

**MODEL UNIT**  
**BAND A**  
**LEVEL 1**

# CELEBRATION

**LIFE CONCEPT: GOD GATHERS CHRISTIANS TO WORSHIP HIM**

YEAR: ..... SUGGESTED DURATION: 4 weeks (100 minutes per week)

DATE OF USE: ..... FAITH STATEMENTS: ① ② ③

**UNIT-SPECIFIC GOALS (highlighted)**
**1. IN CHRISTIAN WORSHIP GOD COMES TO HIS PEOPLE IN WORD AND SACRAMENT AND THEY RESPOND**
**1a** explore Bible stories of people at worship

**1b** identify features of class and school worship

**2. CHRISTIANS WORSHIP REGULARLY AND ON SPECIAL OCCASIONS**
**2a** investigate why Christians worship regularly on a particular day

**2b** identify special occasions for Christian worship, eg Christmas, Easter, baptisms, weddings

**2c** identify ways people can worship God anywhere and at any time

**3. CHRISTIANS WORSHIP IN A VARIETY OF WAYS**
**3a** identify things commonly used in Christian worship (eg Bible, altar, candles) and investigate their significance

**3b** explore forms of expression used in Christian worship

**STUDENT ASSESSMENT**
**ASSESSABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES**

Illustrate people at worship in Bible times. (1a,3b)

Illustrate the way they imagine people in God's family could celebrate at Christmas or Easter. (2b)

Suggest ideas to enhance class worship. (3b)

**ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES**

⇒ work sample

⇒ work sample

⇒ TRS A1/3

**UNIT SUMMARY**

Students identify occasions on which people celebrate. Students are helped to imagine that they are with God's people in Bible times as they worshipped. They see dancing, smell incense, and hear the sounds of musical instruments while they investigate how God's people worshipped. Students explore the worship celebrations of either Christmas or Easter and then consider ways of making class worship a time of celebration.

## UNIT NOTES

In Section 2 students can travel back in time and imagine they are watching God's people at worship. Prepare a Bible times worship area, with pictures/posters, plants to represent trees, a rug to sit on for storytelling, appropriate music playing.

In Section 3 students investigate a contemporary Christian worship celebration. Select either Christmas or Easter.

Because students have differing experiences of worship, adapt the activities to meet the needs and understanding of your class.

### WORDS TO KNOW

celebrate worship praise incense  
Christmas Easter

## INTRODUCTION

### 1. CELEBRATION

Teacher and students share their experiences of celebrations, eg birthday parties. Identify things people might hear, see, smell, touch and taste at a celebration. Collate this information on a chart or poster.

Select from the following activities to develop the theme of celebration:

- Make a 'celebration corner' in the classroom, including items like balloons, wrapped-up gifts, CDs and a CD player. You could also provide materials for students to make their own cards, party hats, streamers, etc.
- Students bring photos of celebrations or paint a 'celebration' picture. Display these.
- Plan a celebration in which students use the senses, eg playing games such as 'musical chairs' or 'guess what's in the parcel', share some 'party' food.

Tell students that when people in God's family celebrate, it is called 'worship'. Worship is a special time for people in God's family as they come together to hear about the things that God has done and to tell him how good he is.

## DEVELOPMENT

### 2. CELEBRATION IN THE BIBLE

In this section you will lead students to imagine that they are travelling back in time and are with God's people as they worship. Teacher Resource Sheets (TRS) A1/1 and A1/2 contain information for teachers.

**DANCING** Move into the special Bible times worship area.

Tell the story of the crossing of the Red Sea (Exodus 14:1–15:21) and relate how Miriam and the women danced and led the people in celebration and worship. (Pages 110–115 of Story 12 in *The Lion First Bible* aptly conveys the celebration and worship of the occasion).

Teach *The Victory Song*, ATN 35. Encourage students to dance freely as they sing or listen to the song. Identify the senses that are connected with dance.

Share Psalm 149:3.

Either invite a person skilled in liturgical dance to demonstrate this form of dance to your students, or use TRS A1/1 to help you teach simple dance movements. Use these at appropriate times in class worship.

### INCENSE

The Bible tells that incense was used to show honour and reverence for God. The incense used in worship was regarded as holy and could only be burnt inside the tabernacle.

Move into the special Bible times worship area.

Light some incense and allow time for students to describe the scent.

Tell students that people in the Bible times burnt incense as part of their worship. This was a way of showing that God was special. The smoke of the incense going upwards reminded the people of their prayers going to God. Incense is used also in some churches today.

Share Psalm 141:2.

Consider using incense in some class worship. Be aware that incense may not be appropriate for some students, eg those suffering with asthma.

**MUSIC** Move into the special Bible times worship area.

Use the suggestions on TRS A1/2 or play a recording of a contemporary musical version of Psalm 150 (eg *Sound Song*, *Gospelling to the Beat #2*) with students playing or miming appropriate instruments.

**SUMMARY** To summarise and review this section, collate information about things God's people might have heard, seen, smelt or felt as they worshipped him.

Students use paints or collage materials to make their own picture of people at worship in Bible times. Display these in the classroom or in the worship centre. Talk with students to assess their understanding and prepare a caption for their picture.

### 3. CELEBRATION TODAY

Choose to study either Christmas or Easter. Encourage students who have attended worship at Christmas and Easter to share their experiences, but be sensitive to students who have not had this experience.

Tell students that people in God's family still worship as a way of celebrating what God has done for them.

**CHRISTMAS** Discuss the ways students celebrate Christmas in their family. At Christmas people in God's family celebrate as they remember Jesus' birth.

Read the Christmas story from a Bible story book and ask students to listen for occasions or words which indicate worship and celebration, eg Mary's song of praise, the singing of the angels, the visit of the shepherds, the gifts of the wise men.

When people in God's family worship at Christmas this is what they may **see**. Show and talk about a manger scene.

This is what they might **hear**. Play a recording of Christmas songs. Identify the words that tell about Jesus' birth and the words that show this is a song of celebration. (They may also hear the story of Jesus' birth read from the Bible, the pastor talking about the Christmas story, perhaps bells.)

You may add other senses:

- They might **smell** (as well as see) candles and/or pine tree.
- They might **feel** a small gift such as some churches give the children at Christmas.
- They might **taste**. Give each child a sweet. Children often receive sweets as part of the celebration.

Invite students who have attended worship at Christmas to share their experiences.

Students illustrate the way they imagine people in God's family celebrate at Christmas.

**EASTER** Discuss the ways students celebrate Easter in their families. At Easter people in God's family worship as they remember that Jesus died and came alive.

Either read the story of Jesus' death from a Bible story book or briefly review the story with pictures. Then read the story of the resurrection. *The Lion First Bible*, story 58, captures the spirit of celebration.

When people in God's family worship on Easter day, this is what they may **see**:

- Show a picture of a sunrise and explain that at Easter some people worship outside, very early in the morning. When they see the sun come up, it reminds them of the garden on the first Easter morning.
- Show an arrangement of flowers or a banner and tell students that on this day the church may be bright with decorations.

This is what they may **hear**. Play a recording of Easter songs. Identify and discuss the words which tell what Jesus has done and the words which indicate celebration. (They may also hear the Easter story read from the Bible, the pastor talking about the Easter story, trumpets.)

You may add other senses:

- They may **smell** flowers.
- They may **taste** Easter buns which people share at Easter.

Invite students who have attended worship at Easter to share their experiences.

Students illustrate the way they imagine people in God's family could celebrate at Easter.

**Optional: Other occasions for worship:**

Identify and list other times when people in God's family come together to celebrate and worship, eg weddings, baptisms, opening and closing services at school, as well as regular Sunday worship. For each one you choose, discuss why this is a time of celebration and how people celebrate.

**SUMMARY** To summarise and review this section, collate information about things God's people might see, smell, touch and taste at worship at Christmas, Easter (or other occasions) and compare this with worship in Bible times.

## RESPONSE

### 4. CELEBRATION IN CLASS WORSHIP

Use TRS A1/3 to involve students in suggesting ways of making worship in the classroom a time of celebration. Discuss their ideas and implement appropriate suggestions. This could involve making banners, redecorating the worship area, learning new songs or establishing new rituals. Once students have completed preparations and are familiar with new routines, they design invitations asking parents or another class to join them in a worship celebration.

## YOU WILL NEED

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|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ items to set up a 'celebration corner', eg balloons, cards, tapes, materials for making hats, streamers etc.</li> <li>○ optional: props to make a storytelling area, eg rug, plants, appropriate music</li> <li>○ be prepared to model a dance to the students or invite a guest or older students to do so</li> <li>○ optional: a guest with a knowledge of liturgical dance</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ musical instruments</li> <li>○ pictures of musical instruments in Bible times</li> <li>○ items associated with Christmas or Easter worship, eg a tree, a wrapped-up gift, sweets, buns, banners, flowers</li> <li>○ appropriate songs for children which tell the Christmas or Easter story</li> </ul> |
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## INTEGRATING INTO OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS

**ARTS:** *Dance:* Learn simple dance movements and formations, experience a range of dance activities that explore feelings; share dance with others in the class; give reasons for liking or disliking a dance. *Music:* Use instruments to experiment with sound; explore and create rhythmic patterns.

**SOCIETY AND ENVIRONMENT:** *Time, Continuity and Change:* Hear stories about remote times and places. *Culture:* Explore the customs and practices of familiar groups; identify features of religious celebrations.

from the National Statements and Profiles

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## UNIT EVALUATION

Which activities worked well in this unit?

Which resources were useful in the implementation of this unit?

How did I respond to the range of students' appreciation of the celebratory aspects of worship?

How did I respond to the range of students' attitudes towards worship in the classroom?

What would I do differently if I was teaching this unit again?

How will I use and build on knowledge, understandings, skills, attitudes, and values students have developed in this unit?



# DANCE

## Information for teachers

Dance was a feature of Israelite worship. People danced at feasts and celebrations to express praise and thanks to God. Because Jesus was a Jew, dance would have been part of his life. The original meaning of the word 'rejoice' means to leap or dance. When Jesus told people to rejoice, this was equivalent to an invitation to dance. People danced as a group in lines or circles, with men and women dancing separately.

The Bible contains a number of references to dance as an expression of worship, eg

- Miriam dances after the Israelites cross the Red Sea, Exodus 15:20,21
- David dances before the ark of the covenant, 2 Samuel 6:1–5
- 'Praise God with drums and dancing', Psalm 150:4

The New Testament does not contain direct references to dance as part of worship, and over the centuries dance played a lesser role in worship services.

Liturgical dance has become a feature of worship in some churches today. Through liturgical dance people communicate, and respond to, the message of the Bible.

## Introducing liturgical dance in the classroom

The following sequence can be used to introduce dance to younger students:

1. Ask students to suggest words they would use to tell someone how good they are and how much they like that person. Record some of these words.
2. Tell students that when Christians worship God they come to tell God how good he is. Introduce and discuss the meaning of words like *praise, celebrate, thanks, joy, kind, rejoice*.
3. After talking about the meaning of the words ask students how they could use their bodies to show what the word means, eg praise = hands lifted up and looking up. You could record the words along with a simple outline of appropriate actions on a chart.
4. Tell students that people can read in the Bible the words of praise that God's people used to worship him many years ago. Share simple verses like:
  - *Shout praises to the Lord! . . . I will shout praises. I will sing and praise the Lord for as long as I live.* Psalm 146:1,2.
  - *I look to the hills! Where will I find help? It will come from (God) who made the heavens and the earth.* Psalm 121:1,2.
  - *Come and praise the Lord. Let everyone praise him. His love for us is wonderful . . . it will never end. Shout praises to the Lord.* Psalm 117.
5. Select one of these verses (or others like them) and together discuss and practise a sequence of movements that express the meaning of the words. Encourage students to move slowly and with expression.
6. Once students are familiar with the routine, music could be added.

Do not limit students' experience to structured dance.  
Continue to provide opportunity for free expression and movement to music.



# MUSIC

## Information for teachers

- Music was an important part of life in Bible times. People sang as they worked and they sang to celebrate joyful occasions, eg weddings, feasts and after victory in battle. Even shouting was used to express joy and praise. See Psalm 47:1; verse 1 of Psalms 146 – 150 (CEV). Sad songs were sung at funerals or when the people were in exile.
- Singing was an important part of festivals and special worship occasions. Choirs sang songs from the psalms. Some psalms were especially written with a chorus so that many people could join in (Psalm 118:1–4, Psalm 136).
- Musicians played an important part in the worship life of the people. Groups of musicians formed orchestras and played during worship. Permanent musicians were employed at the temple.
- The Bible mentions many musical instruments, eg  
 stringed instruments: harp and lyre  
 wind instruments: flutes, pipes, trumpets and horns  
 percussion instruments: cymbals, drums, rattles or castanets, tambourines.

## Activities

1. Read this paraphrase of Psalm 150:

*Shout praises to God.*

*Praise God on earth. Praise God in heaven.*

*Praise God with trumpets and harps.*

*Praise him with tambourines and dancing.*

*Praise him flutes.*

*Praise him with drums and loud clashing cymbals.*

*Let everything that is alive praise God.*

*Shout praises to God.*

Identify the musical instruments listed and show pictures of what these instruments looked like.

Substitute the names of instruments that are accessible and current, eg *Praise God with the castanets*, *Praise God with guitars*.

Divide students into groups to say the words and play an appropriate instrument. Once students have practised this, either present it to an audience or record it on tape for students to listen to.

2. Make simple musical instruments, eg

- a harp from a tissue box and rubber bands
- a shaker from paper rolls and small stones or dried beans
- a tambourine from paper plates and bottle caps or bells
- rhythm sticks from wood off-cuts
- drums from tin cans

Use these instruments to accompany Psalm 150 or other songs in class worship.



# WORSHIP IN OUR CLASS

The following questions relate directly to the experiences that students have had in this unit.

In order to involve each student, divide the class into groups and give each group one topic to discuss. Invite adult helpers or older students to work with each group, helping students to read, discuss and record their ideas. The teacher moves from group to group to assess students' participation and understanding.

<p><b>Songs and music</b></p> <p>Do you like the songs we sing in worship?</p> <p>Name your favourite worship song.</p> <p>Do you like to listen to songs on tape when we worship?</p> <p>Would you like to join in by playing instruments? What instruments could we use?</p>	<p><b>Visual</b></p> <p>Do you like to see pictures on the walls as we worship?</p> <p>Do you like to see pictures that other children have made?</p> <p>Do you like to see pictures that adults have made?</p> <p>What else could go on the walls in the worship corner?</p>
<p><b>Movement and dancing</b></p> <p>Would you like to dance as part of worship?</p> <p>Would you like to dance by yourself or in a group?</p> <p>Would you like to make up your own dance or do a dance that everyone knows?</p> <p>What are some other ways that people could move as part of worship?</p>	<p><b>Sense of smell</b></p> <p>Would you like to use incense as we worship?</p> <p>What other things with a scent could we use in worship?</p>

GOD GATHERS CHRISTIANS TO WORSHIP HIM