

FOREWORD

This worship resource provides engaging, inclusive worship experiences for young children. The material in this book intends to introduce children to various elements of the liturgy and the symbols used in our worship. Few, if any, supplies are needed to be successful in the teaching of these units. Instructions are provided for worship leaders who will guide the children in conversational learning and participatory music.

These materials were originally written for the Early Childhood Choir School Program at Westwood Lutheran Church, Minneapolis, MN, and are dedicated to young children, who with children of all ages are the Church of today!

—Michael Burkhardt

USE THESE WORSHIP EXPERIENCES:

- as a monthly Sunday school/church school worship unit
- during your choir rehearsals
- in corporate worship as the Children's Sermon

EXTRACT INDIVIDUAL PIECES OF THESE WORSHIP EXPERIENCES FOR CORPORATE WORSHIP:

- hymns of praise
- psalms
- scripture readings
- children's sermons
- prayers
- blessings

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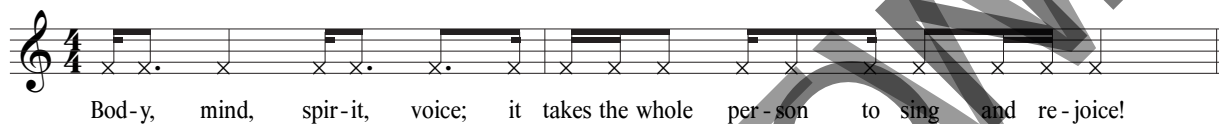
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PREPARING FOR WORSHIP

BODIES, MINDS, AND VOICES

Bodies and **Minds** may be prepared or warmed up with simple stretching exercises and a brief time of intentional focus, through which children are encouraged to engage their entire body. The leader invites the children to copy the leader's movements, focusing on what is seen and responding with immediate imitation.

Bodies, Minds, and **Voices** may be prepared or warmed up by using the following chant by Helen Kemp in a variety of vocal experiences: the speaking voice, the speaking voice using the "light" vocal mechanism (the head voice), the whispering voice, and the singing voice (*sol-mi* melody for the chant).



SPIRITS AND THE WORSHIP SPACE

Spirits and the **Worship Space** may be prepared by physically putting the elements of worship in place. The following texts might initiate each action of preparation:



Candles

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world." [John 8:12]
The candles are lighted.



Cross

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life." [John 11:25]
The cross is placed between the candles.



Bible

Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. [Psalm 119:105]
The Bible is placed on the lectern or reading desk.



Bread and Wine

Jesus said, "Take, eat, this is my body. Take, drink, this is my blood. Do this in remembrance of me." [Matthew 26:26-27 and Luke 22:19]
Bread and wine are brought forward and placed on the communion table.



Water

As a bowl of water is brought forward or water is poured from a pitcher into the baptismal font, the leader may say:
We begin our time of worship with the words spoken to us at our baptism,
In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
Children may dip their fingers in the water and make the sign of the cross upon their foreheads.

GOD SAW THAT IT WAS GOOD!

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Pictures of creation: a solar system; a variety of skylscapes; plants and forests around the world; sun, moon and stars; creatures from around the world; people from around the world

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP (see page 4)

GREETING SONG

As the worship leader sings the Greeting Song, the children are invited to greet one another by echoing the phrase, "Good day, friends," whenever it occurs in the song. The final phrase offers opportunities to name various parts of our persons with which can praise God. The children may be encouraged to locate each part as the leader sings. The leader models the actions: **eyes** (point to eyes, encouraging the children to focus on worship symbols placed in the space); **heart** (cross hands over heart); **ears** (cup ears, indicating preparation to listen to God's word).

Good Day, Friends

Good day, friends, **good** day, friends, I'm ver - y glad to see you! Good
 day, friends, **good** day, friends, let's praise God with our ___*

* eyes, heart, ears

Text and music: B. Bailey

SCRIPTURE READING Genesis 1

The Bible reading for today comes from the first book of the Bible, the book of Genesis. It tells the story of how everything came to be. I will need your help to tell the story. After each time God speaks, I will need you to say these words: *And God saw that it was good!*

Let's say those words together: **And God saw that it was good!**

Well, it was like this:

In the beginning, God said, "Let there be light." *Hold up a picture of a brilliant solar system.*

And God saw that it was good!

God said, "Let there be sky." *Hold up several pictures of skies – calm and sunlit, stormy with clouds.*

And God saw that it was good!

God said, "Let the earth bring forth plants and every kind of tree." *Hold up pictures of plants and forests from around the world.*

And God saw that it was good!

God said, "Let there be sun to brighten the day and moon and stars to light the night." *Hold up pictures of the sun, moon and stars.*

And God saw that it was good!

God said, "Let the earth bring forth all kinds of living creatures – creeping things, cattle, and wild animals. *Hold up pictures of creatures – reptiles, animals, birds, etc. – from around the world.*

And God saw that it was good!

God said, "Let us make people in our image. Let them fill the earth and take care of what we have made." *Hold up pictures of people from around the world.*

And God saw that it was good!

In the beginning, God gave life to everything. *Point to pictures of creation.*

And God saw that it was good!



MESSAGE

Today we are reminded that everything God made is good. We are also reminded that God has asked us to take care of all that God has made.

Refer to the pictures from the Scripture Reading as you call out parts of creation:

We care for the sky and the earth's resources by:

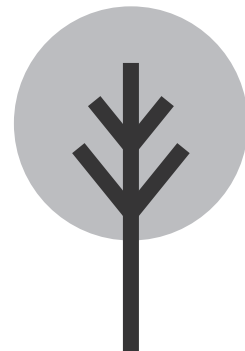
walking or riding bicycles instead of always traveling by car.

We care for the green things of the earth by:

watering our plants,
trimming trees,
harvesting (picking and preparing) fruits and vegetables,
and growing new plants in the place of old ones.

We care for the creatures of the earth by:

feeding them,
taking care of them when they are hurt,
and protecting them.



We care for the people of the earth by:
 sharing water and food,
 helping them when they are sick or in trouble,
 and being a friend to them when they are frightened and alone.

This may seem like a lot to do, but when we remember that God made all things good, it becomes a joyful job to care for the world into which God has placed us.



PRAYER

And so we join together with all those around us to offer prayers of praise and thanks for the world and everything in it.

With Hearts and Hands and Voices



E B E

With hearts, — with hearts, — with hearts and hands and voic - es, we
 thank — we thank — the Lord who made — — *

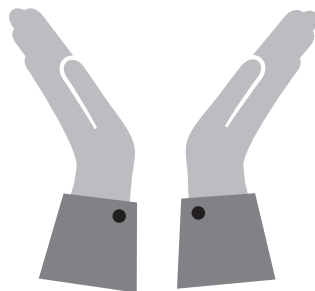
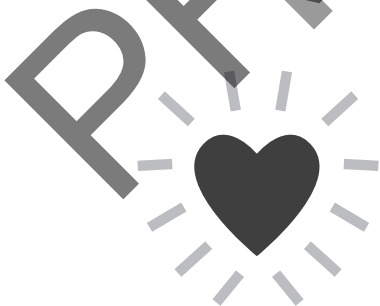
* the world, the sky, the plants, the sun, the moon, the stars, all creatures, all people

Text and music: B. Bailey



BLESSING

Go in peace. Take good care of all of God's gifts!

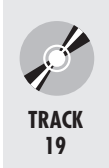




SENDING SONG

When singing this song for the first time, the worship leader may ask the children to listen for a group of words that is repeated several times in the song. After the group of words has been identified, "Rise, children, gonna praise the Lord!" the worship leader may ask the children to count how many times the phrase is repeated as they listen once more. When the worship leader sings the song a third time, children are invited to join for the repeated phrase, "Rise, children, gonna praise the Lord!"

Rise, Children, Gonna Praise the Lord



N/C G C G D G

Lift up your voice and sing,— Rise, chil-dren, gon-na praise the Lord!

N/C G C G D G

Praise now our God and King,— Rise, chil-dren, gon-na praise the Lord!

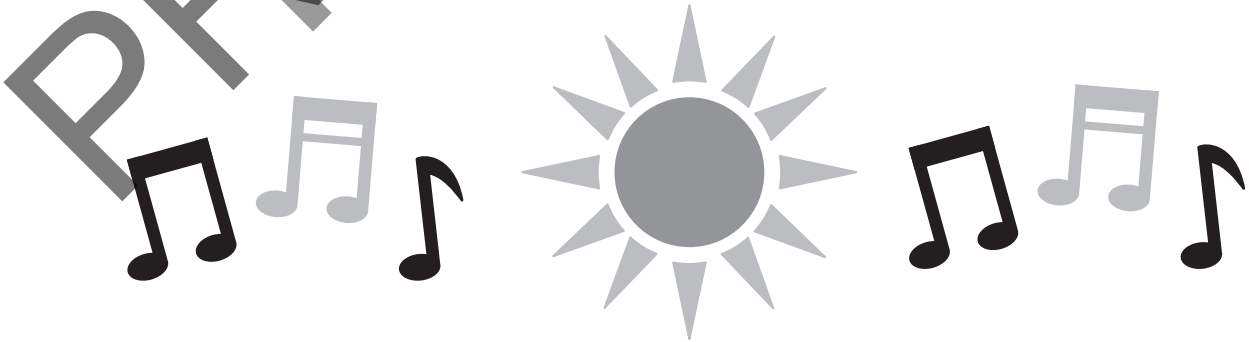
N/C G C G D G

Rise, chil-dren, gon-na rise, gon-na rise,— Rise, chil-dren, gon-na praise the Lord!

N/C G C G D G

Rise, chil-dren, gon-na rise, gon-na rise,— Rise, chil-dren, gon-na praise the Lord!

African-American Spiritual



ADVENT 1 – A SAVIOR IS COMING

MATERIALS NEEDED

- Advent wreath
- Four Advent candles with the Christ candle
- Candle lighter

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP (see page 4)

GREETING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Today we begin a new season as God's children. We call this season Advent and use the time of Advent to prepare our hearts for Jesus' coming.

Did you notice the wreath of candles at the front of our worship space?

How many candles do you see?

How many candles are white?

How many candles are purple/blue/pink?

As we get ready for Jesus' coming, we light a new candle each week before Christmas. When all the purple/blue/pink candles are lit, we know it's almost time to celebrate Jesus' birth! We will light the center candle – the white Christ candle – on Jesus' birthday.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

The Advent candle-lighting song may be learned prior to, or during, the first Advent worship time. To teach this song, the worship leader may sing it for the children and then teach each of its phrases by rote. As the season progresses, consider teaching the children how to sign each week's theme word (hope, peace, joy, love) in ASL – or by displaying a large poster with the week's theme word. Visit an online ASL video dictionary to reference the correct signs (handspeak.com/word and aslpro.com are excellent resources).

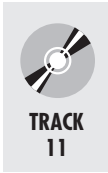
This week we will light a purple/blue candle. Some call this the Prophet candle.

A prophet is one of God's special messengers who lets people know that something is going to happen in the future. There were many prophets who told God's people that a savior was coming for them and for all the world. The prophets' messages gave the people hope.

All sing the candle-lighting song while the first Advent candle is lit.



Light a Candle



Light a can-dle for hope this Ad-vent, one bright can-dle for hope.

Light a can-dle of hope this Ad-vent, Je-sus, the hope of the world!

Text and music: Michael Burkhardt



SCRIPTURE READING Zechariah 9:9

The Bible reading for today comes from the prophet Zechariah.
 Let's hear what he has to say:
 "Rejoice greatly...your king comes to you!"



MESSAGE

Like the prophet Zechariah, we, too, can tell people that Jesus is coming.
 We might use five simple words to share this good news: "Rejoice! The Lord is coming."

Let's say these words together: **Rejoice! The Lord is coming.**

We could also sing these words. They might sound like this:

Rejoice melody

Re - joice! The Lord is com - ing,

Let's all sing these words together.
 (singing) **Rejoice! The Lord is coming.**

The Lord comes to us in many ways. During Advent we remember how God first came to earth as a little baby, how God comes to us each day, and that God will come to the earth again.

How about we share this good news with each other? Let's all sing the words we have just learned while I share some new words with you.

Hello/Apostolic Greeting

Jackie Weissman
adapted and arr. Michael Burkhardt

Piano

There are man - y ways to say hel - lo, say hel - lo, say hel - lo.

There are man - y ways to say hel - lo, won't you ech - o me? Hel - The

lo, hel - lo, hel - lo, hel - lo, hel - lo, hel - lo, hel - lo, hel - lo, hel - lo. Hel - Lord, The Lord, be with, be with, you now, you now, a - men! a - men! The

lo, hel - lo, hel - lo, hel - lo, hel - lo, hel - lo, hel - lo, hel - lo, hel - lo. Lord, The Lord, be with, be with, you now, you now, a - men! a - men!

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