

# Planning



Sunday, November 6 – Saturday, November 12 • 2022

## Praise God

A psalm, prophecy, church letter, and gospel story offer guidance about faithful living, and we are encouraged to ground our personal and communal life in praise of God.

### This week...

#### Ecumenical prayer calendar

Fiji, Melanesia, Micronesia, Papua New Guinea, Polynesia, the Solomon Islands

As listed in *Pilgrim Prayer: The Ecumenical Prayer Cycle*, edited by Ester Pudjo Widiastih and Karen L. Bloomquist. (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2018). <https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/prayer-cycle> offers valuable aids for intercessory prayers, prayer on behalf of and in solidarity with others.

#### Special day ([commentary](#) on p. 140)

**November 11** – Armistice Day/Remembrance Day/Veterans' Day

#### Personal reflection

Psalm 145:1–5, 17–21 reminds us that God is always close to us. “God is near to all who call on God” is important to recall during times of trial and when things in our lives are going just fine. God’s glorious splendour and wondrous works are to be praised daily, forever and ever.

Begin each day, this week, by stretching your arms into the air and naming one or two things for which you are thankful, saying, “I praise God for\_\_\_\_\_.”

*The planning page is provided in text format for copying, adapting, and adding to your bulletin or online worship resources or website or social media (see Text folder, Worship Outline).*

#### November 6, 2022

22nd Sunday after Pentecost  
32nd Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Proper 27 (32)

#### Revised Common Lectionary (Year C)

Haggai 1:15b—2:9

**Psalm 145:1–5, 17–21** or Psalm 98

2 Thessalonians 2:1–5, 13–17

Luke 20:27–38



*Seasons of the Spirit™*  
is based on semi-  
continuous readings of the  
*Revised Common Lectionary*.

**Liturgical colour** green

#### Notes

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### Online Resources

#### Lection Connection

Essays and discussion prompts linking current events with this week’s scriptures. Use for sermon preparation, Bible studies, and small groups or share on social media at <https://www.seasonsonline.ca/10/>.

#### Nurturing Faith and Spirituality at Home

An easy-to-share, weekly online resource supports the spiritual lives and faith formation of individuals and families at home. It is provided in the [Faith at Home](#) folder.





**Haggai 1:15b—2:9**

**Psalms 145:1–5, 17–21**

the focus in age-level materials

**2 Thessalonians 2:1–5, 13–17**

**Luke 20:27–38**



Seasons of the Spirit™ is based on the semi-continuous readings of the Revised Common Lectionary.

# Praise God

**T**his week, psalm, prophecy, a church letter, and the gospel story all offer guidance to their communities about faithful living. Grounding one's personal and communal life in praise of God, to bask in the God who is the source of our identity, provides the surest way to be faithful.

**Haggai 1:15b—2:9** is from the second shortest book in the Hebrew scriptures and dates from the post-exilic period. King Cyrus of Persia defeated the Babylonians in 539 BCE and permitted the people of Judah to return to their land. Upon their return, they remember the former glory of the land and become demoralized at the sight of Solomon's temple, which has been lying in ruin since 587 BCE. Although a foundation for a new temple was laid in 536 BCE, work became stalled. In the second year of King Darius of Persia, the prophet Haggai extols Zerubbabel, the governor of Judah, and Joshua, the high priest of Jerusalem, to motivate the people to rebuild the temple so that God may be properly worshipped. Haggai assures them that the temple's former glory does not matter; what matters is that God's spirit abides with them now and that God promises hope for the future.

**Psalms 145:1–5, 17–21** is an acrostic. These verses start with the first five and last five letters of the Hebrew alphabet. This form often conveys the sense of having covered the subject "from A to Z." The psalm is full of language that is striking in its absoluteness – the word "all" appearing seven times in four verses. This is a psalm of praise that holds line after line of testimony to the goodness of God, except for one phrase (not even a complete sentence) of judgment. Evident in this psalm is our desire for communion with God, which is what makes it possible to see and understand God's greatness. The role of humanity is to testify to that glory in all ways. Not wanting a relationship with God is what constitutes "wickedness."

God of rest and renewal, we seek what you alone can genuinely give. Break open our gratitude that we may full embrace your good gifts. Calm our hearts, minds, and spirits, so we may bask in the fullness of your glory. Amen.

**2 Thessalonians 2:1–5, 13–17** In a context in which the Roman kings would have spoken of themselves as gods, the author urges believers, oppressed by the empire at every turn, to remember who God is and not be influenced by propaganda. Appealing to their sense of chosen-ness and selection by God, the author offers the readers words of encouragement during difficult times.

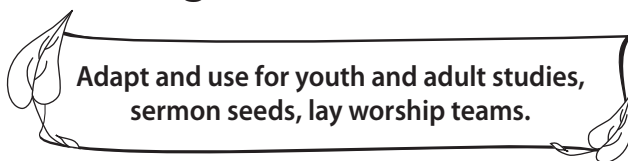
**Luke 20:27–38** Jesus has entered Jerusalem and in the final week before his crucifixion engages in a series of confrontations with religious authorities. In this passage, Jesus weighs in on an ongoing controversy between the Pharisees, who believe in resurrection, and the Sadducees, who do not. The Sadducees intend to trap Jesus by asking a question about Levirate marriage; a tradition meant to ensure the continuity of the family line and to protect vulnerable women from widowhood. Jesus demonstrates robust debating skills by supporting the idea of resurrection by quoting Moses, who spoke of the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob – three patriarchs who are all alive to God. In addition to articulating faith in resurrection, Jesus answers the Sadducees' underlying "family values" question by asserting that marriage is of concern on earth, and one's marital status does not define people in God's eyes.

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The remnant of exiles that returned to Judah wrestled with demoralization at the difficult prospect of rebuilding their homeland and religious centre. Jesus' contemporaries and early followers struggle with questions about life after death and wrestle with anxieties about the future. Today's passages subscribe to the importance of tradition, worship, and praise. Whether using, like the psalmist, a poetic form to inspire insight into God's grace, calling for a worship space in which the community can gather together, or following traditions that have been handed down in order to calm anxieties about the future, today's scriptures call God's people to centre themselves in worship and praise.



## Reflecting on the Word



### Connecting with life

Many people can relate to the experience of life moving so fast that it's challenging to pay attention to all that's happening.

- Name some of the things that prevent people from "realizing life" while they live it.
- What are some ways that could help you be more able to "realize life"?
- Take a moment to name some tangible blessings in your life.

### Scripture

**Haggai 1:15b—2:9** was written after the exiles had returned home. The returning exiles are disheartened by their inability to re-create the glory days of Solomon's temple. This is a solid story of encouragement of facing the task and trusting God into the future.

- What symbols in your community point to God's presence with you?
- How can a focus on the past impede our efforts to thrive in the present?
- What stories are being told in your community that are strong roots of faith and sign of God's presence for you?

**Psalms 145:1–5, 17–21** talks of God in great majestic tones.

- What part of your own story reflects the awe and majesty of God?
- Where in all of this do you experience the mercy and forgiveness of God?

Make a two-column list of action verbs ascribed to God and people (the psalmist and the community).

- Under the "God" column, explore in what ways you see, or do not see, God's activity in your community today.
- Under the "People" column, explore how you do or do not see these verbs put into action in your community of faith today.

**Luke 20:27–38** While the initial context of the gospel passage appears to be the desire for the Sadducees to engage Jesus in conversation about resurrection, the context of the other scriptures tend toward the presence of God in this world and the next.

- What does it mean to you to say that God is "God not of the dead, but of the living"? (Luke 20:38)

**2 Thessalonians 2:1–5, 13–17** offers encouragement and speaks of standing firm in Jesus during challenging moments.

- Where do you go for encouragement? To what or whom do you cling to in faith?
- What encouragement would you like to give your community?

### Connecting scripture and life

The writer of Psalm 145 used acrostic poetry form to spell out the greatness of God.

- What forms, structures, rituals, or traditions help you maintain your life of faith?
- What forms, structures, rituals, or traditions might you be interested in exploring as a means of enhancing your spiritual life?

## Focus for Worship, Learning, and Serving

From the very young to the most senior amongst us, many have experienced a God-presence in some form – whether they can name that experience as God or not. God is experienced in nature, art, songs, scripture, prayer, friends, and faithful people. The writer of Psalm 145 used acrostic poetry form to spell out the greatness of God, who is near to all. Traditions, rituals, and forms help people develop faithful habits. We learn how to pray and praise through reciting psalms, singing familiar hymns, and hearing the same stories and promises over and over. This does not

mean worship can never change and that congregations must follow the same liturgy and sing from the same hymnal they've always used. But it does mean that practices that allow opportunities for comfortable participation can allow for meaningful worship. Learned behaviours of prayer can sustain people undergoing difficult times.

What opportunities might you offer in worship, learning, and serving for your community to build spiritual practices to sustain them as they grow and are nurtured in faith?



# Praise God

## Prepare

NOTE: The following suggestions are mere starting points; adapt, delete, and add according to your local needs and context. If a community is gathered in person, they may speak the **bolded** lines. If worshippers are not all physically present, consider having a different individual say the bolded responses. Instructions are *italicized*.

- ❑ Recruit volunteers needed for worship.
- ❑ Choose an option for hearing Psalm 145:1–5, 17–21. For the Bible story, arrange for a storyteller to present “David’s Song of Praise” on p. 142 or “Praise God” in Exploring Our Faith at the end of this week’s materials. For the paraphrase, arrange for 14 voices.
- ❑ Bring items for setting the worship space.
- ❑ You might choose to print *Just as We Are One* on or in your bulletin (in the Images to Project and Print folder). For background to the art and artist, see “Connecting with the Art” on p. 8.
- ❑ Bring songs such as “God Is Our Shelter” (*Seasons Songbook, vol 8, #12 on Seasons Music CD, vol. 8*). Printed music and recording also available at *Seasons* MP3 Downloads, [www.seasonsonline.ca](http://www.seasonsonline.ca)).
- ❑ Set stations as described on pp. 143–144.



## Music Suggestions

### Fresh as the Morning

Shirley Erena Murray, Tony E. Alonso; *Seasons Songbook, vol. 8*

### God Is Our Shelter

Chris O'Hara; *Seasons Songbook, vol. 8*

### Let the People of God

Ken Medema; *Seasons Songbook, vol. 8*

### We Sing of Your Glory/*Tuya Es La Gloria*

Traditional; *Seasons Songbook, vol. 8*

### Forever I Will Sing

Michael Mangan; *Seasons Songbook, vol. 5*

### God Is the One We Trust

Maria Millward; *Seasons Songbook, vol. 5*

### Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

Henry van Dyke

### Now Thank We All Our God

Martin Rinkart



A chart that shows the licence holder(s) for each song in each of the 9 *Seasons of the Spirit* Music Volumes can be found at [www.seasonsonline.ca](http://www.seasonsonline.ca). Click on Library; Seasons Music Information. Please contact a licence holder for permission to duplicate.

## Gather

### Call to worship

Make a joyful noise all the earth.

**We are embraced by steadfast love and faithfulness!**

Make a joyful noise all the earth.

**God has done awe-inspiring things!**

Make a joyful noise all the earth.

**Let the waters roar, the mountains groan,  
the grasses and trees clap their hands!**

Make a joyful noise all the earth.

**Break forth into joyous song and sing praises!**

Come, let us worship.

### Opening prayer

God of the living, we thank you for your presence with us today.

We thank you for the ways you are with us as individuals.

*A time for silent reflection and thanksgiving.*

We thank you for the ways you are with us as a community.

*A time for silent reflection and thanksgiving.*

We thank you for the ways you are with all Creation.

*A time for silent reflection and thanksgiving.*

**We thank you, God. We thank you, God. We thank you,  
God. Amen.**

### Prayer of confession

God, we get caught up in the busyness of life, and we forget to notice:

**your presence, the wonders of your Creation, your blessings in our lives.**

God, we become focused on memories of the past, and we get distracted...

**from your presence, from the wonders of Creation, and your blessings in our lives.**

God, we find ourselves worried about the future, and we get distracted...

**from your presence, from the wonders of Creation, and your blessings in our lives.**



Forgive us, God. Help us to notice your presence. Help us to realize your goodness.  
Help us to remember how you guide us. Help us to trust you with our futures. Amen.

## Engage

### Opening the word

**Haggai 1:15b—2:9** The prophet Haggai was among the last prophets of Israel before a long period of silence, which was broken finally by John the baptizer. Haggai speaks to the people of Israel as they return from exile to the ruins of what used to be a magnificent home and temple. He urges God's people to take courage and rebuild – rebuild the temple and rebuild their lives. His words of comfort and consolation are full of the reassurance of the return of abundance and prosperity to God's people.

■ **What are the "ruins" of your world?**

■ **In what ways are you in need of courage to rebuild?**

**Psalm 145:1–5, 17–21** *the focus scripture for age-level materials in ENCORE*

Choose from the following.

**Bible story** Have a storyteller present the story "[David's Song of Praise](#)" on p. 142. Alternatively, for younger children, tell the story "[Praise God](#)" (in Exploring Our Faith at the end of this week's materials).

### Acrostic paraphrase

*Arrange for 14 voices to pick up the reading at each letter of the alphabet.*

Always I will champion God's name,  
Bless and praise God as I rise each day, who is so  
Colossal, vast, beyond my reach. Yet I will  
Disclose God's powerful feats as a small part of  
Each cycle of praise from generation to generation. On God's  
Fascinating industry I will reflect and study.  
God is honest and impartial in each holy pursuit. Within a  
Hair's breadth is God; close by to everyone who contacts  
God to reveal their essence authentically. God  
Implements and puts in motion the petitions of all who  
stand in awe,  
Justly listening to their lament is a catalyst to unchain  
them.

### Words of affirmation

Hear and receive this affirmation from God's words spoken by the prophet Haggai: "Take courage, all you people of the land... for I am with you. According to the promise that I made when you came out of Egypt, my spirit abides with you. Do not fear."

Kind and loving, God defends those who return God's

Love. But the nefarious and corrupt, God will shatter into pieces.

My lips will give voice in ceaseless adoration, testifying to my focus on God.

Now, and till the end of time, let the whole human race honour God's name.

**2 Thessalonians 2:1–5, 13–17** The writer of this letter, whether Paul or one of Paul's proteges, reminds the people of Thessalonica that they already know what they need to do – they have been taught well. They are encouraged not to be swayed by the powers of the empire that would demand they call the kings gods or be shaken by the threats surrounding them – to conform and give up their beliefs. They are encouraged to stand firm and hold fast to the traditions they were taught, in contrast to the ways of the world around them.

In many ways, our world, which is full of consumerism and consumption, also threatens us with new gods and traditions that call us away from what it means to be faithful. This text calls us to stay close to what we understand about the gospel. With the rules of love, compassion, justice, and truth being the traditions taught by Jesus, we are also called to hold fast to these – and not to cultural assumptions – as we begin to listen in new ways.

■ **What are the "gods" we worship today?**

■ **How are we pulled away from what we know to be true about our call as followers of Christ?**

■ **What are the ways we can stand firm and hold fast? What do we need to do this?**

**Luke 20:27–38** There is a powerful subtext in this story of a woman who has had to marry seven different men. It is likely, in that day, that none of them was a person with whom she had been "in love" in the ways we understand love in our cultures today. She would have been utterly vulnerable without the protections these marriages provided her but let us not ever imagine that she was able to do anything but endure such a reality. Her side of the story might provide a rich counter focus for today's service.





If gathering in person, invite children, young people, and all who wish to move to the stations.  
Others will remain seated for proclaiming the word. For those participating at home,  
you might encourage them to use materials that have been sent.

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## Respond

**Sing** or listen to a song such as “God Is Our Shelter” as people gather together again (*Seasons Songbook*, vol. 8, #12 on *Seasons Music CD*, vol. 8. Printed music and recording are also available at *Seasons* MP3 Downloads, [www.seasonsonline.ca](http://www.seasonsonline.ca)).

### Prayers of the people

Gracious and loving God, Creator and redeemer and giver of all good things,  
we come before you as we are.

**We acknowledge that sometimes we find it hard to feel thankful.**

**Sometimes pain or regret, fear, sadness or anger or anxiety seem to fill our hearts and leave no room for gratitude.**

So we come before you today asking for the gift of a grateful heart, for the ability to be cheerful givers,  
and for the comprehension of your blessings to fill our hearts.

**We pray your blessing on all those whom we love, on all those whom you love,**

**and in all the places of the world that need your peace.**

God, may we approach each moment of the day, each encounter with another, each opportunity that comes our way, with a spirit of love and power, peace and joy,

knowing that you have looked into our hearts, claimed us with your love and called us your own. Amen.

### Armistice Day/Remembrance Day/Veterans’ Day

*The following piece may be read to introduce a moment of silence, traditionally observed at 11 a.m. on November 11 in many nations, recalling the armistice that ended World War I. Some churches and communities use this time as a prayer for peace.*

Beyond words, beyond the battle, beyond the outcry,  
lies silence; for what words and what warring and what  
anger has words enough?

It is sacred, this silence; and holy, this remembering.

**For only silent remembering can carry enough pain and truth together to whisper again:**

**“It is enough.”**

### Prayer of dedication or offering prayer

O, merciful Creator,

we see your hand open wide to satisfy the need of every living creature.

Create in us thankful hearts for all your loving providence.

Help us be faithful stewards of the gifts you have given us to share your love throughout the world. Amen.

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## Bless

Go, and tell your story. Go, and listen to the untold story.  
And go, knowing that you are part of God’s great story of love and compassion on Earth. Go in peace.

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## Special Day Commentary

### November 11 – Armistice Day/Remembrance Day/ Veterans’ Day

At the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month in 1918, the armistice – laying down of arms – was signed to end the first World War. Many nations continue to call this Armistice Day, while others name it Remembrance Day or Veterans’ Day, recalling the sacrifice made by women and men in both World War I – “the war to end all wars” – and the many wars that have taken place since.



# Write Your Own Psalm

by Ray McInnis

In the challenging world of the 21st century, a remedy for transforming the bleakness of the weekly news may be to sit right down and write yourself a new psalm to God. Psalms help us directly express our longing for God. They help us bring our thanks, praise, laments, confession, trust, and vision to the Holy One.

But you might ask, how do I write a new psalm? Where do I begin?

A good place to start is by opening your Bible and turning to Psalm 136. This Hebrew psalm begins:

Give thanks to the Holy One who is so good,

*God's faithful love endures forever.*

Give thanks to the God of gods,

*God's faithful love endures forever.*

Give thanks to the Sovereign of sovereigns,

*God's faithful love endures forever.*

who alone does great wonders;

*God's faithful love endures forever.*

In this psalm, the writer recounts the Hebrew liberation from captivity in Egypt, punctuating the remembrance with "God's faithful love endures forever." By repeating this refrain, the writer uses a poetic device of repetition.

In other psalms where repetition occurs, the psalmist may use a phrase on every other line or use a phrase or a word frequently. In Psalm 148, the writer uses variations with the word praise twelve times for emphasis.

When a writer uses repetition in a hymn, prayer, or new psalm, anyone can join in and say the phrase aloud. Even without a printed copy, it becomes clear very quickly what the words are for the repeating line.

Writing a new psalm can help us access and express our contemporary thoughts and feelings and bring them before God. By writing down the words, we move from the randomness of thoughts that swim in and out of our minds to the stillness of offering directly to God what is on our hearts.

## To write your own psalm

Choose a phrase that is important to you. It may be a word of comfort, wisdom, inspiration, motivation, healing, compassion, justice, God's love or something else. In choosing your phrase, look in the Psalms, another book of scripture, a line from a chorus or verse in your hymnbook, or some other inspirational writing that has helped you in your faith journey.

Take a sheet of paper and write down the phrase you have selected four or five times. (*In the example below, I wrote "To You, my strong One, I return" from Psalm 59 as a response on lines 2, 4, 6, and 8 – although you can always write more lines.*)

Now take a moment to be still in the presence of God.

Next, on a separate sheet of paper, brainstorm as many lines as possible that would come before or after the phrase you have chosen to be the key repeating line in your new psalm. Take at least five minutes to get these out on paper. Then, from that list, circle the lines you like the most.

Arrange these on the blank lines on the other page where you have entered your repeating phrase.

Read your psalm through, aloud. Make any changes to the wording so that you are satisfied with the flow. Offer your new psalm to God.

## A sample psalm:

When I am in trouble,

*To You, my strong One, I return.*

When I lose my way,

*To You, my strong One, I return.*

When I feel alone,

*To You, my strong One, I return.*

When I think I don't need You,

*To You, my strong One, I return.*

Psalms can be personal and private, or community activities with people working on lines together or each person contributing a line. The point is to express honestly and openly our feelings to God, as did the psalm writers of the Bible.

*Ray McGinnis is the author of Writing the Sacred: A Psalm-Inspired Path to Appreciating and Writing Sacred Poetry (Northstone, 2005) and Unanswered Questions: What the September Eleventh Families Asked and the 9/11 Commission Ignored. Living in Vancouver, Canada, he worships at Canadian Memorial United Church.*



# David's Song of Praise

Based on Psalm 104:17–21

When David was a boy, he spent many hours in the fields with his sheep. He would often take his harp along to play a simple melody or make up a song while he sat in the fields. As he got older, he began to appreciate the beauty and the balance of the world around him.

One day, David awoke early and decided to grab his harp and take a walk as the sun came up. The pink clouds chased away the darkness and chill, and the nighttime insects quieted down as the daytime insects got busy for work. David's heart was filled with such peace and joy, seeing how creation weaved together to create a perfect and divine balance.

As the last bit of the sun shimmered up from the horizon, David began to play a song on his harp and sing a prayer to God. He sang:

Creator God, how great you are! You grow the tender grass to feed the cattle. You give us fruits, vegetables, and grains to cultivate, wine to share and gladden our hearts, bread to eat and strengthen us, even oil to lotion our skin.

You planted the cedar trees, grew them tall and strong, and now the birds can build nests safely in their branches. Your high mountains are pastures for the wild goats, and even the rock-badgers find a home burrowing in the boulders there.

You gave us the moon, which marks the months and the sun, which marks the days. At night the young lions roar. At dawn, they slink back to their dens to rest as we go off to work until the evening shadows fall once more.

O God, what a variety you have made in all your wisdom! Earth is full of your riches.

A recording of this story is available in MP3 format in the Audio Stories folder.



## Bible story

### Materials

- Basic supplies
- Paper or drawing pads
- Recording of today's story "[David's Song of Praise](#)"
- Alternatively, arrange for a storyteller to present the story

## The practice of storytelling

### Directions

1. Listen to the story "David's Song of Praise."
2. Write or draw your reflection on this psalm. What words stand out for you? What images come to mind when you hear today's psalm?

**Younger children** What do you think it means to praise God and say that God is kind and fair? Use the art supplies to draw or write about the good things God does.





## Living, Learning, Growing as Disciples

The following stations might be set up around your worship space, or in other places around the church, in your home, or outdoors. Choose one or more practices, depending on your space and numbers. Display the directions for all to see onscreen or in person. Adapt stations for use when physically distancing and above all, follow the safe practices of your congregation and local health officials.

**For your convenience, directions are formatted for printing and available in the Stations folder.**

### Health and Safety Practices



**Basic supplies** pens, pencils, markers, crayons, white glue/glue sticks, scissors, hand sanitizer, wipes placed in a basket or bin, two containers marked “clean” and “used”



**Setting the space** Utilize large spaces where people can maintain a safe physical distance. Spread out chairs around a large table or use tape to mark off the space around stand alone chairs.



**Keep it clean** Wipe down and disinfect places used for stations. Provide enough arts and crafts supplies to reduce sharing and mark containers “clean” and “used.” Remind people to use hand sanitizer as they begin and as they end stations.

### Response centre

#### Materials

- Basic supplies
- Variety of art and craft materials



**Suitable for all ages**

#### The practice of creativity

##### Directions

1. The writer of Psalm 145 reminds us that we can praise God and say thanks to God each day.
2. Use the craft materials to make a symbol that will remind you to celebrate God’s amazing work. Or create a symbol that will remind you to praise God every day.

### Stain glass window

#### Materials

- Basic supplies
- Fine-point markers
- White paper
- Metal spoons
- List with different names for God (such as Creator, Refuge, Shepherd, Almighty, Love)

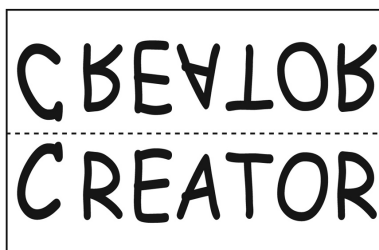


**Suitable for all ages working together**

#### The practice of creativity

##### Directions

1. Look at the list of names for God. Add to the list if you have other ideas.
2. Take a sheet of paper, a pencil, and a dark crayon.
3. Fold the paper in half, landscape orientation (right side longest edge meeting left side longest edge). Unfold the paper. Use the fold as the line where you write or print the name GOD or another name for God. Make the letters large enough almost to fill one side of the folded page. (See illustration.)
4. Trace over pencil lettering firmly with a crayon. Fold the paper. The crayon name is now on the inside of the folded paper. Take a spoon and rub across the crayon side of the paper. Push firmly as you rub back and forth.
5. Open the paper. There will be a mirror image of the name on the other side of the fold. Take the crayon and trace over this mirror transfer. (See illustration.)
6. Now for some further creativity! Look at your design and imagine a stained glass window pane. Add different shaped sections that will be filled in with markers to make a unique work of art surrounding God’s holy name. The finished “window” will be filled with hues and designs that hide or accent the name of God.



## Questions for God

### Materials

- Basic supplies
- *Children's Letters to God* by Stuart Hample
- Newsprint
- Sheets of copy paper



**Suitable for ages 6–adult  
working together**

## The practice of bringing our questions

### Directions

This week's gospel passage, Luke 20:27–38, is an example of human ponderings.

1. We all have questions about God and questions we would like to ask God. Some questions are frivolous; others are quite serious. Brainstorm questions for God. List on newsprint.
2. Our questions may hold clues to how we imagine God. Is God a judge? a referee? a healer? a Santa? a teacher? When you pose your questions to God, with whom are you talking?
3. **Option:** Read selected entries from the book *Children's Letters to God*. Who is God to some of these letter writers?
4. You might write short letters to God and compile your own "Letters to God" booklet.
5. Conclude your time at this station with this prayer.

*Holy One, you who made us and are with us, and within us, we have many questions about life, death, and life beyond death. Help us accept that every question need not have an answer. What a relief! Amen.*

## Alphabet psalm

### Materials

- Basic supplies
- Sheets of paper
- Personal journals (optional)



**Suitable for  
ages 6–adult**

## The practice of praise

### Directions

1. Read aloud Psalm 145:1–5, 17–21. Keep in mind that this psalm is an acrostic poem in the original Hebrew – each verse begins with a letter of the Hebrew alphabet.
2. Create your own praise acrostic. Choose a word that means "praise" to you – or even the word praise itself. Next, write a short phrase or sentence that begins with letters in your word:

J umping with happiness at sunny weather

O

Y

3. Write your alphabet psalm on paper or in your journal.

*The article "Connecting with the Art" on page 8 provides background to this season's posters and art engagement ideas for individuals and groups. You might add an Art station and select one of the art engagement ideas.*



Story and activities for the very young to use in church or at home.

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## Praise God

A story based on Psalm 145:1–5, 17–21

In the morning, I open up my eyes,  
I stretch my arms and legs, and I say,

**"Every day in every way, I love you, God!"**

I button my buttons, zip up my zippers,  
put on my socks and shoes.

I wash my face and brush my teeth,  
and then I say,

**"Every day in every way, I love you, God!"**

Just before I eat my food,  
at breakfast, lunch, and dinner,  
I bow my head and say,

**"Every day in every way, I love you, God!"**

I like to play with all my toys.

I like to play with other girls and boys.

We run and jump and laugh and play,  
and when we stop to rest, we say,

**"Every day in every way, I love you, God!"**

The sun has set, and I climb into my bed.

When my bedtime prayers are said,

I say,

**"Every day in every way, I love you, God!"**

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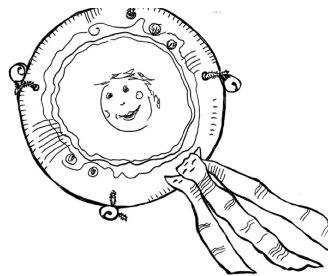
## Tambourine

Playing a musical instrument is one way we can say  
how much we love God.

**You will need** a thick paper plate; markers, or crayons,  
or pencils; crepe paper streamers; 4 jingle bells, hole  
punch, 4 pipe cleaners or lengths of yarn or ribbon;  
stapler.

### Instructions

- Decorate your paper plate.
- Punch holes at the top, bottom and middle of the two sides around the edges of the plate about 1.5cm/0.5 in from the edge.
- Attach bells using pipe cleaners, yarn, or ribbon.
- Thread pipe cleaners through the holes of your plate and twist to secure.
- Cut lengths of crepe paper streamers and staple a bunch to the bottom of the paper plate.
- Dance while shaking the tambourine and saying, "Praise God."



It is good to tell about all the good things God has done for us. Sometimes we sing and play instruments to tell about God's love.

Connect the dots for the instruments.

Use markers to decorate the picture of children singing about God's love.

