

Exploring Worship Leader Leaflet



Exploring Luther's Small Catechism

This course is recommended for Grades 5-6.

INTRODUCTION

This course is designed to help fifth and sixth grade learners:

- explore Lutheran worship;
- relate worship to its source—the Bible;
- discover the meaning of worship in their lives.

It emphasizes the fact that all people, regardless of age, are important members of the body of Christ.

THE LEARNERS

Remember that fifth and sixth graders tend to be independent and inquisitive. They appreciate being challenged with questions that call for abstract rather than concrete answers. They may not always be able to see the relationship between what they are learning and their life experiences, but with a little gentle prodding they will discover it.

THE LEARNING SETTING

This course is intended to be an experiential as well as a cognitive quest for understanding of the many facets of Lutheran worship. Throughout the course, references are made to the liturgies printed in *Lutheran Book of Worship (LBW)*, code: 3-330 and A Contemporary Translation of Luther's Small Catechism, code: 15-5305 or 15-7510. Provide plenty of both resources so learners can refer to them often.

Learners are often asked to work in pairs or small groups to facilitate interaction, relationship building, and cooperative learning. Not all of your learners will learn and interact in the same way, so be sensitive to the varied needs and abilities of your learners. If possible, take learners to your congregation's worship space during each session to reinforce the concepts presented.

GETTING READY

Prepare each session carefully. Read the materials and select the response activities that will fit in your time and space. Read through the session in the learner resource. Not all of the learner resource pages and activities need to be done during class time. You may want to consider working through this course in more than four sessions. Make the course fit the needs of your learners, your congregation, and yourself.

Pray before you teach each session. "Lord give me the wisdom to share from my heart the faith you have given to me. Amen."

SESSION 1

WHAT IS WORSHIP?

LEARNING FOCUS

Lutheran worship is the gathering of believers around the Word and Sacraments where God acts and humans respond.

BACKGROUND

This session will introduce learners to the concepts of worship, corporate worship, and liturgy. They will learn that there are many forms of worship

described in the Bible and that they may worship alone, with their families, or with their congregation. Learners will discover that corporate worship is a gift from God, one that is guided by a liturgy that includes gathering, hearing the Word, sharing the meal, and sending believers to serve God and others. They will learn that *Lutheran Book of Worship* contains several forms of liturgy.

Make your learning space inviting, comfortable, and full of reminders of worship experiences. Display posters or bulletin covers that show people involved in familiar worship activities as well as the seasonal colors and symbols. Provide plenty of Bibles and copies of *Lutheran Book of Worship* and a chalkboard and chalk or chart paper and markers. Most importantly, be yourself and welcome each learner with a warm smile and a hearty hello.

HEART OF THE LEARNING

Worship Is Many Things

Preparation: Provide learner resources (LR), Bibles, local and national newspapers, and pencils for each learner.

- Divide the group into pairs or small groups. Invite learners to help you list all the things they do on Sundays. Divide the chalkboard or chart paper into two columns, and have each team, in turn, name one thing someone on that team does on Sundays. Tell them that each individual thing that they do counts as an answer. (*For example, things like “pray, sing, read scripture” could be listed separately instead of saying “go to church.”*) Review the lists together and ask volunteers to circle items that might be considered worship.
- Ask a volunteer to read the paragraph on page 2 (LR). Assign each team a Bible passage from page 3. Invite teams to name the ways to worship mentioned in each passage.
- Distribute local and national newspapers from the past week. Have learners look for ways that people have worshiped God in their daily lives. Then have learners brainstorm a list of activities from their lives that might be considered worship.

Worship Together

Preparation: Provide markers and dictionaries.

- Ask learners to write about or draw people in their church families on page 4 (LR). Find out why these people are important to the learners.
- Ask learners to look up and write the definition of the word *corporate*, which means “to be united in one body.”
- Ask a volunteer to read aloud the paragraph at the bottom of page 4. Have learners identify how the people they identified at the top of the page help each other grow in life and faith.

A Pattern to Follow and Liturgy

Preparation: Provide enough copies of *Lutheran Book of Worship* and chalkboard and chalk or chart paper and markers.

- Ask a volunteer to read aloud “A Pattern for Soccer, a Pattern for Worship” on page 5 (LR) and “Liturgy” on page 6. Find out how many learners worship regularly.
- Together, review the liturgy for Holy Communion (Setting One) beginning on page 57 of *Lutheran Book of Worship*. Use the chart on page 6 (LR) to note the worship elements that may be included in each of the categories listed there. Have learners recite or sing any parts of the liturgy they know.
- Invite learners to look through the liturgy for Holy Baptism beginning on page 121 of *Lutheran Book of Worship*.
- Encourage learners to notice which worship settings and liturgies are used in worship services.

A Time to Pray

- Ask learners to list their concerns in the kernels on page 6 (LR).
- Begin a prayer with words such as “Dear God, we ask that you hear our concerns. We pray for...”
- Encourage learners to take turns sharing their prayer concerns. (*This is called a popcorn prayer.*)

RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

Choose from these activities to complete your session as time allows.

A Silent Liturgy

Preparation: Provide drawing paper, pencils and crayons (or markers), and one poster board.

- Review the many forms of worship learners identified, as well as the concepts of corporate worship and liturgy.
- Brainstorm the many signs in our world that speak a message without using words, such as: pedestrian crossing, rest room, and no smoking signs.
- Ask learners to draw symbols or simple pictures to represent the four parts of the liturgy: GATHERING, WORD, MEAL, SENDING.
- Together review the symbols and choose one symbol for each part of the liturgy on a “worship” poster you create together. Involve everyone in making the poster: some drawing, some coloring the symbols, and some writing a one- or two-word explanation under each symbol.
- Display the poster in your learning space or in a public area where it may be seen by the whole congregation.

The Place We Worship

Preparation: Arrange to visit your congregation’s worship space. Provide markers or crayons and a large piece of blank paper divided by lines into four equal sections marked: GATHERING, WORD, MEAL, SENDING.

- Take learners to your church’s worship space and look closely at the things you find there: altar, pulpit, lectern, baptismal font, Holy Communion vessels, paraments, and whatever else you discover.
- Invite learners to describe the things that they see. What questions do they have and what memories do they have about using or watching someone else use the items you see?
- Work together to draw the different items in your congregation’s worship space. Place each item in the appropriate section on the paper.

SESSION TWO

GOD’S WORD IS ACTIVE IN OUR LIVES!

LEARNING FOCUS

God’s Word is a word of judgment and forgiveness. It is heard and celebrated throughout the year during our worship services.

BACKGROUND

This session will help learners gain an understanding of God’s forgiveness as they examine the cycle of the church year and the way in which it revolves around the life and ministry of Jesus. The session activities will focus on God’s love as reflected in the Bible and Lutheran liturgy. Learners will discover the Bible as the source of God’s Word of love for our lives and see how the Bible is used in worship during the seasons of the church year.

Expect learners to question the ritual, seasons, and holidays of the church year, as well as wonder why we read lessons from the Bible and listen to sermons during worship. This session addresses those issues, explaining the purpose behind and need for seasons, holidays, biblical reading, and sermons in Lutheran worship.

Decorate your learning space with posters, newspaper clippings, and magazine photos concerning things like the church year, important and familiar biblical passages, and people engaged in reconciling behaviors such as hugging or shaking hands. These things will set a positive and supportive mood for the activities focused on God’s forgiveness and love you will incorporate in the session.

HEART OF THE LEARNING

Who Needs Forgiveness?

Preparation: Provide pencils and learner resources (LR).

- Ask learners to put themselves in the situations on page 7 (LR). Use the questions at the bottom of that page to review their responses.



God's Word of Forgiveness

Preparation: Provide a copy of *Lutheran Book of Worship (LBW)* for each learner.

- Ask a volunteer to read the first paragraph on the top of page 8 (LR) and the Confession on page 77 (LBW). List the sins that the Confession states that we commit. Ask learners to give examples from their experiences. Then ask a volunteer to read the next paragraph on page 8 (LR).
- Invite the learners to read the Absolution together. Discuss why the words of the Absolution are good news: Why do we celebrate this news? Why does it matter if God forgives us?

God's Word in Worship

Preparation: Provide a copy of your congregation's worship bulletin for each learner.

- Ask a volunteer to read aloud page 9 (LR). Distribute the bulletins and point out the Bible readings on them. Invite three volunteers to read the three Bible lessons for the day listed in the worship bulletin. Stop after each reading so a volunteer can record on the chalkboard or chart paper what the class thinks is the main point of each passage.
- Refer to the explanations of the Word of God on the top of page 9. Ask which passage was easier for learners to understand. Ask which passage would be easier to share with others. Remind them that preachers use the sermon to share with others the good news of God's forgiveness and love.

Celebrating God's Word through the Year

Preparation: Provide a copy of *Lutheran Book of Worship* for each learner and blue, green, purple, and red markers (multiples of each based on class size).

- Begin by reading together the text on page 10 (LR). Ask learners to look at the calendar representing the church year on page 10. Are there any days or seasons that they recognize? Note the colors of the church seasons as listed on page 10 and encourage the learners to color their calendars to correspond. Have them leave white spaces uncolored. (*NOTE: If your congregation's vestments are colored differently, explain that those colors were assigned to particular seasons at a previous time in history.*)

- Ask a volunteer to read aloud the paragraph at the top of page 11. Then have learners mark the church year calendar on page 10 as directed.
- Have learners complete the word scramble on the bottom of page 11. (*Answers: 1=days; 2=Advent; 3=celebrate; 4=Epiphany; 5=Lent; 6=Wednesday; 7=season; 8=Easter; 9=Pentecost; 10=taught; 11=Christ; 12=King; "birth" is not used.*) Review these terms by reading the completed paragraph aloud together.

What Time of Year Is It?

Preparation: Provide a Bible for each learner.

- Ask a volunteer to read the paragraph on page 12 (LR). Encourage learners to work in pairs to discover the answers. (*Answers: Mark 1:1-8, Advent, butterfly; Acts 2: 1-4, Pentecost, dove; Luke 2:1-20, Christmas, manger; John 18:33-37, Christ the King, crown; Matthew 1:18-25, Easter, cross.*)

A Time to Pray

- Encourage learners to write prayers of thanksgiving in the space provided on page 12 (LR). Tell them you will share your petitions as you pray together. You may want to do another "Popcorn Prayer" if that worked well last week.

RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

Choose from these activities to complete your session as time allows.

Preach God's Love

Preparation: Arrange for a visit to your congregation's worship space and a conversation with your pastor. Write the following questions on the chalkboard or chart paper: What did God (or Jesus) do in the passage? What difference does God's action make in our lives? How does the passage you read relate to people today?

- Ask learners to write a few sentences about what they might want to say if they were giving a sermon about one of the biblical passages they read to complete the activity on page 12 (LR). Point out the questions you have posted to guide them.

- Take learners to your worship space and give each student a chance to get into the pulpit and share their ideas.
- Invite your pastor to visit the class and tell them about why he or she feels it is important that we hear about God's love and forgiveness, and what it is like to preach and lead a congregation throughout the church year.

Media Blitz

Preparation: Provide video camera, videotape, VCR, and television. If this equipment is not available, provide drawing paper and markers.

- Invite learners to create television commercials that would encourage people their age to come to worship. Tell them to be sure to include some things that happen during worship and some of the important things that a person might learn by attending worship. Record them on videotape and then play them for all to see using a VCR and television.
- If video equipment is not available, have them create a magazine or internet ad using drawing paper. Post their ads in your learning space and share them with the rest of the congregation by including the designs in your congregational newsletter.



SESSION 3

PEOPLE OF PRAYER AND PRAISE

LEARNING FOCUS

We sing hymns and say prayers throughout our worship service, giving thanks and praise to God for the many gifts we have been given.

BACKGROUND

Learners will learn that the Bible is the source for all Lutheran forms of worship. This session compares parts of the liturgy to corresponding biblical texts and explores the worship elements of prayer, praise, and hymns.

The lives of most fifth and sixth graders are filled with music, song lyrics, and movie and television dialogue. They may be so used to hearing those voices that they may not actually hear the words and messages being relayed. This session will help them recognize that the words spoken and sung throughout the worship liturgy have a message worth hearing.

Keep your learning space comfortable and casual, and continue to let your learners know that you enjoy spending time with them. Continue to encourage learners to ask questions and volunteer opinions at appropriate times.

HEART OF THE LEARNING

The Story of God's Love

Preparation: Provide learner resources (LR).

- Ask learners to turn to page 13 (LR). Ask: **What movies have you seen lately? What made those movies good or bad from your point of view?**
- Have learners draw pictures of scenes from their favorite movies in the space provided on page 13. Ask them to explain their work.
- Discuss the ways that words and music add emotion and feeling to a movie. Ask: **What kind of music did you hear during a sad scene, scary scene, happy scene, or mushy scene you remember from a movie? What kinds of words and what tone do the actors use during those different scenes?**
- Ask a volunteer to read aloud the paragraph on page 14. Ask: **How is Lutheran liturgy like a movie? How do the music and words that we use in worship reflect the message of worship? (Explain that the words used in hymns and prayers come from the Bible. They are God's Word to us.)**

Liturgy and Life

- Ask learners to complete the activity on page 14 (LR); suggest they work in pairs or small groups.

God's Word Is God's Story

Preparation: Provide Bibles, pencils, and one copy of *Lutheran Book of Worship* for each learner.

- Ask learners to read together the paragraph at the

top of page 15 (LR). Divide the class into three groups and assign one section to each group. Give learners time to complete the assignment and then share answers. Help the learners see that the differences they notice may reflect adjustments made to help worshipers understand how God's story and their daily stories intersect.

Words of Prayer and Praise

- After you have read the directions on page 16 (LR), give learners time to complete the word search. Before you begin, review the definition of the word *Kyrie*, which is a prayer that begins with "Lord have mercy." Review the solved puzzle as time permits.



Worship Words

Preparation: Provide one copy of *Lutheran Book of Worship* for each learner and many colored pencils.

- Read the introduction on page 17 (LR). Invite volunteers to work on the chalkboard or chart paper while others copy the design to their books.

A Time to Pray

- Read together the introduction on page 18 (LR). (*There are seven petitions in the Lord's Prayer.*) Give learners time to write petitions as indicated. Before you begin a prayer, invite learners to add any petitions they wish.

RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

Choose from these activities to complete the session as time allows.

Make a Prayer Journal

Preparation: Provide darning needles, heavyweight thread, and old cardboard. Also provide one sheet of colored construction paper, three sheets of white writing paper, and several colored markers for each learner.

- Have learners make prayer journals for recording personal prayers. Ask learners to think of a simple shape that reminds them of a Bible story that tells what God has done for them. (*Some examples are a cross, a musical note, or a hand.*)
- Ask each learner to draw and cut a pattern from cardboard to serve as the shape of the book. Have them cut two shapes from construction paper and decorate them to serve as covers. Have them trace and cut from the writing paper 10 similar shapes—facing the same way as the cover shapes to serve as pages for the journal.
- Ask learners to stitch the covers and pages together at the top or on the side using a stitch that begins at the back, comes through the pages and front cover, and goes around the top or side to reenter the book through the back, repeating until the pages are secure.
- Encourage learners to use their journals regularly to record things they want to tell God about their lives, things for which they want to thank God, and requests they wish to make for others. Suggest they look back occasionally at the prayers that they have prayed on earlier occasions, noting the ways in which God has answered those prayers.

Write a Class Hymn

Preparation: Provide pencils, scrap paper, a poster board, chart paper and markers or chalkboard and chalk.

- Tell learners that together you will be writing a hymn of praise to God. Select a familiar tune for the hymn, such as a TV jingle or hit song. Brainstorm words, phrases, and ideas that they think should be included in this hymn. Record all answers on the chalkboard or chart paper. Use those ideas to generate lines of the hymn and a title.

- Record the hymn verses and the name of the tune to which it is to be sung on a piece of poster board, and display it in your learning space. Sing your hymn together. Talk to your pastor or music minister about incorporating this hymn in your church's worship service.



SESSION FOUR

ONE COMMUNITY WITH ONE GOD

LEARNING FOCUS

God brings us together in one faith through the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. We state our common faith using the Nicene, Apostles', and Athanasian Creeds.

BACKGROUND

Learners will explore how we are brought together into the body of Christ through the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. Learners will discover the need for creeds as means of expressing our faith and being unified in that faith.

Fifth and sixth grade learners often feel that they are different from and sometimes alienated by their peers. This session seeks to reassure them that God loves each of them as individuals and expresses that unconditional love in a physical way through the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. Tell learners you are glad they have been in this class. Ask them to take home their learner resources and class projects at the end of the session.

HEART OF THE LEARNING

We Are One

Preparation: Provide learner resources (LR) and pencils.

- Read the first three paragraphs on page 19 (LR). Ask learners to write answers in the space provided. Discuss the answers and relate this to the learners' lives. Encourage them to complete the activity at the bottom of page 19. Share answers.

Joined in the Sacraments

Preparation: Provide Bibles and a copy of *Lutheran Book of Worship* for each learner.

- Ask a volunteer to read aloud the paragraph at the top of page 20 (LR).
- Divide into three small groups and assign each group a section of the activity: WORD, SIGN, PROMISE. Review answers.
- Ask: **Why do you think God joins together people who are so very different? (God's love for all people motivates God's actions on our behalf.)**

Children of a Loving God

Preparation: Provide Bibles and a copy of *Lutheran Book of Worship* for each learner.

- Ask a volunteer to read the paragraph and the quote from A Contemporary Translation of Luther's Small Catechism on page 21 (LR).
- Ask learners to complete the activity on page 21. Then review their answers.
- Point out the symbol of the shell with three drops of water on page 21. Ask: **Why is a shell an appropriate symbol for Baptism? (Shells come out of water.) Why are there three droplets of water rather than two or four? (We baptize in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.)**

Joined in Holy Communion

Preparation: Have Bibles and copies of *Lutheran Book of Worship* available. Find out how and when your congregation prepares young people to participate in the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

- Ask volunteers to read aloud page 22 (LR).
- Take time to discuss the references to Luther's Small Catechism and *Lutheran Book of Worship*. Note that the questions Luther answered have been on the minds and hearts of people for generations. Ask: **Have any learners participated in this sacrament? Are others interested in doing so? Why is it important to remember that Jesus died for our sins?**
- Explain how and when your congregation prepares young people to participate in the Sacrament of Holy Communion.

Gathering in God's Name

Preparation: Provide a Bible and a copy of *Lutheran Book of Worship (LBW)* for each learner and an ample supply of dark-colored markers. Arrange to photocopy the learners' drawings.

- Ask a volunteer to read aloud page 23 (LR). Have learners read one of the Bible stories referenced in the baptismal prayer on page 122 (*LBW*). Distribute markers and have them sketch one scene in the space provided in their books. Review their work when everyone is finished.
- If learners agree, photocopy the drawings so your congregation can use them for bulletin covers or inserts on Sundays when the Sacrament of Baptism is celebrated in your congregation. Assure learners that originals will be returned after the designs have been photocopied.

We Believe...

Preparation: Have colored markers available.

- Ask a volunteer to read the paragraph at the top of page 24 (LR). Ask learners to read aloud the Apostles' Creed printed on page 65 of *Lutheran Book of Worship*.
- Ask learners to design a symbol explaining the Apostles' Creed as indicated on page 24 (LR).

A Time to Pray

- Ask learners to write some prayer petitions in their learner resources. Begin a prayer, allowing learners to join in as they choose to do so.

RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

Choose from these activities to complete your session as time allows.

T-Shirts or Bumper Stickers

Preparation: You will need chart paper and markers or a chalkboard and chalk for both activities. For T-shirts, you will need a clean white T-shirt for each learner (50% cotton-50% polyester), fabric crayons (available at craft stores), white paper, an iron, and a surface on which to iron. For bumper stickers, you will need permanent markers and adhesive-backed paper cut to 4" x 11" strips.

- Ask learners to think of slogans that they know and the point that those slogans get across to those who read or hear them. Tell learners that they will be making T-shirts or bumper stickers with a slogan to announce that we are united by God. Ask learners to brainstorm things that God does or has done to unite people in God. Write down these ideas.
- Ask learners to brainstorm ideas for a slogan that would capture as many of the things that God has done as possible into one sentence or phrase. List the ideas. Choose a slogan and design a symbol to illustrate it.
- For bumper stickers, have them draw the slogan and symbol on a bumper sticker using permanent markers. For T-shirts, have them draw the slogan and symbol on a piece of plain white paper using fabric crayons. (*Note: all words must be written backwards onto the paper!*) Place the paper face down on the front of the T-shirt and iron it.
- Encourage learners to wear their T-shirts or display the stickers at home or church.

Class Creed

Preparation: Provide chart paper and markers or chalkboard and chalk, and a poster board.

- Write a class creed to tell the world what you believe about God. Ask learners to brainstorm sentences or phrases that state things they believe to be true about God. Record their answers. Encourage your learners to use positive statements rather than negative ones such as: "We believe that God loves everybody," rather than "God gets mad when we sin."
- Put the statements into creed form beginning with: "We believe..." Display the creed where others in your congregation might see it.



Exploring Worship Leader Leaflet

This Leader Leaflet has a corresponding Learner Resource.

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