

CHRISTIAN PRACTICES WITH CHILDREN
Session 6: Worship

Resources

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| Audience | This class is designed for parents of children ages 3- 11. |
| Setting | Sunday afternoon Lunch and Learn Series |
| Time Frame | Approximately 1 hour class, 12:15 – 1:30 |
| Environment | Fellowship Hall, round tables, chairs, dry erase board, CD player, DVD player and TV. |
| Leader Preparation | Bring copies of bulletin, hymnals, <i>Because of You</i> , <i>Koala Lou</i> , <i>The Family Story Bible</i> , river rocks, faith review sheets, prayer books, CD player, and CD. |
| Study Focus | Practicing Worship with Children |

Invitation (5 minutes)

“One does not apply worship to life. You make it your practice until worship and life become one.” Parker Palmer, Quaker Educator¹

Dr. Walter Bruggeman professor of Old Testament studies at Columbia Seminary writes in his theory on Christian education that “any community that intends to survive must concern itself with education.”² Take a moment and consider how is it that you find yourself here as a worshipping Christian?

I remember as a child sitting between my grandmother and grandfather most Sunday mornings at Covenant Presbyterian Church. Nestled in between these two experienced Christians, I learned the rhythm of worship. I remember reading the doxology, the Lord’s Prayer, and the Apostle’s Creed over and over again so that I could sing and say them with the congregation, without looking. I remember wise men, angels and God resting merry gentlemen; I remember hanging greens with big red ribbons; I remember burning candles and singing choirs; I remember the baby Jesus, his mother Mary, and his father Joseph; I remember hot chocolate, sugar cookies and community caroling; I remember worshipping on Christmas Eve at Covenant. I remember Easter lilies, palm branches, brass instruments and a LOUD organ; I remember a minister taking a black shroud off a gold cross and saying, “Christ has risen,” and a choir singing in return, “He

¹ Palmer, Parker. “Meeting for Learning: Education in a Quaker Context.” < <http://www.pym.org/worship-and-care/Meeting-for-Learning.htm> > June 18, 2009.

² Bruggeman, Walter. *The Creative Word*. Augsburg Fortress Publishers. 1982.

has risen indeed!" I remember worshipping on Easter Sunday at Covenant. I remember Dick and Betty Peak, and hot, red robes; I remember a cuckoo flew over to Galilee; I remember lice, flies, and fleas flying all over Egypt land; And I remember Jonah and the nasty Ninevites; I remember singing in the children's choir. Worshipping at Covenant, I heard the stories, sang the songs, and prayed the Lord's Prayer. Growing up at Covenant Presbyterian Church, I learned that God is love; I am loved; and in return, I am called to love. I learned to worship God.

Responding Out Of (15 minutes)

We are going to break into groups of two and share the stories of how we find ourselves here today as worshipping Christians. I have some stones for you. When you have shared your worship stories, come and get a stone. And when your child asks, "What do these stones mean?" (Joshua 4:21, NRSV) You shall tell them your story.

Encountering Worship (25 – 30 minutes)

**Please stand and join me in our Call to Worship:
(Chant and echo)**

This is the day

This is the day

The LORD has made

The LORD has made

This is the day

This is the day

The LORD has made

The LORD has made

This is the day the LORD has made

This is the day the LORD has made

We will rejoice and be glad in it

We will rejoice and be glad in it

This is the day

This is the day

The LORD has made

The LORD has made³

Let us stand and sing hymn #338 Kum ba Yah.

**Trusting in God's mercy, let us confess our sins together in community before
God.**

You can write your own prayer, or use a prayer from the [Book of Common Worship](#) or other liturgical resource.

³ Adapted from Psalm 118:24 (NRSV)

Leader: Trusting your mercy, we lift these prayers to you in the name of Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. Amen.

Declaration of Pardon

“Friends, hear the good news: in Jesus Christ you are forgiven. Therefore, “

Today’s Old Testament reading comes from the book of Psalms, reading Psalm 139 beginning at verse 7 and reading to verse 12. Listen now for the word of God.

Psalm 139: 7-12 “Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheoul, you are there. If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast. If I say, ‘Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night,’ even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you.”
(NRSV)

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Say:

We have been created by God for God; therefore, we are pursued by a love that will not let us go.

Read aloud *The Runaway Bunny*

Ask: In the story *the Runaway Bunny*, where does the little bunny try to hide? **(Hold the book, turn the pages slowly, and have parents find all the places the little bunny tried to hide).** **Ask:** What did his mother do? (Again, let the parents find all the ways the mother bunny found her son). **Ask:** Can we hide from God? Could God find you under the bed? Could God find you dressed in red? Could God find you soaking in a bath? Could God find you walking down a path? Could God find you hiding in a tree? Could God find you sailing on the sea? Could God find you sitting on the moon? Could God find you at 12 noon? Can you think of places to hide? **(Let parents name all the places he or she would like to hide).** **Ask:** Could God find you there?

Let us pray together .

You might read a prayer from the children’s book *A World of Prayers* (Jeremy Brooks, Eerdmans, 2006) for this part of the service.

Let Us Stand and Sing Hymn #294 Wherever I May Wander

Sing together

**“Please stand and let us affirm what it is we believe using the words of the
Apostle’s Creed.”**

**Responding Out Of
(15 minutes)**

We will break into three groups. Each group will go to a table where I will have the book *Because of You*, or *Koala Lou*, or *The Family Story Bible* out on a table with its faith review sheet, a hymnal, a Bible, a book of prayers, and a copy of the bulletin from our worship service. Each group will plan a mini-worship service. Tell the participants: “Do this together! Talk to one another; think with one another; and plan with one another.”

Come back together as one large group. Ask participants to pick someone from their group to take a few minutes and share aloud with the rest of us their mini service, their thoughts, their concerns, their ah ha’s.

Say: “You can worship anytime, anywhere. Children learn by doing, playing, practicing, experiencing. Practice worshipping at home; practice worshipping at church; practice worshipping.”

Closing Benediction

Sit up front with your child at church so she can see;
Help your child find the scripture readings so he can follow along;
Help your child find the hymns and show her how to read a hymnal;
Find for your child the Lord’s Prayer, the Apostle’s Creed (located in the front of our
blue hymnals) so she can say with us the Lord’s Prayer and the Apostle’s Creed;
Pray the Lord’s Prayer with him and say the Apostle’s Creed with him as a nighttime
prayer each evening so that he can say it with us in church without looking;
Try hard not to shhh her.
Children can be distracting for you and for others around you, but they belong; they
are important; and they are learning; “their worship and their lives are becoming
one.”

And remember, we are in this together. Your children are a part of the family of God. They belong in worship. And each and every member of this congregation has made a vow, a sacred promise to “nurture and guide, by word and deed, through love and prayer so that [your children] may know and follow Jesus Christ.”

Let us go out from this place in the love of God, the mercy of Jesus Christ, and the
fellowship of the Holy Spirit and practice worshipping.

This series of lessons was prepared by Union-PSCE student Kim Lee, MACE, Fall 2009.