

Children and Worship

Children as baptized members of our worshipping community are full members of the Body of Christ in the Church. Our communities not only need their presence but their participation and contributions to our liturgy. They have much to offer and help complete the model of full inclusion in the Body of Christ. Children can minister in many ways when their gifts and developmental stages are honored.

Examples: †Singing in the choir
 †Serving as Ushers
 †Serving a Greeters
 †Serving as Acolytes
 †Collecting the Offering
 †Bringing forwarding the Eucharistic elements (oblation)
 †Serving as a lector to read the lessons or prayers
 †Participating in chancel dramas, pageants, presentations
 †Presenting lay homilies
 †Altar guild members assisting in the preparation and care of the sacristy

With careful guidance all of our children can find a way to be an active participant in our liturgy.

Helping Children Write Liturgy

Writing a Collect:

-address-ascibe-request-consequence-doxology-

Address- an opening greeting to God

example: "Our God"

Ascription- naming or describing God

example: "most loving"

Request- asking for something we might want God to do example: "care for..."

Consequence- from our request what we expect to happen

example: "knows your loving presence"

Doxology-a closing that reminds us of our relationship with God
 unsurpassed"

example: "whose love is

-God, You are... We hope... So that... In Jesus' name. Amen

Writing the Prayers of the People (POP)

Brainstorm what you wish to pray for remembering to add any additional categories that might relate to the overriding themes of the scripture readings, etc. For younger children begin by brainstorming using the Five Finger Prayer (attached). This could actually be used as a form of the Prayers of the People (POP) led by younger children. Some categories to think about expanding on could be:

- †The World Church, its members, its needs, its mission
- †The nation and those leading our nation
- †The world and all its inhabitants
- †The diocese and/or your state and the leaders of both
- †The local community
- †Those who suffer, are sick, or are in trouble
- †The departed (those who have died)
- †Our own needs

Compose short prayers and/or sentences from your brainstorming. Decide how the prayers will be presented. By looking in the BCP (beginning on page 383) you can see the different styles of POPs. You can decide to use a refrain or not; or a response to each prayer, or just silence after each. The POP can also be said by one person, have a group with each taking a prayer, have one person read the prayer and another lead the refrain. In the use of the Five Finger Prayer, you could have each "finger" explained and then a prayer said by an older child with the younger children leading by holding up their appropriate fingers and possibly adding names.



The Five Finger Prayer

1. **Thumb** - this is the finger closest to you, so we pray for those who are closest to us, such as our mother, father, brothers, sisters, and grandparents. Who else close to you needs our prayers?
2. **Index finger** - This is our pointing finger, so we pray for those who point the way for us, such as parents, teachers, pastors, policemen, bus drivers, crossing guards, and so on.
3. **Middle finger** - this is the biggest finger of all, so we pray for those with big responsibilities, like our president, government leaders, state and city leaders, and others who govern us.
4. **Fourth finger** - this is the weakest of all our fingers, so we pray for those who are weak, those who are sick, those who are sad and alone, those who are in hospitals and rest homes, and those who are poor and starving and forgotten by others.
5. **Little pinky** - this is the little finger, and it comes last. The Bible tells us we ought to put others ahead of ourselves, so we ought to pray for others first and then pray for ourselves. Pray for anything you wish to talk about with God.

As **our hand** is now open let us shake our hand in the air and thank God for the blessings given to us.... Alleluia, AMEN

Writing a Eucharistic Prayer

must include the following

†Praise to God for the sacrifice of Jesus Christ

†Words to God based on, 1 Corinthians 11:23-26 (the Lord's Supper)

†Words saying what we are remembering

†Invitation to the Holy Spirit to be present in the bread and wine (body and blood) or the sacrament and in your lives as you serve the Lord.

†Concluding Doxology-a closing that reminds us of our relationship with God

Writing a Eucharistic Prayer can be one of the most difficult pieces to write, but it can be a great time to take out the Book of Common Prayer and take apart our Eucharistic Prayer to find the parts above.

Look at a few different versions using the BCP:

Rite One

Eucharist Prayer-Pages 334-336 beginning with "All glory be"...and ending with "O Father Almighty, world without end. AMEN".

Rite Two

Eucharistic Prayer A-Pages 362 and 363 from beginning with "Holy and gracious Father":.....and ending with "Almighty Father, now and forever. AMEN".

Eucharistic Prayer B-Pages 368-369 beginning with "We give thanks to you,...and ending with Almighty Father, now and forever. AMEN."

Eucharistic Prayer C-Pages 370-372 beginning with "God of all power,...and ending with, "from generation to generation. AMEN".

Timetable and Steps to Plan and Write a Liturgy

-at least 3 weeks prior to worship if you are writing the liturgy-

or

-2 weeks prior to worship if leading Propers already written-

The first few times creating a children led worship you may want to just pick to lead the liturgy with the Propers assigned to the day having a child or youth lead them or you might take one or two areas and concentrate the writing and leading on those. In any case doing the steps here will deepen the understanding of the liturgy for those involved.

Have groups of those participating read and discuss the lectionary readings assigned to the Sunday i.e. OT/NT/readings, psalm, Gospel, collect. Then, as a full group decide on one (or two) overriding theme/s that you want to focus on during this worship. Divide your groups as you find appropriate, i.e. age, grade, interest....with each group responsible for a particular area.

Areas: Propers of the Day: collect, OT/NT readings, psalm, Gospel
 Hymns (if organist /choir director is part of the planning)
 Prayers of the People
 Sermon/homily
 Eucharistic Prayer

†Remember: In the worship itself there are many other ways that the children can lead that do not necessarily require them to be part of the writing or "in front" leading of the liturgy. If you have children who are not comfortable visibly leading they might wish to just be part of the writing piece as their participation in the worship or may find another way through the areas on the first page of this resource.

Suggestions for the group processing:

Hymn group-Use Hymnal 1982, Lift Every Voice and Sing II, or Wonder, Love and Praise to find songs that are appropriate and complimentary to the lessons being read or the theme being presented. This is a great time for your organist or a choir member to explain our hymnals and how to find categories, themes, etc. to the children.

Prayers of the People group-brainstorm and write ALL ideas using lots of newsprint and then edit down to a manageable piece.

Sermon/homily-can take the form of a skit, readers' theatre, personal testimonies/thought and reflection on the theme or readings. Think also out of the box, using audio or visual equipment as part of the sermon. This part may take additional weeks to plan and practice.

Eucharist Prayer- Brainstorming on newsprint after the theme discussion will be extremely helpful for these prayers also. Some questions to begin writers thinking are:

Who is God?

What are you thankful for?

What has God done for us and the world?

Why are we here? What do we do in church? What are we remembering when we celebrate the Eucharist?

What did Jesus do and say at the Last Supper? What do we want to remember? What do we want for the future?

How can we ask the spirit of God to be present with us? Why are we doing this?

With all your responses go back to the Eucharist prayer examples, the themes, and those present to construct a prayer.

Resources for Writing Liturgy-

- †Including Children in Worship, A Planning Guide for Congregations* by Elizabeth J. Sandell, Augsburg Fortress
- †Enriching our Worship: Supplemental Liturgical Materials* by the standing liturgical commission
- †Book of Common Prayer*
 p. 400-499 an Order for Celebrating the Holy Eucharist
 p. 383 Instructions for writing POP (Prayers of People)
- †As We Gather to Pray: An Episcopal Guide to Worship* p 66-67
- †Journey to Adulthood-Rite 13 planning The Order of Service* p.1-7
- †The Prayer Book Guide to Christian Education* by Sharon Ely Pearson & Robyn Szoke, Revised Common Lect. A,B,C stresses major themes of baptismal theology for readers
- †Understanding the Sunday Scriptures, A Companion to The Revised Common Lectionary A,B,C,* by H. King Oehmig, D.Min. provides summary of each Sunday Lessons, a prayer for the day and reflection area
- †Prayers for an Inclusive Church,* by Steven Shakespeare Collection of prayers for the church Year, Church Publishing
- †Liturgical Music for the Revised Common Lectionary* by Carl P. Daw, Jr. and Thomas Pavlechko , Church Publishing
- †Liturgy for the Whole Church, Multigenerational Resources for Worship,* by Susan K. Bock
- Lectionary Story Bible Yr A,B,C,* by Ralph Milton Wood Lake Publishing Inc.
- † Every Day and Sunday, Too,* by Ramshaw, Gail and Judy Jarrett. Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1996.
- † Sunday Morning,* by Ramshaw, Gail and Judy Jarrett. Chicago: Liturgy Training Publications, 1993.
- †Worship Feast, 100 Readings, rituals, Prayers, and Guided Meditations,* Abingdon Press
- †Worship Feast, 100 Awesome Ideas for postmodern Youth,* Abingdon Press
- †Worship Feast 50 Complete multisensory Services for Youth,* Abingdon Press
- †The Book of Uncommon Prayer 1 and 2, Contemplative and Celebratory Prayers and Worship Services for Youth Ministry,* by Steven L. Case, Youth Specialities

Suggestions for Children in the Pews

Provide child focused materials for children in church assist them during those Sundays when they are not as actively involved in the worship leadership. There are a variety of worship bulletins that can be purchased by subscription which follow the lectionary. Once subscribed to they give permission to reproduce as many as are



"i do listen during the sermon

i just listen through my

heart and fingers

they wander while he muses

they dance while he intones"

Amen. Picture & prayer

by Barbara Desrosiers

needed. These can be handed out by users when adults receive the weekly bulletin or as children enter worship if they only attend part of the service. Small bags of crayons or "golf" pencils can also be handed out to color the illustrations or to do the word puzzles. There are also websites that allow free download of a variety of activity papers related to themes (see below). Also available are books that follow the Eucharist that can be placed in the pews alongside The Book of Common Prayer and hymnal. Create packets with items for children to take to their pews with their parents.

Bulletins: †The Sunday Paper and The Sunday Paper Junior

<http://www.the-sunday-paper.com/index.html> by Gretchen Wolff Pritchard

†Peace papers <http://www.ipj-ppj.org/Resource%20Pages/Peace%20Papers.htm>

†Children's Worship Bulletins for ages 3-6 and 7-12 <http://www.childrensbulletins.com/>

†Children's Worship Bulletins and Bible Beginner Activity Bulletins (Logo Productions)

Booklets: †Alleluia! Amen, by Gretchen Wolff Pritchard (Holy Eucharist, Rite II)

<http://www.the-sunday-paper.com/id2.html>

†Holy communion for Children (Rite II) by Joan Lippa, Forward Movement Publications

<http://www.forwardmovement.org/showbook.cfm?prodid=733>

†New Life by Gretchen Wolff Pritchard (Rite of Holy Baptism)(web address above)

†From Candle press www.candlepress.com

What are We Doing? For all ages who are trying to figure out what we are doing when we come to Eucharist. No fancy terms, no theological language—just a simple explanation.

Come to the Table -Explains the Eucharist (child's booklet and parent's booklet)

Called by Name-Delves into Baptism

Me Too! Explores the meaning of the Eucharist for children 4-7 yrs.

†Come and Join the Celebration by John Muir and Betty Pedley, A resource book to help adults and children experience Holy Communion together. www.chpublishing.co.uk

†What We Do In Church, An Anglican Child's Activity Book by Anne E. Kitch which has interactive puzzles, color by the numbers, word find etc to help children ages 4-7 grow to a deeper understanding of Anglican worship life. (Morehouse Publishing)

†Including Children in Worship, A Planning Guide for Congregations, by Elizabeth J. Sandell pub. by Augsburg Fortress

Website resources for Church School Leaders

General Resources:

- www.dltk-kids.com general a bible related crafts
- www.sundayschoolcrafts.com general bible related crafts and ideas
- www.coloringbookfun.com general resources with holiday and bible sections
- www.geocities.com/enchantedforest/1925/color.html religious color pages
- www.candlepress.com parent/child resources
- www.carsondellochristian.com (mostly generic school free picks)
- www.apples4theteacher.com coloring-pages for holidays
- www.kidsdomain.com misc. stories, resources, holidays
- www.kidssundayschool.com registration free
- www.archspm.org/family seasonal family resources
- www.io.com/~lcowper/resources.html: "Sunday school Teacher's Online Resources"
- www.mssscrafts.com Crafts and resources for bible stories
- <http://www.churchguides.com/anglicansites.asp> church guides
- www.kerrresources.com general topics, clipart, and bulletin covers, free registration
- www.talks2children.itsforministry.org/t2c talks to children
- <http://www.sermons4kids.com> object lessons and coordinated activities
- www.daniellesplace.com some free samples more available by subscription see web page
- www.crafts4kids.com general resources to be adapted to church school
- http://ecusa.anglican.org/44385_ENG_HTM.htm free online resources by the national Episcopal Church
- www.talks2children.itsforministry.org/t2c help with talks to children
- <http://www.kiskipby.org/Education/cemetasites.htm> Megasite for Children's Ministry

Skits, Plays, and Puppet Shows: www.dramatix.org use the menu at the top of the page

www.bmts.com/~cookes/skitsanct.html Skits for the Sanctuary on the left of the page.

All Saint's Day: www.cathloic.org/saints background on saints

www.textweek.com on left of the page, click on "Index by Scripture" to navigate to the topic for the week you are teaching, and find material for children toward the bottom.

Resources through Curriculum sites: www.rotation.org geared to rotation model C.S. but has some good ideas for topics

www.godlyplay.org.uk additional information on Godly Play

www.godlyplay.org



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www.childrenatworship.org
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