

**MODEL UNIT
BAND D
LEVEL 1**

A LIFE OF WORSHIP

LIFE CONCEPT: GOD GATHERS CHRISTIANS TO WORSHIP HIM

YEAR:.....SUGGESTED DURATION: 10–12 HOURS

DATE OF USE: FAITH STATEMENTS: ① ② ③

UNIT-SPECIFIC GOALS (highlighted)

1. IN WORSHIP GOD COMES TO HIS PEOPLE IN WORD AND SACRAMENT AND THEY RESPOND

1a explore the concept of worship as a common human experience

1b examine the distinctiveness of Christian worship

2. CHRISTIANS WORSHIP REGULARLY AND ON SPECIAL OCCASIONS

2a explore the biblical pattern of God's people setting aside time for regular worship

2b investigate the worship festivals of God's people

2c explore the Christian understanding that worship encompasses the totality of life

3. CHRISTIANS WORSHIP IN A VARIETY OF WAYS

3a explore the place of ritual in Christian worship

3b investigate the role of different forms of worship in the Christian tradition

STUDENT ASSESSMENT

ASSESSABLE STUDENT OUTCOMES

Produce a word-web on worship OR present an alien's version of Christmas and Easter based on evidence collected by students. (1a)

Analyse the worship elements in the Christmas and Easter stories in Luke. (1b)

List the rituals that were part of Israelite worship; identify the responses of worshippers in a Christian worship service. (3a)

Find evidence in Daniel and 1 Peter that a person worships God in every facet of life. (2c)

ASSESSMENT STRATEGIES

⇒ group work sample

⇒ TRS D1/2, TRS D1/3 individual work samples

⇒ work samples

⇒ work samples

UNIT SUMMARY

Students find evidence that worship is part of the human experience. They examine the Christian understanding that worship brings God's action into people's lives and that worship is a response to God's action. This is evident in both the book of Daniel and the stories of Christmas and Easter as they are told in the New Testament. Students explore the idea that worship is more than rituals — the worship of God involves every facet of life. Students reflect on the place of worship in their own lives.

UNIT NOTES

At the heart of Christian worship is the relationship between God and the worshipper: 'for he is our God and we are the people of his pasture' (Psalm 95:7, the Order of Matins). Christian worship begins with God's word and God's action. It centres in Christ — his life, death and resurrection. It is a response of adoration, confession, thanksgiving and supplication.

INTRODUCTION

1. ALL PEOPLE WORSHIP

To stimulate thinking on the topic of worship, show students examples of people at worship in both a religious and non-religious context. Use pictures or videos, eg specific scenes depicting traditional and contemporary worship, serving in the streets (*Sister Act 1 and 2, The Apostle*), newspaper articles, worship pages on the Internet, examples of crowds singing and barracking for their team at a football match, crowds venerating their political leader, hero worship of singers/groups.

Students create a word-web on worship, in which they explore their understanding of worship (refer to Teacher Resource Sheet [TRS] D1/1). Students can work in groups, recording their webs on large sheets of paper.

DEVELOPMENT

2. GOD ACTS, PEOPLE RESPOND

The Bible story of Daniel is the starting point for students' investigation of worship. All the information required can be found in the book of Daniel.

For extension work, general and Bible encyclopedias have information on Babylonian religion and lifestyle.

An important point made repeatedly in Daniel is that God is the 'living God' who is all-powerful and reveals himself to people. This calls for a response. Students read *The Image of Gold and The Fiery Furnace* (Daniel 3) and *Daniel in the Den of Lions* (Daniel 6). They identify what God does in each of the stories and how people respond to God's actions.

Students read Daniel 4. They compare Nebuchadnezzar's response to God's action in the life of Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (Daniel 3:28,29) with his response to God's action in his own life (Daniel 4:37). They write a short explanation of how Nebuchadnezzar's worship is different at the end of chapter 4 and what has prompted the change.

3. DANIEL'S GOD

Students read Daniel 1 – 6. Divide the class into six groups. Give each group a chapter from *The Dramatised Bible* to rehearse and then present to the class.

Students examine various passages from Daniel to find out more about the God whom Shadrach, Meshach, Abednego and Daniel worshipped, the God for whom they risked their lives. Students list the qualities of God found in:

Daniel 2:17–23	Daniel 2:27–30
Daniel 2:46,47	Daniel 3:16–18
Daniel 4:25,34,35	Daniel 5:18
Daniel 6:21,22,26,27	Daniel 9:3–19.

Students compare the 'living God' worshipped by Daniel and his friends with the God the Babylonians worshipped as described in Daniel 3,5 and 6. Students note the information given about the gods/idols:

- their origins
- forms they can take
- what they can do for people
- the type of worship they motivate.

(Note: Babylonians believed that their gods could control everything, but they were not able to reveal the future.)

Psalm 115, sections of Isaiah 44,45 and 46 and Jeremiah 10 clearly contrast the God of the Hebrews and the idols of their neighbours. This can be a good extension study.

Students discuss in what ways people can become like the gods they make/worship, eg what do people who worship a singer or pop group do?

Students tease out the implications of the commonly held idea: it doesn't matter which god you worship, since they are all the same.

4. MORE THAN RITUALS

Working in the same groups and on the same chapter from Daniel, students find evidence that worship of the 'living God' involves not just occasional ritual but all of a person's life.

For further study students look at how Amos describes what God expected of his people and what God thought of their worship rituals (Amos 2: 6–12; Amos 5:7,10–13, 21–24). See also Isaiah 58 and Micah 6:6–8.

Students list the rituals that were part of the Israelites' worship. Discuss:

- What made those rituals unacceptable?
- How is the worship of God to be expressed in daily life?
- On what basis does God demand all of a person's life as worship?

5. GOD COMES IN JESUS

Christmas and Easter are key worship events for Christians. They demonstrate clearly the basics of Christian worship: God speaks and acts, people respond by recognising their unworthiness, by praise, by passing on God's message, etc.

Divide the class into two groups. One group concentrates on Christmas, the other on Easter.

Groups brainstorm what the festival means to them and the wider community (encourage students to give you the whole picture, not just the religious one). They share and collate the memories, sounds, sights, rituals, foods, activities, symbols and emotions associated with Christmas and Easter. They find seasonal greeting cards, songs and artwork.

Students imagine that they are aliens who have returned home and are reporting on the important celebrations of a random selection of people living in Australia. Students present the aliens' version of Christmas and Easter, based on the evidence collected.

Students compare the aliens' version of Christmas and Easter with the accounts given by Luke in Luke 2:1–20 and Luke 24:1–35. Students analyse the two passages, establishing what God has done for people in Jesus and the responses people make to God's action. See TRS D1/2 for Christmas and TRS D1/3 for Easter. Each sheet has optional *Dig Deeper* sections which can also be used in the next section.

6. CHRISTIAN WORSHIP CELEBRATES THE GOOD NEWS

Brainstorm life-threatening situations, eg a capsized boat, a car accident, a climber falls off a cliff. Students write/speak a monologue of the feelings and thoughts people in those situations might have about their past actions, relationships, hopes, etc. Current newspaper stories can be used as stimuli.

Students imagine that the person is rescued. What will that person's attitude be towards their rescuer? Brainstorm what difference the rescue could make to the way a person sees their life and their future. What motivates the change in people's attitudes? You can show students selected scenes from films, eg *Reconstructing Henry* and *The Doctor*.

Students consider how for Christians Easter is a rescue from death and Christmas is the birth of their rescuer. Christians celebrate their rescue and their rescuer, not just at one festival,

but throughout the whole year (see *Dig Deeper* 2 and 3 of TRS D1/2 and 3 for Bible references).

Provide students with a range of worship service orders, including one with holy communion and an order for baptism. Students find the Christmas and Easter good news in these worship services. They list how the order of service gives worshippers opportunities to respond to the good news of God's rescue.

7. WORSHIP IS A LIFESTYLE

In a broader sense, Christian worship is offering God all of one's life in thankfulness for the new life brought about by the death and resurrection of Jesus (Romans 12:1). To understand the motivation for such Christian worship, students analyse passages which emphasise the impact this life-changing event has on a person, eg Romans 12, Ephesians 4,5 and Philippians 2. 1 Peter 1:13 – 2:25 is an appropriate text to examine because it is written in the context of the resurrection (1 Peter 1:3–9).

Students analyse the Bible passage(s) using the following headings and questions. Answers can be given as diagrams or pictures.

1. BEFORE: From what does God (through Jesus) rescue people?
2. GOD'S SAVING ACT: What does God's rescue operation involve (for God and for people)?
3. AFTER: What is the rescued person's new identity/situation?
4. A LIFE OF WORSHIP: What different areas of life are affected by the rescue? What attitudes and behaviours are part of worshipping God?

RESPONSE

8. PERSONAL REFLECTION

Create a quiet, reflective atmosphere in which students consider what they have learnt about worship during the unit. TRS D1/4 Part A is for teachers; it provides a range of questions to guide students' reflection. Students record their thoughts and feelings in their journals.

The unit began by looking at worship in various contexts. One way of concluding the unit is to ask students to produce a class overview of worship, with students (individually, in pairs or groups) producing a piece of work entitled 'Worship — Me?'. Students use a medium of their choice. TRS D1/4 Part B offers some suggestions that can be given to students.

YOU WILL NEED

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ TRS D1/1, 2, 3, 4○ Bibles, <i>Dramatised Bible</i> version of Daniel○ pictures (videos) of people engaged in worship, eg <i>Sister Act</i> 1 and 2 | <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ copies of various Christian worship service orders, including one for baptism and one for holy communion○ newspaper articles, specific scenes from films of people who have survived life-threatening situations, eg <i>Reconstructing Henry</i>, <i>The Doctor</i> |
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INTEGRATING INTO OTHER CURRICULUM AREAS

Find out what students are doing in other curriculum areas in relation to

Topics

- customs of various societies _____
- history: Babylonian empire _____

Skills

- analysing words: their origins, meanings, uses _____
- forming life goals, attitudes, values _____

UNIT EVALUATION

Which activities worked well in this unit?

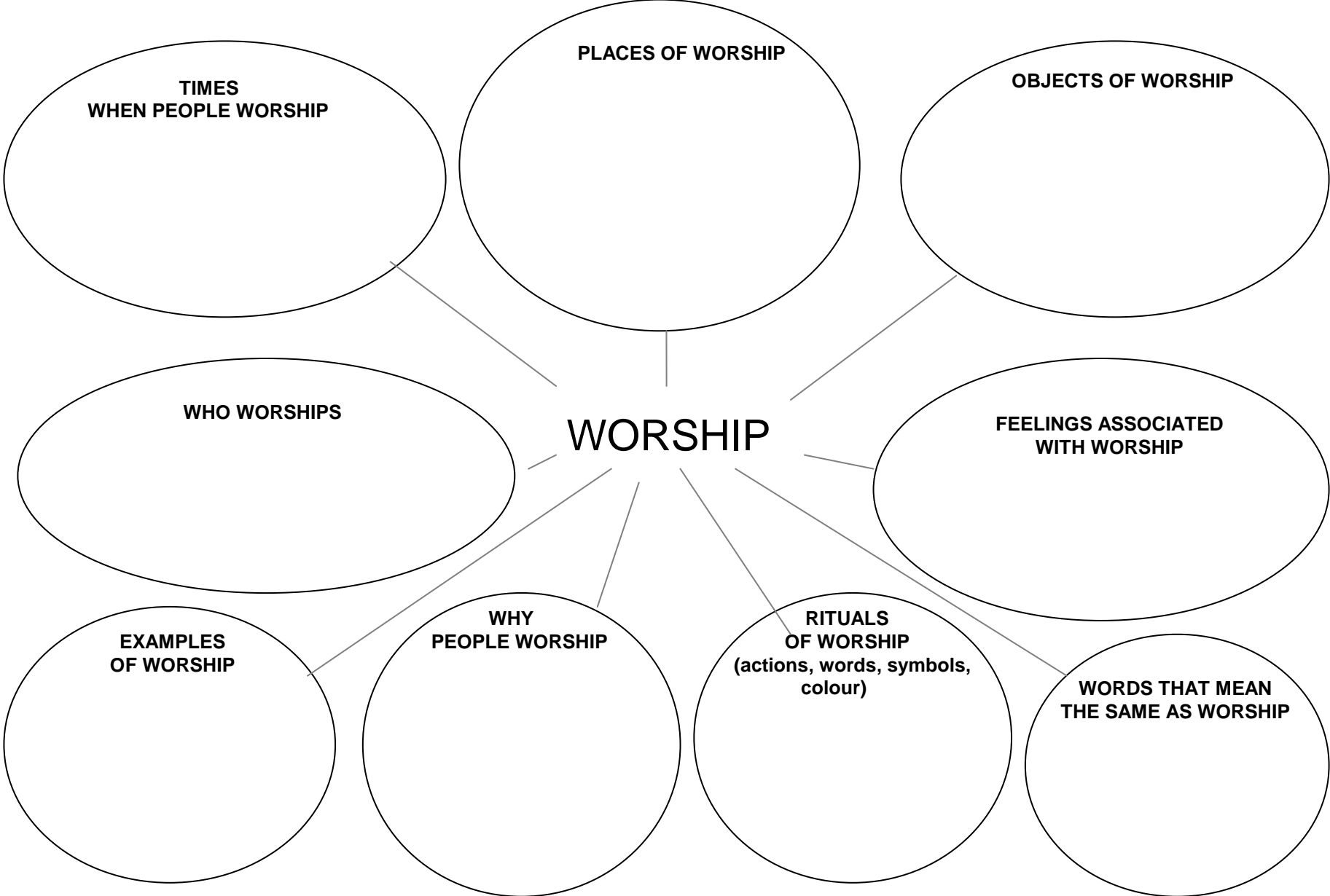
Which resources were useful in the implementation of this unit?

How did I respond to the range of students' worship experiences?

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

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?



GOD COMES TO PEOPLE IN JESUS

The Christmas Story

What makes Christmas one of the most important worship events for Christians?

Is it an important event for them only?

Read Luke 1:1–20

What does God say and do?

What event of importance does Luke describe? _____

What good news does God's messenger announce? _____

For what is God being praised and worshipped? _____

DIG DEEPER 1	Mary and the shepherds, along with other Jews, were waiting for a Messiah*.
	What do the Old Testament passages Isaiah 7:14; 9:6,7 and Micah 5:2–5 tell people about the Messiah and what he would do for them? _____
	How is the event in Luke 2:1–20 a fulfilment of what people had been waiting for? _____
	What does the event reveal about God's 'worth' (God's qualities)? _____
	What evidence is there in the passage that Jesus is the reason for people's worship of God? _____
[* Don't know what 'Messiah' means? Go to a Bible dictionary.]	

How do people respond?

In the Bible story . . .

how does Mary respond to what God says and does? _____

how do the shepherds respond to what God says and does? _____

how do the angels respond to God's actions? _____

The Christmas Story

DIG DEEPER 2	<p><i>In the beginning was the one who is called the Word. The Word was with God and was truly God. From the very beginning the Word was with God . . . The Word became a human being and lived here with us. We saw his true glory, the glory of the only Son of the Father. From him all the kindness and the truth of God have come down to us. John 1:1,2,14 (CEV)</i></p> <p><i>Long ago in many ways and at many times God's prophets spoke his message to our ancestors. But now at last, God sent his Son to bring his message to us. Hebrews 1:1,2 (CEV)</i></p> <p>The writer Luke includes events that took place prior to Jesus' birth and soon after his birth. He gives his readers an insight into how various people responded to Jesus' birth.</p> <p>Work in pairs. Read TWO of the listed passages and answer the questions. Some passages will have more information than others.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"> Luke 1:26–38 The birth of Jesus foretold Luke 1:67–79 The song of John the Baptist's father, Zechariah Luke 2:21–35 Simeon sees Jesus in the temple Luke 2:36–38 Anna sees Jesus in the temple Matthew 2:1–12 The wise men visit Jesus </p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Summarise the verses that tell the reader that God communicates to people. _____ _____ 2. List what God has done and will do for people. _____ _____ 3. Christians recognise that Jesus is God's message. Summarise what God's message is to people. _____ _____ 4. Write the words that best describe people's response to what God does, to God's message. _____ _____
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DIG DEEPER 3	<p style="text-align: center;">Christian worship today</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Read the song <i>Glory to God in the highest</i> which is part of many worship liturgies (see <i>Lutheran Hymnal</i> pages 8 and 25)</p> <p>By what different names is God described? _____ _____</p> <p>What do these names tell us about the worth of God? _____ _____</p> <p>What does God do for the worshipper? _____ _____</p> <p>What is the worshipper's response to God? _____ _____</p>
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GOD COMES TO PEOPLE IN JESUS

The Easter Story

What makes Easter the most important worship event for Christians?

Is it an important event for Christians only?

Read Luke 24:1–35.

What does God say and do?

How did God’s message come to people in Luke 24:1—25? _____

What is God’s message? _____

What do Cleopas and his friend find out about Jesus? _____

How does Jesus help Cleopas and his friend understand and recognise who he is? (verses 27,30,32) _____

DIG DEEPER 1	<i>Isaiah 53</i> is one of the passages Jesus would have explained .
	What happened to the person Isaiah is describing? _____
	For whom did the person suffer? _____
	What does the passage tell us about the purpose of Jesus’ death? _____

What do all of the above show about God’s worth? _____

For what is God worshipped? _____

How do people respond?

In the Bible story . . .

how do the angels respond to God’s actions? _____

how do the women respond to God’s actions(see also Matthew 28:8,9)? _____

how does Peter respond to God’s actions? _____

how do Cleopas and his friend respond to God’s actions? _____

DIG DEEPER 2

*And if Christ wasn't raised to life, your faith is useless,
and you are still living in your sins.* 1 Corinthians 15:14(CEV)

The following passages will help you to understand why the death and resurrection of Jesus are central events in God's good news to people and in Christian worship. Work in pairs. Read TWO of the listed passages and answer the questions. Some passages will have more information than others.

- Acts 10:34-43 Peter speaks to Cornelius and his people
- Acts 17:22-31 Paul speaks to the Athenians
- Romans 6:3-5 Baptism is a death and resurrection
- 1 Corinthians 15:1-8,17,20 Paul teaches the Corinthians about the resurrection
- Colossians 3:1-4 A believer's life is identified with Jesus
- 1 Peter 1:3-9 The resurrection gives hope

1. Using your own words describe the good news message of Jesus' death and resurrection in the passages you have read. _____

2. How do people respond to the good news of God? _____

DIG DEEPER 3

Christian worship today

Examine the following parts of a communion worship liturgy
(see *Lutheran Hymnal* pages 18 -20):

- The words of institution
- Lamb of God
- Song of Simeon

- What does God do and say to people in holy communion? _____

- What evidence is there that Jesus is central to Christians' worship of God? _____

Personal Reflection

PART A: QUESTIONS

1. Ask students to think of a time when they prayed. Were they asking for help? saying sorry? giving thanks? praying for other people? To whom were they praying?
2. Ask students to think of a time when they have felt in awe of creation. What did they do to show their sense of awe?
3. Ask students to write about or draw a place that has been special to them. Students reflect on who or what is associated with this place to make it special and what happens within them when they visit this place either physically or in their memories.
4. Students reflect on what is important to them and how they show that importance in the things they celebrate and the way they live their lives and relate to people.
5. Remind students that the unit began with the premise that all people worship. Do they agree? Do they see themselves as people who worship? Students use the headings in the word-web to help them reflect on themselves as people who worship.
6. Revisit the various activities covered in the unit. Students write down what new things they have learnt about worship: what has surprised them? reassured them? puzzled them? Students identify parts of the unit which were relevant to them and reflect on what made those things relevant.

PART B: SUGGESTED WAYS OF PRESENTING 'WORSHIP — ME?'

The aim of this activity is for students to evaluate the place of worship in their lives. Be prepared for and accept honest, non-Christian responses. There should be no pressure on students to make public what they want to keep private. Give students the option to complete the activity without having to disclose it to the class. Assure students of confidentiality. Please note that this activity is optional and that you are not obliged to conduct this activity if you are uncomfortable with it.

- ◆ Write an essay entitled *Worship — Me?*
- ◆ In small groups create a series of tableaux which highlight the various aspects of worship — colour, movement, music can be combined.
- ◆ Create a collage or painting which shows your understanding of what worship is.
- ◆ Write a poem or song reflecting feelings associated with worship.
- ◆ Create a set of symbols that represent the role worship plays in your life.
- ◆ Act out different types of worship situations, eg if football is most important to you, then show scenes of 'worship' taking place in football.
- ◆ Present a report on an example of worship.
- ◆ Write about a worship experience.

GOD GATHERS CHRISTIANS TO WORSHIP HIM