to read the words aloud. To make rhythm instruments, obtain small sticks, a jackknife, a large plastic ice cream container, inner tubing, heavy-duty rubber band, PVC pipe, large plastic lids, hole punch, pipe cleaners, small bells, and an adult helper.

- Invite the children to show their love to God by creating a dance to “Earth and All Stars!”
- Accompany the dance with rhythm instruments from different countries as a reminder that members of God’s family worldwide worship with music. Following are instructions for making the instruments.
- Have an adult cut grooves in a small stick to make a Brazilian *reco-reco*. Play by scraping another stick along the grooves.
- Stretch a piece of inner tubing over the top of an ice cream container to make a Haitian *conga*. Fasten the tubing with a heavy-duty rubber band. Play with the fingers and palms of both hands.
- Tell the children that in Haiti the *vaksin* is a bamboo tube blown like a trumpet. Make one from a three-foot length of PVC pipe.
- Punch four holes around the edge of each plastic lid to make tambourines from India. String two small bells on a pipe cleaner. Thread the pipe cleaner through a hole. Fasten tightly and repeat for each of the holes. Play by shaking and tapping.



SESSION 4

GOD’S FAMILY WORSHIPS

LEARNING FOCUS

The children will learn that God comes to us in a personal way in Holy Baptism and the Lord’s Supper.

BACKGROUND

God meets each of us, one on one, in the Sacraments of Holy Baptism and Holy Communion. Baptism combines God's name with each of ours, beginning our individual lives of faith. In the Lord's Supper, God's family comes to worship for a special meal. These sacraments combine physical elements—the water, wine, and bread—with God's promises to believers. That is why they are known as the “visible Words of God.”

It's not easy to comprehend the notion of God's promises. But the sacraments are visible, tangible signs of God's love. Since children of this age learn best by doing, the sacraments provide a concrete way to learn about and participate in worship and to sense God's presence in their lives.

Set up a worktable for the opening activity and for completing the “We Worship” movie strip and the worship book activities.

HEART OF THE LEARNING

God Blesses Children

Preparation: Place a copy of *LBW* on the classroom altar made in Session 2. For each child, provide 11 narrow ($\frac{3}{8}$ " wide) wooden craft sticks and a 4" x 6" strip of adhesive paper to make a puzzle. Also have fine-point watercolor pens or markers. Make a sample puzzle before class.

- Peel the backing from the strip of adhesive paper and lay the strip, sticky side up, on a table.
- Press the sticks as close together as possible onto the adhesive paper, so they will not shift.
- Print the words *YOU ARE* across the top of the sticks; draw a baptismal shell in the center, and print *GOD'S CHILD* across the bottom.



Assembled craft-stick puzzle

- Remove the sticks from the adhesive paper and mix their order.
- Invite the children to put together the puzzle.
- Recall that the shell is a symbol for baptism.
- Read Mark 10:13-16. Explain that Jesus blessed children and welcomed them into God's family. Tell the learners that more than 400 years ago Martin Luther wrote a service of Baptism that included these verses.
- Ask the children if they can think of another time during worship when they receive God's blessing (*Holy Communion, the Lord's Supper*).
- Say that some children have studied about the Lord's Supper and share the meal. For all other children, the pastor puts his or her hands on each child's head and blesses him or her in God's name.
- Invite the learners to make their own puzzles to remind them of their membership in God's family and of how God has blessed them.
- Ask them to share this message by inviting friends and family at home to do the puzzle.
- Invite the children to kneel around the classroom altar for a blessing and prayer.
- Lay your hands upon each child's head in turn and say, “God bless you.”
- Introduce the following by saying that it comes from the service of Holy Communion, the Lord's Supper.
- Pray the prayer on page 94 of *LBW* that begins “Pour out upon us. . . .”

RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

“We Worship” Movie Strip

Preparation: If possible, videotape a worship service and set up a videocassette player for viewing. Provide heavy paper or a shoe box and 8" x 27/8" pieces of plain white paper for each child. Cut slits in the heavy paper or shoe box as directed on page 14 of the learner resource. Have scissors, crayons or markers, and transparent tape available. Follow the directions in the learner resource to make a sample movie strip.

- Play the videotape to find, name, and discuss parts of the worship service. Use the fast forward feature; do not expect children to listen to the whole service.
- Show children your sample movie strip. Invite the children to make their own movies, following the directions on page 14 of the learner resource. Let them use the plain white strips to add their own scenes.
- Have the artists show and tell about their movies.

Sharing Worship

Preparation: Locate a blank tape and an audio-cassette player that will make recordings. If you did them, have ready the “movies” made in “We Worship’ Movie Strip.” If desired, provide one blank audiotape per child. Arrange for tape copying, if you decide on this option.

- Invite the children to record a tape to share what they’ve learned about worship. (If you are using the movies they made, tell them the tape will be used to accompany the movies.)
- Include the action poems, psalms, and prayers from earlier sessions.
- Share the tape and movies with another class or send them to congregational members who cannot come to worship.
- Allow the children to make individual tapes to share with their families, if time permits. Another option would be to copy the group’s tape for each child.

Worship Books

Preparation: Have ready the learner resources, scissors, pencils, markers or crayons, and a stapler.

- Distribute the materials, including each child’s learner resource.

- Have the children cut along the dashed lines to remove pages 15 and 16.
- Cut on the center dashed line to form two strips.
- Fold the strips on the solid lines and staple them together to form an eight-page booklet.
- Have the children print their names on page 1.
- Tell the children that the books they just made can be taken home to complete with family or friends and that when they do, they will be sharing their faith with others and worshipping God.
- Thank the children for sharing time with you.
- Close in a prayer that thanks God for each child by name, for inviting us all to be part of God’s family, and for God’s great gift of Jesus to us.
(Note: You may choose to complete the worship books in class. If so, work through the book one page at a time together so that you can comment on the themes of each page as it’s completed.)



We Worship Leader Leaflet

This Leader Leaflet has a corresponding Learner Resource.

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