

MENU

BIBLE REFERENCES

1

In worship God comes to his people in word and sacrament and they respond

The wonder ('worth-ship') of God

1 Chronicles 29:10–20 Job 38 – 42
Psalm 8 Mark 10:13–16
Romans 11:33–36

Words that signify worship

Genesis 18:2 Genesis 24:26
Exodus 25:1–9 Deuteronomy 11:13
1 Chronicles 25 Psalm 40:4–8
Micah 6:6–8 Matthew 4:8–10
Matthew 15:8,9 Matthew 18:26
John 4:23 John 16:2
Acts 2:42,46,47 Acts 7:59,60
Acts 13:1–3 Romans 9:4
Romans 10:8–10 Romans 12:1
Romans 14:5,6 Ephesians 5:19
Colossians 3:16 Philippians 3:3
Hebrews 13:15 James 1:27
1 John 1:9 Revelation 5:11–14

People worship

Genesis 4:3–5 Genesis 8:20,21
Genesis 18 Genesis 28:10–22
Genesis 32 Exodus 14, 15:1–20
Judges 13 1 Samuel 1, 2:1–11
2 Chronicles 6,7 Esther 3,4,9
Jonah Matthew 9:1–8
Matthew 14:22–23 Luke 1:26–56
Luke 10:38–42 John 4:1–42
John 9 John 12:1–8
Acts 3:1–10 Acts 9:1–19
1 Corinthians 11:17–33 1 Timothy 2:1–10

God is present in worship

Genesis 12:1–7 Exodus 3,4
Exodus 19:9–11 Exodus 20:24
Exodus 33:12–23 Psalm 26:8
Psalm 99 1 Chronicles 16:1–36
2 Chronicles 5:1–3 2 Chronicles 5:13 – 6:2
2 Chronicles 6:18–21 2 Chronicles 7:1–4
Matthew 18:19,20 John 14:23
John 15:5 John 17:14–17
Romans 5:1,2 1 Corinthians 11:17–34
Ephesians 2:18 Ephesians 3:17–21
Revelation 4:8–11 Revelation 5:6,8–14

Which God do you worship?

Exodus 32 Joshua 24
Judges 16 1 Kings 18:16–39
2 Kings 23 Daniel 3,6
Hosea 2,4,8,11 Psalm 115
Isaiah 44,45,46 Jeremiah 10

Jesus and his gospel are at the centre of Christian worship

Isaiah 7:14 Isaiah 9:6,7
Isaiah 53 Micah 5:2–5
Matthew 28:18–20 Luke 1:26 – 2:40
John 4:9–42
John 9 in particular v5 and v35–38
John 20:24–31 Acts 8:26–39
Acts 2:22–41 Acts 10:34–43
Acts 14:6 Acts 17:22–31
Romans 6:3,4 1 Corinthians 11:17–34
1 Corinthians 15:1–8, 17,20
Ephesians 1 :7–10, 22,23
Ephesians 2:4–10,13,14
Philippians 2:6–11 Colossians 3:1–4
Hebrews 10:19–22 1 Peter 1:3–9
Revelation 5

Worship as a corporate experience

Genesis 12:1–3 Exodus 19:3–8
Deuteronomy 6 Joshua 24:1–27
1 Chronicles 29:20 2 Chronicles 7:1–10
Luke 22:14–20 Acts 1:14
Acts 2:42–47 Acts 4:23–37
1 Corinthians 10:16,17 1 Corinthians 11:20–34
Ephesians 5:19,20 Colossians 3:16
1 Timothy 2:1–10 Hebrews 10:23–25
1 Peter 2:4,5
Worshippers as a flock
John 10:11,14–16, 27,28; 1 Peter 2:25
Worshippers as a family
Matthew 12:48–50; Ephesians 2:19
Worshippers as a body
1 Corinthians 12:12–31; Ephesians 4:12
Worshippers as a building
Ephesians 2:20–22; 1 Peter 2:4–8
Worshippers as branches of a vine
John 15:1–17

Worship requires an attitude of humility

Exodus 3:5	Isaiah 6:5
Psalms 32:5	Psalms 34:18
Psalms 51:10–12, 17	Micah 6:6–8
Matthew 18:3,4	Luke 18:13,14,16,17
Revelation 4:10,11	

2 Christians worship regularly and on special occasions

Regular Christian worship

Acts 2:42–47	Acts 13:1,2
Acts 13:14,15	Acts 14:21–25
Acts 20:7	1 Corinthians 11:17,18
1 Corinthians 14:26	1 Corinthians 16:2
Ephesians 5:19	Colossians 3:16
Hebrews 10:25	

OLD TESTAMENT FESTIVALS

Sabbath rest

Genesis 2:2,3	Exodus 20:8–11
Exodus 23:10–12	Leviticus 25:1–7
Leviticus 25:8–22	Deuteronomy 5:12–15.

Passover:

Exodus 12	Deuteronomy 16:1–8
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Day of Atonement:

Leviticus 16:23,26–32	Numbers 29:7–11
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Firstfruits

Leviticus 23:9–14

Feast of Weeks

Leviticus 23:15–21

Feast of Booths

Leviticus 23:33–43	Numbers 29:12–39
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Feast of Lots (Purim): Esther 9:18–32

CHRISTIAN FESTIVALS

The Christmas story

Luke 2:1–20	Matthew 2:18–25
Matthew 2:1–12	

The Easter story

Luke 24:1–35

The Ascension story

Matthew 28:16–20	Luke 24:50–53
Acts 1:1–11	

The Pentecost story

John 14:8–17,25–27	John 15:26,27
John 16:4–11	John 20:19–23
Acts 2:1–21	

Reformation Sunday

Jeremiah 31:31–34	Romans 3:19–28
John 8:31–36	

Worship is more than rituals

Amos 2: 6–12	Amos 5:7,10–13, 21–24
Isaiah 58	Micah 6:6–8
Matthew 5:14–16	Matthew 6:1–13
Matthew 6:22–24	Matthew 15:1–9
Matthew 19:16–22	Matthew 22:37–40
John 4:21–24	Colossians 2:13–23

Worship is a lifestyle

Daniel 1 – 6	Romans 12:1,2,9–21
Romans 13	Ephesians 4,5
Philippians 2	Philippians 4:4–7
1 Peter 1:13 – 2:25	

Jesus worships

Luke 2:21–24, 41–52	Luke 3:21,22
Luke 4:1–12	Luke 4:16–21
Luke 5:13,14	Luke 5:16
Luke 9:28,29	Luke 10:21–24
Luke 19:45–47	Luke 22:7,8,14–22
Luke 22:39–46	Luke 24:30,46

Psalms that reflect various worship times and attitudes

- psalms of lament: 12, 44, 80, 94, 137
- psalms of praise: 8, 19, 66, 100, 103, 104, 113, 148
- psalms of celebration: 50, 81, 101, 144
- psalms of trust: 11, 16, 23, 27, 62, 91, 121, 125

3 Christians worship in a variety of ways

The origins and observance of the Passover

Exodus 12:1–28	Exodus 24:3–11
Leviticus 23:4–8	Deuteronomy 16:1–8
2 Chronicles 35:1–19	Ezra 6:13–22
Matthew 26:17–30	

Baptismal themes

Crossing of the Red Sea	Exodus 14,15
Crossing of the Jordan river	Joshua 3,4
Christian baptism	Matthew 28:19
	Romans 6:3–7

MENU

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES

1

In worship God comes to his people in word and sacrament and they respond

WORSHIP PAGE Students investigate worship pages listed on the Internet, eg the Mimi Rogers worship page, the Whitney Houston worship page. Students define the writer's understanding of worship through an analysis of the language used by the writer and the information given about the person being featured on the webpage. What view of the person does the writer want the reader to have? What is the chief purpose for creating worship webpages?

This activity can lead to a discussion of the hero worship of singers, actors, football players, political leaders, friends etc. (1a)

WORSHIP EVERYWHERE Students examine the meaning of worship, beginning with the Old English derivation 'worth-ship', as well as defining the meaning of its various synonyms: adoration, homage, devotion, reverence, honour, veneration, adulation. They find evidence of adoration, devotion, reverence etc in their own experience and human experience in general.

Students list and discuss people's thoughts, feelings and actions towards people, gods, ideas, objects etc considered to be worthy of such treatment.

Students debate the idea that what a person most values is what they in fact worship. (1a)

RELIGIOUS WORSHIP Working in small groups students research various religions' worship practices. They find out:

- Who/what is worshipped?
- When/where/how is worship conducted?
- What is the purpose of worship?
- What role does the object/god play in worship?
- How is worship linked to people's concept of the object/god they are worshipping?

Students collate their findings and identify common elements of worship across the religions. Discuss what distinguishes worship from other human activities such as daily chores that are done habitually.

Alternatively, focus on either Islam or Hinduism, answering the above questions.

Another approach is to ask students to find examples of places of worship in the world, past and present, eg mosque, Greek temple. Students research the role such places have in the life and beliefs of people. (1a,2a,3a)

A SENSE OF WONDER Write on the board words which convey the idea of wonder: amazement, fascination, marvellous, admiration, awesome, mysterious, etc.

Give students a range of experiences to help them reflect meaningfully on the topic of wonder. Students may

- think of a saying, an object, an experience, an invention, a quality that conveys a sense of wonder;
- describe a time when someone did something wonderful for them;
- listen to a majestic, soulful piece of music;
- view a documentary that demonstrates the intricacies of nature, technology, medicine, the body, birth of a child, etc;
- examine artwork such as Eschers' drawings;
- lie down on the school oval and contemplate the sky;
- read Bible passages, eg
1 Chronicles 29:10–20
Job 38 – 42 Psalm 8
Mark 10:13–16 Romans 11:33–36

Students list the emotions associated with wonder, eg gratitude, helplessness, joy, love. They think of concrete ways that people (especially young children) express their wonder.

Discuss in what ways a sense of wonder and worship are related. (1a)

HELP! Students survey people to find out how many people read their horoscope or tarot cards or have their palms read. What prompts people to engage in these activities? What are they looking for?

Students think of times when they have prayed. Were they asking for help, saying sorry, giving thanks, praying for others? What were they hoping would be the result of their prayers?

Students survey their friends and parents to see if there is a relationship between praying and times of crisis. In what way is this kind of approach to God related to worship? (1a,1b)

SCHOOL WORSHIP Students describe what happens during school worship and discuss their feelings and thoughts about their experience of school worship. Brainstorm what would make the worship times more meaningful. Use this activity as a diagnostic tool to gauge student understanding of Christian worship. (1a,1b)

WELCOME RITUALS Students role-play the social conventions and rituals performed when people are being welcomed or meet each other in a range of different contexts, eg

- Students return home from school or camp or an outing with friends.
- The principal addresses the school assembly.
- The teacher walks into the classroom at the beginning of a lesson.
- An exchange student meets their host family for the first time.
- The Prime Minister visits his/her electorate.
- Friends greet each other after a long absence.
- A singer/pop group comes out on stage at a concert.

Students list the different greetings and responses — verbal and non-verbal.

Lead on to exploration of worship rituals. (1b,3a,3c)

TALKING ABOUT AND TALKING TO

Students discuss and role-play the difference between talking about and talking to someone. They note the changes in both verbal and non-verbal language that take place from one situation to the next.

Lead on to an exploration of worship as listening to God and speaking to God. (1b,3a,3c)

DOING IT ALL TOGETHER Students list activities which are best enjoyed and most meaningful when done in a group. Students identify the individual benefits of group participation, eg how does playing in a team help the individual team player?

Students share what their family (and extended family) does to create a sense of togetherness. How important are these activities for one's sense of belonging to and identity with one's family? How does each member of the family contribute to and participate in the family activities?

This can lead to a discussion of individual and corporate worship. (1b,3a)

2

Christians worship regularly and on special occasions

A STRESS-FREE LIFE Brainstorm the importance of regular sleep, rest and leisure for wellbeing. Students find articles in popular magazines on how to be stress-free. Students identify what the articles suggest about a person's use of time.

Lead on to exploring the importance and value of setting aside time for regular worship. (2a)

TIME Students read Ecclesiastes 3:1–8. (Note that 'time' is understood as divinely appointed). They find examples of the different time-frames mentioned from their own life experience, community life and general history. Discuss how people celebrate and commemorate some of the life activities listed in the passage.

Students draw a time line of events in their lives, indicating times of sadness, happiness, change, growth, new friendships, moves, etc. They identify times in their lives that are remembered in a special way and celebrated. How is this done?

Lead on to a study of special worship times and events. (2a,2b)

CALENDARS Students investigate the way in which a calendar organises time for different groups of people, eg Roman calendar, a gardener's calendar, industry-specific calendars, religious calendars (Hindu, Islamic, Judaic calendars).

Students identify on what basis a calendar is organised: seasons? significant events? They find out the starting point for the calendar and how this is linked to the main purpose and identity of the people using the calendar.

Use this as an introduction to a study of the church year. (2a)

PUBLIC HOLIDAYS Students look through a calendar, listing all the public holidays in their state/country, eg Australia Day, Anzac Day, Labour Day. In groups students investigate the reasons for setting aside these special times. They find out

- what happened to make this an important event for all people in a state/country to remember;
- the significance of the date chosen for the public holiday;
- what the event has come to symbolise for people living years after the event;
- how the public holiday is celebrated at an official level.

Students share their research and discuss:

- Are public holidays meaningful for people?
- Should public holidays remain on the calendar?
- What role do the public holidays have in the life of a community? country?

Move on to a study of Christian festivals and holy days. (2a,2b)

FESTIVALS, FETES, CARNIVALS

Students collect pictures of festivities, eg pictures of religious festivals, pictures of last year's school fete, pictures of local festive events (tourist bureaus may have pictures of these). Students make a list of what constitutes a festival. What is the overriding mood depicted in the pictures? What is the main purpose for having festivities?

Continue by exploring the purpose of Christian festivals. (2b)

SIGNIFICANT MOMENTS Take any fairy tale or story familiar to students, eg *Hansel and Gretel*, *Beauty and the Beast*, *The Frog Prince*. Students identify the significant moments in the life of the main characters and give reasons for their choice.

Students determine which of these moments would be worth commemorating and celebrating regularly. They design a festival/celebration for one of the moments (students answer who/ what/ where/ when/ why/ how questions to help them design a celebration).

Lead on to explore how significant events in Jesus' life are celebrated in Christian festivals. (2a,2b)

CHRISTMAS AND EASTER Divide the class into two groups. One group brainstorms what Christmas means to them and the wider community (encourage students to give you the whole picture, not just the religious one). The other group does the same for Easter.

Students share and collate the memories, sounds, sights, rituals, foods, activities, symbols, emotions associated with Christmas and Easter. They find greeting cards, songs and artwork on the theme of Christmas and Easter. (The film *Steel Magnolias* has several scenes showing how Americans celebrate these events.)

Students imagine that they are a group of 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 entirely on the evidence collected. (2b)

TOTALLY DEVOTED TO YOU

Students listen to love songs describing two people's love and devotion for one another. Discuss what it means to be devoted to something or someone, and how people demonstrate their devotion to others and to a cause. Is it possible to be totally devoted to two people, two causes?

Use this to introduce a study of Christian worship as devotion. (2c)

A LIFE-CHANGING EXPERIENCE

Brainstorm life-threatening situations, eg a boat capsized in wild open seas, a car accident, a climber falling off a cliff. Students write/speak a monologue of the feelings and thoughts people in such situations might have about their past actions, relationships, hopes, etc. There is never a shortage of such stories in the newspapers, which can be used as stimulus.

Students imagine that such a person is rescued from death. What will that person's response be towards their rescuer?

Brainstorm what difference the experience could make to the way a person sees their life and their future. What motivates the change in people's lives?

You may view selected scenes from films, eg *Reconstructing Henry* and *The Doctor*.

This can introduce a study of Christian worship as a celebration of the life-changing rescue achieved by Jesus Christ. (2c)

3

Christians worship in a variety of ways

DO I KNOW THESE WORDS? As an introduction to aspects of Christian worship, students find in a dictionary the meanings of:

ceremony	decorum	convention
tradition	ritual	rite
formality	celebration	liturgy.

Students give concrete examples of the words, using the school context. (3a,3b)

SYMBOLS Use this or one of the following activities to introduce a study of the rituals of Christian worship.

Rituals involve symbols which express rich meaning. Students think of objects, photos, images, experiences and events that have significance and meaning for them.

Students bring objects etc to the class and share the story of the objects, explaining the value and meaning the objects have for them personally.

Students attempt to sum up in a sentence what their object symbolises for them. (3a)

RITUAL IN LIFE Elements of ritual act like a collage, giving an event or a life richness of meaning. Ritual is evident in all areas of life, eg

- sporting events, eg Olympic Games, Wimbledon, World Cup Soccer, AFL and Rugby matches
- rites of passage from foetus → child → adult → authority figure → elder
- celebration of significant events, eg birthdays, weddings, graduation
- civic events, eg opening of Parliament, Australia Day observance
- processes of the law
- social events, eg barbecue, rock concerts
- religious festivals.

The class examines the elements of ritual in one of these contexts, or students work in groups, each examining a different context.

Students create a diagram, or tell the story, or re-enact the event to illustrate the part the following elements play in the ritual event:

- the nature and use of space and time
- the specific roles
- actions and responses of people
- the use of colour, furnishings, objects and symbols
- the structure and sequence of the elements.

Students discuss the messages and values the ritual conveys. (3a,3b)

FAMILY RITUALS Ritual is a means of expressing and passing on a group's values and of providing an identity and bond for the group. Working in small groups, students describe to one another what their family (and extended family) does to celebrate birthdays, Christmas, holidays and other family events. Students consider how time is set aside for family celebrations. They identify the elements of ritual that are present in the celebrations. What is their own specific role in the celebrations? Discuss times when the celebrations take a different form, when the ritual is changed.

Students discuss the importance of celebrating family events with other members of the family. (1b,2a,3a,3b).

A SENSE OF PLACE Rituals are often set within a context which is then invested with meaning for a person. Begin with a discussion on the importance of the bush, the sea, wide-open spaces, quiet places for people. What do these places symbolise for many people? What different opportunities do these places offer people?

Students write about or draw a place that has been special to them. They 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. (3a)

MANY DIFFERENT WAYS There are many ways of celebrating the same event. Students investigate which traditions and rituals are always performed at Olympic Games and how each host country adapts these. What impact have historical events and developing technology had on the way Olympic Games ceremonies have been conducted?

Alternatively, students investigate how different groups will celebrate (or have) celebrated entering a new millennium.

This can serve as an introduction to a study of what is common and what is different in various forms of Christian worship. (3b)

MENU

DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

1

In worship God comes to his people in word and sacrament and they respond

WORDS THAT SIGNIFY WORSHIP

A number of different Hebrew and Greek words are used in the Bible to render the concept of worship. Bible word books and encyclopedias give detailed information on this. Give each student a Bible verse (see *Words that signify worship* in the Bible References Menu).

Encourage students to look up the verse in various translations. Create a bank of words that denote worship, eg serve, fall down, bow their heads, offer gifts. Students list the activities and objects associated with worship in the Bible verse. They determine which aspects of human experience are involved in worship: physical, volitional, emotional, intellectual, spiritual.

Examining words (both their derivation and meaning) used to describe Christian worship will help students understand some aspects of worship: service, liturgy, office, cult. (1a)

PEOPLE WORSHIP There are numerous stories in the Bible of people worshipping. Select several stories from the list in the Bible References Menu. Students read the stories and analyse the worship experiences described. They record

- what has prompted the worship
- to whom worship is directed
- the language, action and gestures used by the worshipper
- the emotions expressed
- the time and place of worship
- whether worship is private or public.

Students present the worship experience described in the story in a pictorial or diagrammatic format. It must be easy for others to see the relationship or movement between the worshipper and the object of worship. Each student writes a paragraph summarising what he/she has learnt about worship.

NOTE It is possible to study the book of Jonah with worship as the focus. There are three groups of people: the sailors, Jonah and the Ninevites. Students examine the worship responses of each group, identifying the who/what/when/where/why/how of worship. (1a)

GOD ACTS, PEOPLE RESPOND

A study of the tabernacle (its design and furnishings and the role it played in the lives of the Israelites) will introduce students to some important aspects of Christian worship:

- It is God-centred and focuses on God's gracious actions for his people.
- In worship people meet God and respond to his actions.

Both the *Lion Handbook of the Bible* and *The Encyclopedia of the Bible* have clear summaries with illustrations. Book 4 of *The Great Bible Discovery* series also has good illustrations. Students record the important messages inherent in the structure and furnishings of the tabernacle.

Take students to the school chapel (or closest Lutheran church). Students consider the significance of the structure and the furnishings of the school chapel. They note similarities and differences between furnishings and objects in the tabernacle and the Christian setting. They seek to identify what features of Christian worship buildings relate to God's actions (eg altar) and what relate to people's response (eg hymn board). (1b)

JESUS AT THE CENTRE Christian worship centres on Christ and his gospel. In groups students identify the good news which Jesus brings to people and how people respond to that good news in any of the stories listed below. Allocate each group a different story.

Luke 2:21–40	John 4: 9–42
John 9 (in particular v5 and v35–38)	
John 20:24–31	Acts 8:26–39
Acts 2:22–41	Revelation 5

See Bible References Menu for additional references.

Alternatively, examine a range of Christian worship service orders. Students note

- what is said about Jesus and his work
- how the worshippers' respond in the service
- what makes the sacraments of baptism and holy communion central features of Christian worship. (1b)

PSALMS Give students a range of psalms to read, analyse, contemplate and personalise:

- psalms of lament: 12, 44, 80, 94, 137
- psalms of praise: 8, 19, 66, 100, 103, 104, 113, 148
- psalms of celebration: 50, 81, 101, 144
- psalms of trust: 11, 16, 23, 27, 62, 91, 121, 125

Psalms were written to help worshippers respond to God's actions in their lives. Students

- record what they find out about the worshipper's life, attitudes, concerns;
- list the words and images used to describe God. What view of God is contained in the psalm?
- identify, plot and even act out the rhythm of worship. How is the worshipper's relationship with God challenged, changed, encouraged in the process of worship?

Students compare modern psalms (eg Bruce Prewer's *Australian Psalms* and *More Australian Psalms*) with biblical psalms. (1a,1b,2c)

TOGETHER IN WORSHIP Christians do not worship in isolation from each other.

Students find evidence for the corporate nature of worship in the content (prayers, songs, confessions) and rituals of a Christian worship service. Students take special note of the language used and instructions given to the worshippers. What place does the Apostles' Creed — an 'I' statement — have in the service?

Students investigate the role corporate worship played in the lives of the ancient Israelites and early Christians. Joshua 24:1–27 summarises the history of Israel prior to entering the promised land and offers reasons for corporate worship. The Lion *Handbook of the Bible* has an informative section on the tabernacle, describing worship and the people's involvement in worship.

The Lion *Encyclopedia of the Bible* and the Lion *Handbook of The History of Christianity* both offer a clear exposition of worship in the early Christian church. Students determine what are the benefits of corporate worship for individuals within either the Hebrew or Christian community. See Bible References Menu for additional references.

Students may also consider situations in which private worship is more appropriate and/or beneficial than public worship. (1b,1a)

WHOM DO YOU WORSHIP? The Old Testament presents God as the only one worthy of people's worship. Idols are shown to be useless and helpless.

Students examine any of the following stories. Provide necessary background material to help them understand the context.

Worship of the golden calf	Exodus 32
Choice between God and neighbouring idols	Joshua 24
Samson and Delilah	Judges 16
Elijah and the prophets of Baal	1 Kings 18
King Josiah rids Israel of idols	2 Kings 23
Daniel	various stories
The people reject God	Hosea 2,4,8,11

Note: Psalm 115, Isaiah 44,45,46 and Jeremiah 10 are an excellent exposé of the difference between God and idols:

Students investigate on what basis God is seen as worthy and idols as worthless. Besides examining the Bible text, students research the gods and worship practices of Israel's neighbours (relevant to the story). The following questions will help students draw up contrasting profiles of God and idols:

- How do Old Testament writers describe the difference between God and idols?
- What kind of relationship exists between God and his people, and between idols and their followers?
- How does God reveal himself to people? How does this contrast with idols?
- How do people respond to God? to idols?
- How are the differences between God and the idols reflected in the worship practices of the people? (1b)

GOD IS PRESENT In Christian worship worshippers acknowledge and respond to God's presence and God's action in their lives and those of others. Students investigate in the Old and New Testaments the theme of God's presence and people's response to God's presence.

Genesis 12:1–7	Exodus 3,4
Exodus 19:9–11	Exodus 20:24
Psalms 26:8	Psalms 99
1 Chronicles 16:1–36	2 Chronicles 5:1–3
2 Chronicles 5:13 – 6:2	2 Chronicles 6:18–21
2 Chronicles 7:1–4	Matthew 18:19,20
John 14:23	John 15:5
John 17:14–17	Romans 5:1,2
1 Corinthians 11:17–34	
Ephesians 2:18	Ephesians 3:17–21
Revelation 4:8–11	Revelation 5:6,8–14.

Students work in pairs. Allocate a Bible passage to each pair. They record what they find out about

- how God is present in people’s lives
- the kind of relationship that exists between God and people
- how people can enter into God’s presence
- how people respond to God’s presence in their lives.

Provide students with a range of different worship service orders. They note how each service begins, what is acknowledged about God and the type of responses the congregation makes. What do the opening songs focus on? Students compare the order of the services with what they have learnt about God’s presence in the Bible. (1b)

2 Christians worship regularly and on special occasions

THE SABBATH Students explore the meaning and the importance of the Sabbath for God and his people.

OPTION 1: Students read and analyse the story of God giving manna and quail to the Israelites in the wilderness (Exodus 16:1–30).

1. What is the people’s attitude to God?
2. What does God do for the people?
3. What does the Sabbath remind people about God and their relationship with him?

OPTION 2: Students trace the pattern of rest established by God in the Old Testament:
 Genesis 2:2,3 Exodus 20:8–11
 Exodus 23:10–12 Leviticus 25:1–7
 Leviticus 25:8–22 Deuteronomy 5:12–15.

OPTION 3: Students investigate how contemporary Jewish people celebrate the Sabbath.

OPTION 4: Students investigate the observance of the Sabbath at the time of Jesus, especially by the Pharisees.

- How did this contrast with Jesus’ view of the Sabbath (Matthew 12:1–14; Mark 2:27)?
- What insight does Matthew 11:28,29 give to the purpose of the Sabbath? (see also Colossians 2:16,17).

OPTION 5: Students evaluate Luther’s understanding of the third commandment ‘Remember God’s special day and keep it holy’ by comparing it with God’s explanation in Exodus 20:8–11. (2a)

REGULAR WEEKLY WORSHIP

Students investigate the pattern of regular worship for Christians. They explore the topic from various angles, outlined below. Create a class poster, entitled *The meaning and purpose of regular worship*.

- Students research the history of Sunday worship and the reasons for shifting worship from Saturday to Sunday. (Some students can research why Seventh Day Adventists continue to worship on Saturday.)
- Students interview local Christians who attend worship regularly, asking them about the meaning and importance of regular worship for them.
- Students examine New Testament passages on the practice of worship:
 Acts 2:42–47 Acts 13:1,2
 Acts 13:14,15 Acts 14:21–25
 Acts 20:7 1 Corinthians 11:17,18
 1 Corinthians 14:26 1 Corinthians 16:2
 Ephesians 5:19 Colossians 3:16
 Hebrews 10:25. (2a)

OLD TESTAMENT FEASTS AND FESTIVALS

Students work in groups, each group researching a different feast appointed by God for his people in the Old Testament (refer to the Bible References Menu). The *NIV Study Bible* has a summary of each feast, the calendar month, the purpose and Bible references. Students go on to investigate how the feast they research is celebrated by Jewish people today.

Students answer the following questions:

1. What event is *commemorated*?
2. What main message does the feast *communicate* about the relationship between God and people?
3. What is *consecrated*?
4. Who *congregates*? Where? When?
5. How is the feast *celebrated*? (2a,2b)

THE CHRISTIAN YEAR The Christian year offers Christians opportunity to relive their salvation history. Christmas, Easter and Pentecost are the major festivals of the Christian calendar. Other festivals include Epiphany, Ascension and Harvest. Students work in groups, each researching a different festival. They

1. read the Bible stories that form the basis of the festivals (see Bible References Menu);
2. investigate how the festivals were celebrated in the early Christian church;
3. investigate how the festivals are celebrated in local churches, in different denominations and countries;
4. list the symbols, objects, activities, ceremonies, people involvement etc associated with the festivals;
5. make a comparison between the details in the Bible stories and the ritual of the festivals. (2b)

MORE FESTIVALS There are many other festivals which highlight significant moments in the history of the Christian church. Other Christian festivals are specific to denominations, culture groups and local church groups, eg Shrove Tuesday, All Saints Day, St Patrick's Day, Reformation Festival, Mothering Sunday, St Basil's Day.

Students find out which aspects of church life and Christian faith are highlighted in the festivals and in the dominant symbols and rituals of the festivals. Students determine the link between the ritual and what is at the heart of the festival. (2b)

WORSHIP IS MORE THAN RITUALS

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

Continuing to work in groups and on the same chapter from Daniel, students find evidence that worship of the 'living God' involves 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.

- What made those rituals unacceptable?
- How is the worship of God to be expressed in daily life?
- On what basis can God demand that a person's worship should involve all of life? (2c)

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). Numerous New Testament passages emphasise the impact these life-changing events make on a person's life, eg Ephesians 4 and Philippians 2.

1 Peter 1:13 – 2:25 is also an appropriate text to examine because it is written in the context of the resurrection (1 Peter 1:3–9).

To help students understand the motivation for worship in every facet of life, they select a passage from those listed above and analyse the passage in four different ways. Divide the class into four main groups. Give each group a different purpose for reading the passage:

1. BEFORE: From what has God (through Jesus) rescued 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? (2c)

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT At the heart of Christian worship is the relationship that exists 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).

The first commandment sums up the focus of Christian worship. *See Through the Scriptures* (Section 9) gives a succinct explanation of the commandment.

Luther's explanation of the first commandment in his *Large Catechism* can be used to stimulate discussion, especially under the sub-headings: 'Trust in God is the true worship', 'False worship: relying on good deeds', 'Trusting God, the giver of all good things'.

Students analyse the implications of the first commandment for the worship of God (refer to Matthew 22:37–40 and Jesus' encounter with the rich young ruler in Matthew 19:16–22).

Matthew 5:14–16 (you are light) and Matthew 6:22–24 (you cannot serve two masters) are two images which illustrate that worship involves the totality of life. Students explore the meaning of the passages through role-play, applying it to their life experience. (2c)

JESUS WORSHIPS Select examples from the life of Jesus which demonstrate how worship is interwoven in the fabric of his life from birth through to death. Allocate different Bible passages to different groups of students. Students write a one-page response to what they have learnt about the nature and role of worship from the life of Jesus.

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------|
| Luke 2:21–24, 41–52 | Luke 3:21,22 |
| Luke 4:1–12 | Luke 4:16–21 |
| Luke 5:13,14 | Luke 5:16 |
| Luke 9:28,29 | Luke 10:21–24 |
| Luke 19:45–47 | Luke 22:7,8,14–22 |
| Luke 22:39–46 | Luke 24:30,46 (2c) |

3

Christians worship
in a variety of ways

RITUAL ELEMENTS In pairs students receive a word that represents ideas, emotions, actions and attitudes that can be expressed in a worship service.

<i>pride</i>	<i>humility</i>	<i>sorrow</i>
<i>joy</i>	<i>brokenness</i>	<i>wholeness</i>
<i>receiving</i>	<i>self-giving</i>	<i>healing</i>
<i>awe</i>	<i>reconciliation</i>	<i>togetherness</i>
<i>reverence</i>	<i>meditation</i>	<i>initiation</i>
<i>blessing</i>	<i>being sorry</i>	<i>gratitude</i>
<i>equality</i>	<i>freedom</i>	<i>honesty</i>
<i>forgiveness</i>	<i>instruction</i>	<i>communication</i>
<i>closeness</i>	<i>servicing others</i>	<i>belonging</i>

Students create ways of using the body (posture and gestures), movement (dance, mime), music (song, instruments), visuals (graphics, art, banners), elements (fire, water, earth, bread etc) to convey the meaning of the words.

The teacher tells the story of Joseph or Daniel. Students identify the ideas, actions and attitudes from the above list that they find in the story. They then create rituals which tell the story of the relationship between God and Joseph or God and Daniel. Their ritual can be incorporated in a school chapel service where and when appropriate. (3a)

RELIGIOUS RITUALS Students investigate elements of religious ritual in worship found in different religions and/or in different Christian traditions. Students focus their investigation on rituals present in one aspect of worship, eg honouring God, prayer. Students find pictures, view sections of videos on different religions and draw from their personal experience. If possible, students interview people who worship on a regular basis.

Students list: the objects, words and gestures used in the ritual, the different roles and behaviour of people, when and where the ritual takes place.

Students analyse the messages these rituals convey about the deity being worshipped and the relationship between the deity and the worshippers. Of what importance and benefit are the rituals to the individual worshipper and to the group? (3a)

SACRED PLACES Students investigate the places that are set apart for religious activity and ritual in different religions. If students work well together in groups, assign each group a religion, otherwise the entire class can focus on one area of study, eg Islam. Students find answers to the following questions and present their findings as illustrated fact sheets.

- What makes the place sacred?
- When and where was the place first declared sacred?
- How do the layout, furnishings, positioning of the place emphasise its sacredness?
- What specific rituals are related to the sacredness of the place?
- What religious activities are performed within sacred places in general?
- What motivates believers to go on pilgrimages to sacred places or otherwise to spend time at sacred places?

Students investigate the notion of 'sacred space' within Christian traditions.

This activity can be done in conjunction with *God is Present* under Faith Statement 1. (3a)

WORSHIP SPACES The way space is organised reflects and shapes Christian worship. Students begin by researching the way Christians over the course of history have arranged their worship space, eg home churches, catacombs, cathedrals, crypts. Encyclopedias such as *Encarta 98* (under Church Building) give diagrams and relevant information. Students find out what factors have influenced the size, shape, use, and decor of the worship places.

Brainstorm various uses of a Christian place of worship, eg for weddings, funerals, Sunday worship, prayer meetings, choir practice. If students have little experience of worship, invite a local church member or the pastor to speak on this topic.

Students look through various forms of worship (including the service orders) that are used in a local church. They list the different types of interaction between people during the service, the number of people/groups that are involved in presenting various parts of the service.

Students determine which of the worship spaces researched would best accommodate the needs of contemporary worshippers. (3a,3b)

RITUALS TELL A STORY

1. Students investigate the origins and observance of the Passover in the history of the Israelite people. They list the elements of ritual common to all the accounts and state the importance and relevance of these rituals for the Israelites.

Exodus 12:1–28 Exodus 24:3–11
 Leviticus 23:4–8 Deuteronomy 16:1–8
 2 Chronicles 35:1–19 Ezra 6:13–22

2. Students investigate the way that Jesus celebrated the Passover with his disciples (Matthew 26:17–30). They note which new aspects of ritual Jesus added and the important message that Jesus was conveying through that addition.

3. Students investigate the significance of the different aspects of the ritual of holy communion practised in the Christian church. They find out how holy communion is conducted in different Christian traditions. They interview Christians to find out the relevance of holy communion for them.

4. Students identify the main message about God’s action articulated in holy communion. Students think of new rituals, gestures, words and actions that would convey the meaning of holy communion clearly to people who do not come from a church tradition.

A similar procedure can be followed in looking at the ritual of Christian baptism. Students explore the link between the crossing of the Red Sea (Exodus 14,15), the crossing of the Jordan river (Joshua 3,4) and Christian baptism (Matthew 28:19; Romans 6:3–7). (3a)

WORSHIP IS DRAMA The Christian worship service can be described as a drama of several acts in which there are two main actors: God and people. Give students a brief summary of the drama, eg

ACT 1 Assembling in God’s name
 Scene 1 Call to worship
 and hymn of praise
 Scene 2 Confession, pardon
 and response of praise
Act 2 Proclaiming God’s word . . .

Students analyse the unfolding of the drama in both the service with holy communion and the service without holy communion in the Lutheran Hymnal.

Students identify the patterns of listening and speaking, giving and receiving, God acting and people responding.

To help students with the activity, select one aspect of the worship service which is repeated several times, eg

Leader: The Lord be with you.

Congregation: And also with you.

Ask students to dramatise this response using one or more of the above patterns.

Different forms of Christian worship services can be analysed in the same way. (3a,3b)

DIFFERENT FORMS OF WORSHIP

Christian worship is in the name of the Triune God. It is God making himself known. It is God forgiving, renewing, empowering and blessing his people. It is people responding to God in adoration, confession, thanksgiving and intercession. In worship Christians state what they believe.

Different forms of worship services reflect the Christian calendar, stages in Christians’ faith and the various needs of people.

Students collect worship service orders that are

- designed for special occasions, such as the opening and closing services of the school;
- conducted at different times of the church calendar, eg Maundy Thursday, Easter, Pentecost services;
- God acting at different stages in the life of a Christian, eg baptism, confirmation;
- focusing on specific needs of people, eg healing services, youth services, Taize services;
- from different Christian traditions, eg Quaker, Methodist, Roman Catholic;
- traditional and contemporary within a Christian tradition.

Students work in small groups, each group comparing and contrasting two different forms of worship. They answer the following questions:

1. What is the service celebrating?
2. What elements of ritual are common to all services or unique to each service?
3. What aspects of God and of Christian belief are emphasised?
4. What mood will the service probably create?
5. Who will be likely to attend this kind of service?
6. What is the high point (climax) of the service?

Students discuss how presentation could either enhance or block the message in worship. Which do they think is more important: the form or the content of the service? (3b)

DESIGN A WORSHIP SERVICE

Use this activity to teach students about the nature of worship and the different forms that worship can take. The formal teaching can happen as students are involved in the planning and designing.

Students brainstorm significant events of school life for their year-level or for the whole school. They choose an event for which they design a worship celebration. As a class students determine what aspect of the relationship between God and people it will be appropriate to emphasise.

Students then form groups, each of which develops a different part of the service. Each group will need a runner who communicates with other groups so that some coherence of ideas is maintained. Give students books with examples of different forms of worship.

Different groups

- consider how to make best use of the worship space. They need to produce a plan, showing seating arrangement, when and where different groups who are presenters will be positioned;
- prepare a dramatisation of a suitable Bible passage;
- plan which type of visuals can best communicate the message. The groups should use the skills of the various members of the group;
- find prayers and psalms, giving some thought to how the congregation can be involved. Students find out about different choral speaking techniques;
- find appropriate music and songs. It is not necessary to have only singing.

As a class students discuss how they can create a meaningful worship experience for all students. They then decide which of the prepared items are to be included in the service and plan how best to sequence the different parts of the service. (3b)

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE WORSHIP

Some people claim that it is not necessary for people who believe in God to attend worship services regularly — that they can worship God while walking through a rainforest and on a beach. Students investigate the role in a Christian's life of private worship/devotions and regular corporate worship.

1. Students examine Jesus' prayer recorded in John 17. What does the prayer reveal about Jesus' relationship with God and the role of prayer in the context of his life situation?

See Bible References Menu under *Jesus Worships* for material which points to Jesus' regular involvement in corporate worship. Note what Paul writes in Philippians 4:4–7.

Students look through devotional books published for private use. How do they help people in their relationship with God?

2. Students analyse what the biblical descriptions of the Christian church imply about the nature of Christian worship:

flock	John 10:11,14–16, 27,28 1 Peter 2:25
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family	Matthew 12:48–50 Ephesians 2:19
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body	1 Corinthians 12:12–31 Ephesians 4:12
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building	Ephesians 2:20–22 1 Peter 2:4–8
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branches of a vine	John 15:1–17.
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Each student writes an extended response to 'Regular worship is not an optional extra for Christians'. Refer to *Regular Weekly Worship* in Development Activities Menu for more Bible references. (2a,3b)

MENU

RESPONSE ACTIVITIES

1

In worship God comes to his people in word and sacrament and they respond

TELL A STORY Students describe the relationship between God and his people which is found in the form, space, rituals and content of the worship service.

If students have done an extended study of the tabernacle, they can take the role of a Hebrew parent who takes their child to the tabernacle and tells them the story of God and his people, and in fact the story of God and the child. (Hebrews believed that the stories of their ancestors were their personal stories.)

If students have done an analysis of a contemporary Christian service or an early Christian worship service, they take the role of a Christian parent who tells the story of God and his people expressed in the Christian worship service. (Christians identify with the life, death and resurrection of Jesus.) (1b,2c,3a)

WRITE A PSALM Students write modern psalms that can be used in personal meditation and in corporate worship. As a guide and stimulus, students find prayers written by Christians throughout the centuries and use the psalms already studied in the development activities. Students can write psalms of praise, lament, history, celebration, trust. (1a,1b)

QUIET REFLECTION The teacher creates a quiet, reflective atmosphere in which students consider what they have learnt about worship during the unit of work. Teacher Resource Sheet D1/4 (Part A) can be adapted to provide a range of questions to guide students' reflection. Students record their thoughts and feelings in their journals. (1,2,3)

ME? WORSHIP? At the end of a unit of work on worship, students reflect on what they have learnt about worship. They present a personal response to what they have learnt in a piece of work entitled 'Me? Worship?' They use a medium of their choice. Teacher Resource Sheet D1/4 (Part B) offers some suggestions that can be given to students. (1,2,3)

2

Christians worship regularly and on special occasions

GREETING CARDS Students create a greeting card for a celebration in the Christian year or for a stage in a Christian person's journey of faith. Students carefully select pictures and symbols that denote the significance of that event for Christians. (2a,2b)

POSTER PRESENTATION Students make posters of different festivals of the Christian church, focusing on those festivals celebrated by Christians in the local community. (2b)

PLAN A FESTIVAL DAY Students choose a significant event in the life of the school. They plan a festival, including a worship event, which celebrates the importance of the occasion for all students and staff in the school. (2b)

THE LORD'S PRAYER is an example of how a relationship with God permeates all of life. Students present the Lord's Prayer, using their creative and artistic abilities — music, art, drama, dance, movement — to communicate the nature and role of worship in the life of God's people. (2c,3a)

3

Christians worship in a variety of ways

TOGETHER At the end of a unit of work on worship, invite students and their families to join you at a local Sunday worship service. Make sure that students and their families are briefed beforehand on what will happen in the service. (1,2,3)

CREATIVE EXPRESSION Students choose an aspect of Christian worship, eg God gives new life; God's people praise, say sorry, give thanks, pray for others; worship as a way of life. Students work in groups to create a banner or stained-glass windows or series of movements for a liturgical dance which can be incorporated into school worship. (1a,1b,3a)

SCHOOL WORSHIP Students work with the chaplain or person in charge of school worship to prepare a worship service that communicates the message in language, symbols and rituals that are familiar to students in the school community. Students become involved in areas where they feel comfortable, eg in creating a drama, selecting and/or rehearsing music, arranging the worship space, selecting and rehearsing the Bible readings, creating symbols and pictorial banners. (3a,3b)

DRAMA IN WORSHIP Students choose a Bible story which focuses on what God has done for people, eg the story of creation, the crossing of the Red Sea, Jesus feeding the five thousand. Students create a ritual which communicates the message of God's action. Students use any combination of:

- mime
- series of postures and gestures
- series of visual symbols
- sequence of colours
- sequence of songs. (1b,3a,3b)

PRODUCE A VIDEO Students work in small groups to produce a video as a resource on Christian worship. Each group produces a different segment, eg times when people worship, places of worship, rituals of worship, why people worship. Students should aim to communicate the richness and diverse nature of Christian worship through a presentation of Christian worship through time and across different Christian traditions and cultures. (1b,2,3)

MENU**RECOMMENDED RESOURCES**

The introduction to LIFE contains suggested general resources for all LIFE concepts. The following resources may be used in a unit about *God gathers Christians to worship him*.

Some of these resources may be out of print. They are listed because they (or others similar to them) may be found in school libraries.

Preview these and any other resources you intend using to be sure that they are appropriate for your students.

LITERATURE — NON-FICTION**GENERAL**

- Beck et al *Exploring Religion* 1997 Oxford University Press
- Crotty M et al *Finding a Way* 1989 Collins Dove
- Dowley T (ed) *The History of Christianity* 1990 Lion Publishing
- Fee G D & Stuart D *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth* 1993 Zondervan Publishing House
- Growing as God's People* 1981 Lutheran Publishing House
- Luther's Large Catechism* 1983 Lutheran Publishing House
- Luther's Small Catechism* 1996 Openbook Publishers
- Metzner U & C *Like the Flight of a Boomerang* 1994 Openbook Publishers
- Priestly J G *Bible Stories for Classroom and Assembly: The Old Testament* 1992 Religious and Moral Education Press
- Richardson A (ed) *A Theological Word Book of the Bible* 1950 Macmillan Publishing Company
- Supplement to Lutheran Hymnal* 1987 Lutheran Publishing House
- The Great Bible Discovery Book 4 (Moses — Exodus — Covenant)* 1995 Openbook Publishers
- Wendt H *See through the Scriptures* 1987 Shekinah Foundation Inc

WORSHIP

- Dawn MJ *Reaching Out without Dumbing Down* 1995 W B Eerdmans Publishing Company
- Dawn M J *Is It a Lost Cause?* 1997 W B Eerdmans Publishing Company
- Harms C J *Banners for Worship* 1988 Concordia Publishing House
- Harris C *Creating Relevant Rituals* 1992 E J Dwyer

- Mercier C *Christianity for Today* 1997 Oxford University Press
- Prewer B *Australian Psalms* 1979 Lutheran Publishing House
- Prewer B *More Australian Psalms* 1996 Openbook Publishers
- Rock L *Festivals of the Christian Year* 1996 Lion Publishing
- Self D *High Days and Holidays* 1993 Lion Publishing
- Thompson J *Celebrate Christian Festivals* 1995 Heinemann
- Walsh A & T *Graphics and Prayers for Feasts and Seasons* 1997 John Garratt Publishing
- White J F *Introduction to Christian Worship* 1990 Abingdon Press
- Wiersbe W *Real Worship* 1986 Kingsway Publications

AUDIO-VISUAL**VIDEOS**

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Chariots of Fire</i> | <i>Dead Man Walking</i> |
| <i>The Doctor</i> | <i>Raiders of the Lost Ark</i> |
| <i>Reconstructing Henry</i> | |
| <i>Sister Act 1, 2</i> | <i>Steel Magnolias</i> |

MUSIC

- All Together Again* 128, 131, 137, 150, 158, 169, 188
- All Together Everybody* 207, 218, 226, 240, 241, 242, 244, 245, 246, 261, 267, 292, 308
- All Together OK* 313, 324, 325, 330, 375

Put a plastic sleeve in this section of your LIFE binder to keep your own collection of clippings, cartoons, stories, photos, etc which you can use for these units. Add to your collection whenever you come across something that might be useful.

GOD GATHERS CHRISTIANS TO WORSHIP HIM