

Hymns to Sing Praise

Part 4 of a curriculum series
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Morning Has Broken

Author: Eleanor Farjeon
Illustrator: Tim Ladwig
Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
ISBN: 9780802851277

Psalm 118:24 & Genesis 1:1-5

Main Idea:

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth and we stand in awe and wonder at the power and majesty of that creation. When there was nothing - God was already there. Where there was nothing - God was already at work.

Objectives:

Through this lesson the students will have the opportunity to...

- Enjoy viewing a collection of sunrise pictures
- Learn the background of the text for this hymn and discover it's setting in our hymnbooks.
- Create a sunrise picture as a community.

Something to Remember:

"This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it."
Psalm 118:24

Lesson Quick View

We GATHER as the people of God

- Enjoy viewing a "Sunrise Art Gallery"
- Worship with Psalm 118:24 and Genesis 1:1-5
- Learn the sign language for "sunrise" "day" and "sunset"

We HEAR God's Word

- Read *Morning Has Broken* by Eleanor Farjeon.
- Find this hymn in your hymnbook
- Sing this hymn together

We RESPOND creatively

- Create a Community Sunrise Picture using "shared strokes"
- OR Create individual sunrise art/ sculpture to add to the Art Gallery

We DEPART to serve

- Sing together - "This is the Day"

Additional enrichment activities are provided on the last page of this lesson plan.

You Will Need

Gather

- Photos gathered from the internet showing sunrises
- Clothesline & clothes pins OR tape for hanging
- Worship Center items – bright yellow cloth, candle, matches, snuffer, Bible
- Audio recording of "Morning Has Broken" recorded by Cat Stevens in 1971
- Posters/Pictures of sign language

Hear

- Book - *Morning Has Broken* by Eleanor Farjeon
- Hymnbooks
- Audio recording of hymn (from Gather)

Respond

- Art paper
- Paint - yellow, orange, red
- Paint cups, brushes, paper towels
- Art easel (optional)
- Plastic to cover work area, paint smocks/aprons
- Chalk, watercolor markers, color pencils (optional)
- Soft clay/play dough (optional)

Depart

- Words and music for chorus "This is the Day"

Special Note to Leaders

You may find it helpful to read the book review of this book as part of your planning for this session.

Storypath: Connecting Children's Literature With Our Faith Story is part of the Union Presbyterian Seminary Library website offering resources for parents, educators, and pastors.

This book review can be found at
<http://storypath.upsem.edu/reviews/book-reviews-a-z>

Suggested Audience

- Preschool - Grade 5
- Multiage - preschool-elementary
- Intergenerational

Suggested Settings

- Mid-week gathering
- Summer Sunday School
- Family retreat/workshop
- VBS



You Will Need
Nametags

You Will Need

- Pictures and photographs of sunrises by a variety of artists
- Clothesline & clothes pins for hanging
- OR appropriate tape/hanging tools
- Audio recording of Morning Has Broken by Cat Stevens (1971)

You Will Need

Worship Center:

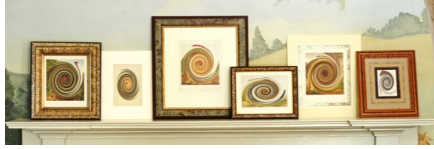
- Yellow cloth
- Christ candle
- Matches & Snuffer
- Bible
- Enlarged posters of sign language

Before the Session

Set up the worship center in a location where everyone can make a circle around it. A small table or piano bench works great.

Greet everyone by name as they arrive and welcome them to the session. If appropriate in your setting, give each person a name tag to encourage everyone to learn each other's names. Introduce newcomers to the rest of the group and invite everyone to make them feel welcome.

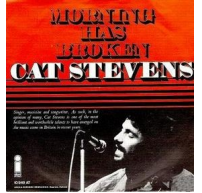
Sunrise Art Gallery



Before the Session begins....collect (from internet searches, books, calendars, etc.) and display photos and artwork depicting a variety of sunrises to create a Sunrise Art Gallery. You might want to use a clothesline and clothespins for hanging or the appropriate tape/hanging tools.

As children are gathering, invite them to walk around and view the Sunrise Art Gallery as they would any art gallery. Ask them to choose their favorite picture and be able to tell why they like that picture.

To help create the mood of an art gallery and begin to acquaint the children with today's hymn, have a recording of Morning Has Broken by Cat Stevens (from his 1971 album *Teaser and the Firecat.*) playing.



Verse 1
Morning has broken like the first morning. Blackbird has spoken like the first bird.
Praise for the singing! Praise for the morning! Praise for them, springing fresh from the Word!

Verse 2
Sweet the rain's new fall sunlit from heaven, Like the first dewfall on the first grass.
Praise for the sweetness of the wet garden, spring in completeness where His feet pass.

Verse 3
Mine is the sunlight! Mine is the morning born of the one light Eden saw play!
Praise with elation, praise every morning, God's recreation of the new day!

Opening Worship

When most or all of the participants have arrived and everyone has had an opportunity to view the art gallery, gather everyone together and ask each child to stand beside his/her favorite sunrise photo. Allow more than one child to choose the same photo.

Invite everyone to join you in worship as you **light the Christ candle** saying, "Jesus says, 'I am the Light of the World. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.'" (John 8:12)

- **Read Psalm 118:24**
- **Invite each child to tell the group why he/she chose the sunrise photo he/she is standing with.**
- **Read Genesis 1:1-5. Point out to the children that before there was anything, including the sunrise, there was God!**
- **Teach the sign language for "sunrise" "day" and "sunset"**

	<p>SUNRISE, SUNSET</p> <p>The left arm is held in front of the body pointing right with the palm down. The right "O" starts below and moves upward (or downward) behind the left forearm. Origin: The sun appearing or disappearing beyond the horizon. Usage: <i>Sunrise</i> will be at five. a golden <i>sunset</i>.</p>
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	<p>DAY</p> <p>The right arm, with index finger pointing out, palm up, is moved in a short arc from right to left (or from left to right) while the left index touches the inside of the right elbow. ALL DAY is signed with a complete arc. Origin: Indicates the course of the sun. Usage: a long, hard <i>day</i>; the first <i>day</i> of the week.</p>
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Invite the group to join you as you pray the following prayer or one of your choosing:
Dear God of Creation, we thank you for the sunrise and all the beauty that it brings. Thank you for the gift of your creation. Help us to appreciate your creation and care for it each and every day. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

Close your opening worship time by extinguishing the Christ candle as you say, "The Light that was in one place, is now in every place."



We HEAR God's Word

You Will Need

- A copy of the book *Morning Has Broken* by Eleanor Farjeon
- Audio recording of hymn from Gather

Read *Morning Has Broken* by Eleanor Farjeon.

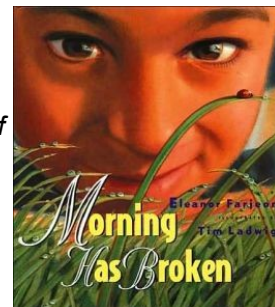
Share with the children the history behind this popular hymn: *The hymn originally appeared in the second edition of Songs of Praise (published in 1931), to the tune "Bunessan", composed in the Scottish Highlands. In Songs of Praise Discussed, the editor, Percy Dearmer, explains that as there was need for a hymn to give thanks for each day, English poet and children's author, Eleanor Farjeon had been "asked to make a poem to fit the lovely Scottish tune."* (From Wikipedia)

Talk with the group about the illustrations that Tim Ladwig has given us. Start with the cover. Have you ever looked at "dew" before or noticed God's amazing creation "up close" like the little boy in the book?

Consider some of the following questions:

- Who do you see in the book?
- What are they doing? Where do they go? What do they see?
- How do they recognize God in the things they see?
- Where do you see God in your everyday life/routine?
- Who helps you see God at work in creation?

Locate this hymn in your church hymnbook (or in one you find elsewhere) and show it to the children. While the hymn was written long ago (1931), it was made most popular by Cat Stevens when he recorded it in 1971. Invite the children to sing along with a recording of the hymn using the book or hymnbook.



You Will Need

- Bible

Scripture reading

Read again Psalm 118:24.

How do you see this verse from the Psalmist portrayed in the words and illustrations of this book?



We RESPOND creatively

Sunrise Picture - A Collective Painting (Option A)

Before the Session begins.....set up an artist's easel and cover the work area with plastic coverings. Set out paint cups with yellow, orange, and red paints. Provide paintbrushes for each color. Provide paint smocks/aprons for the children to wear.

Invite the children to create a collective painting of a sunrise by taking turns painting the strokes. Explain the this will take cooperation and trust among the members of the group. The rules are simple: each child can only paint one stroke (in a color of his/her choice) at a time. It will take some time to create a unified painting so be patient with the process! Be affirming as each stroke is made and the sunrise begins to take shape. Keep taking turns until the group is satisfied that their "collective painting" is complete.

When the painting is complete, ask the children to describe how they felt watching and waiting for their turn. Ask the children to find a time in the next week when they can watch an actual sunrise (or sunset) with a parent or other adult. As the sun rises (or sets) slowly, they can remember watching, and waiting for their painting to be completed!

Remind the children of God's amazing power to create something from nothing and to re-create the sunrise (and sunset) each and every day!



You Will Need

- Artist easel
- Art paper
- Paint - yellow, orange, red
- Paint cups & brushes
- Paint smocks or aprons
- Paper towels
- Plastic to cover work

You Will Need

- A wide variety of art supplies

Individual Sunrise Paintings/Sculptures (Option B)

Set out a variety of art supplies and invite the children to create their own Sunrise picture or sculpture to add to the Sunrise Art Gallery from the Gather time.

Art supplies could include paint, chalk, markers, color pencils, crayons, soft clay, etc.





We DEPART to serve

Closing Prayer

You Will Need

- Sunrise Art Gallery

Gather in the Sunrise Art Gallery you've created and invite the children to share their additions to the gallery.

Invite the children to offer their own prayers of thanksgiving for God's wonderful creation.

Benediction

Sing Together "This is the Day" as a closing benediction.

You Will Need

- Words and music to the children's chorus, "This is the Day" can be found in a variety of children's songbooks and/or an internet search.

This is the day
 (echo) This is the day
 That the Lord has made
 (echo) That the Lord has made
 We will rejoice
 (echo) We will rejoice
 And be glad in it
 (echo) And be glad in it

This is the day that the Lord has made,
 We will rejoice and be glad in it.

This is the day
 (echo) This is the day
 That the Lord has made
 (echo) That the Lord has made



Expanding the Lesson

Looking for ways to turn this one-hour session into a mini retreat or expanded session?

Here are some enrichment activities for you to consider as you plan for your unique time frame and group dynamics.

Gather

- Create a Generational Sharing Time** by inviting members of an older generation to join you for this session. Begin the session with a "Share Time" that pairs children and senior adults in small groups. Invite the seniors to bring a toy or memory from their childhood to share. Be prepared for some amazing sharing as children and adults share current and past memories.
- Learn about how your church/ community is practicing being **Eco-friendly**. Invite a guest to share recycling practices and tips, energy-efficient practices, etc.

Hear

- Gather and share **Morning Prayers** from books, the Common Book of Worship, and other sources as a way of affirming God's presence from the start of our day.
- Make a Twig Prayer Journal** for children to write their morning prayers in.

Supplies

- 1/2 sheets of plain paper + thin cardboard (front/back) same size
- Hole punch
- Small twigs
- Large rubber bands

Instructions

- Sandwich paper between two sheets of thin cardboard
- Punch two holes along top or side edge
- Thread one rubber band from the back to front of each hole, creating two loops on the front side.
- Insert a small twig through the loops on the front and back to bind the journal together

Respond

- Take a **Nature Walk** like the boy in the book. Look for signs of God's creation. Look for the things the boy found in his walk.
- Take a **Generation to Generation Walk** in pairs or small groups. Allow the groups to search together for signs of God's creation. Encourage them to use the book as a guide.
- Take part in an **Eco-Friendly Service Project** in your church or community.