

Worship Resources

for Sunday School Promotion

Using Lectionary Texts for Year C, between September 4-10

Adapted by Elsie Rempel
From *Gather 'Round* Sunday School curriculum Launch
and Dedication Worship Service (see www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/46)

Biblical Texts:

Deuteronomy 30:15-20
Psalm 1, 139
Philemon 1-21
Luke 14:25-33

Hymns/Songs:

- Play or sing any of the songs from the new *Gather 'Round* CD
- *Sing the Journey:*
 - #2: Come, walk with us
 - #12: O sing to the Lord
 - #27: God of the Bible
 - #73: The Lord lift you up
- *Hymnal: A Worship Book:*
 - #6: Here in this place
 - # 20: Come and see
 - #74: We would extol thee
 - #163: Obey my voice
 - #481: O God, your constant care
 - #512: If all you want

Children's Time:

Treasure Chest

Fill a box with examples or symbols for each of the following. Take them out, one at a time and talk about each with the children so that they understand the idea of learning as a "treasure." God has given us the treasure of the Bible, of Sunday school resources, of a church community, and of the Sabbath to help us know God and learn God's ways.

Or, ***Online Lectionary Story***

Adapt/Use the Lectionary Children's story for today, "Giving up to Succeed," at www.mennonitechurch.ca/tiny/335.

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Sermon Prompts:

Psalm 78:1-8, focuses on passing on God's instruction so that each generation might learn to trust in God and not forget the divine teaching, making it particularly suitable for a faith formation focused sermon. This focus could be complemented by using some of the lectionary texts to form the basis for a suitable sermon for this Sunday. For instance, blending the emphases of choosing God's way in Psalm 1 and the intimate relationship with God as described in Psalm 139, the lectionary Psalms for September 9th, or with the challenge to choose God and God's way in Deuteronomy 30:15 -20, could provide a picture of the holistic process of learning about, encountering and responding to God and God's word that is at the heart of Christian education and formation. The New Testament texts, Philemon 1-21 and Luke 14: 25-33, contain metaphors and phrases that could be most helpful, their central themes are more appropriate for an adult rather than an intergenerational focus. However, they have been worked with in child friendly ways in the lectionary children's story referred to above.

Litanies and Prayers:

A Litany of Praise

Leader: Hear, O children of God,
You who are child or adult, teacher or learner,
You who live at home or away
You who come to worship and learn.

People: We have gathered here to worship the Lord our God, the Lord alone!

Leader: Hear, O children our God
You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and
with all your might.
Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart.

People: We will recite them to our children and talk about them at home and at church.
We will meet to hear and respond to God's voice.

Leader: Through the generations, God continues to speak to us – in the wonders of creation,
in the stories from the Bible, and through the living Christ, who taught us to journey
together, following God's ways.

People: We will share God's message in our teaching and learning settings.

Leader: "O Lord, how manifold are your works. In wisdom you have made them all; the earth
is full of your creatures. God's creative work goes on in each generation. When we
hear and share God's good news, God's creative power bubbles up in ways we could
never imagine. Come; gather around to see what God will do!

People: Surprising God, you call forth each generation to hear and share your good news of
salvation. Inspire us and equip us through this new curriculum to become people who
know and love you, who interpret your word for today, who belong to your gathered

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community, the church and who share your good news with joy.

Leader: May our God bless us, bless these resources for teaching and learning, and make us a blessing at home, across the street and around the world.

A Prayer of Dedication for Sunday school

(Invite teachers, children, CE committees, pastor, and parents, to stand and hold hands)

P: Living God

You are the beginning of our journeys, our guide, and our destination.

L: We remember our relatives and mentors, leaders and teachers who led us to faith by singing us songs and telling us Bible stories,
by welcoming and accepting us,
by praying for us without our knowing
and by showing us how to follow Jesus.

P: You have been faithful to your people from generation to generation. Help us pass your faithfulness on the next generation.

L: Today, we are dedicating ourselves and this year of Sunday school to you. May learning and worshiping together inspire us so that we share your good news with joy and confidence. Equip us to be diligent in faith-sharing at home, and nurture us to become passionate followers of Jesus Christ.

All: Bless us so that we can be a blessing. AMEN

A Litany for Sunday School

L: We celebrate our new year of Sunday school.

P: We celebrate its message of love and grace, healing and hope.

L: We celebrate the chance to learn about the Bible, God's story.

P: We celebrate the many ways we can respond and share this story.

L: For teachers who offer their time and talents to teach about and encounter God with others.

P: We give you thanks, O God.

L: For congregations who support the faith nurture of their children,

P: We give you thanks, O God.

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L: For parents and caregivers who nurture and respect their children at home,

P: We give you thanks, O God.

L: For children who come with energy and enthusiasm,

P: We give you thanks, O God.

L: We dedicate this Sunday school year to you, O God, and pray that, through it, we will grow as followers of Jesus Christ.

All: Thanks be to God. AMEN.

Prayer of Confession and Assurance

Leader: Passing on the faith from one generation to the next is an important responsibility. Faith is a part of life's journey, and our faith is formed in many ways and in many settings. The congregation and the home are partners in the faith formation of our children.

People: We confess that we have not always been faithful in sharing God's story.

A. We don't take time to talk about our faith at home.

B. *We've lost the language of faith and the habits of faith.*

A. We are often pre-occupied with work and family life.

B. *We don't love God with whole hearts or single minded devotion.*

Forgive us when we fail to make faith nurture a priority in our home and church life.

Forgive us when we are unfaithful. Help us to draw ever closer to you.

Leader: Listen, people, our God is faithful and steadfast and closer than a heartbeat. Look for signs of God's activity within and around you, in your church community and family, everywhere you work and play. Everywhere you go, God is there ahead of you! Open your eyes and your heart to God's surprising ways. And know that you are deeply loved.

People: This is God's good news! Thanks be to God!

Other Prayers in Mennonite Church resources:

- *Hymnal: A Worship Book*: #661, #795
- *Sing the Journey*: #158: refrain, "Jesus, now lead on"—use as a sending prayer
- Select a prayer from one of the *Gather 'Round* student books