

## Family Worship Guide June 11, 2017

### Preparation for Worship

Gather in a quiet place, free of distraction (put silenced cellphones in another room)

Decide who will lead the various parts. A family worship experience should involve everyone, especially children! This Family Worship Guide can be adapted by families of 1 or 2 people. Here are the parts:

- Reading the Call to Worship
- Reading the Scripture
- Reading the Pastor's Devotional and Our Offering to God sections
- Leading the Prayer (your own words, from notes)
- Playing the songs (if you use them) on a laptop, tablet, or phone (Just listen to the songs if you prefer not to sing. You can copy and paste the links or find them with Google(skip the commercials!))

Discuss who and what you should include in your prayer. In addition to people within the church family, also discuss friends, co-workers, and neighbors for whom you want to pray. Consider what local, national, or international concern you should include (Whoever is to lead the prayer can take notes—it's OK to look at notes when praying). A simple way to pray is to go by ACTS:

**Adoration:** giving God praise by naming God's beautiful qualities (Almighty, loving, etc.)

**Confession:** pausing for a minute for everyone to acknowledge their sin silently & privately

**Thanksgiving:** naming specific ways God has provided for needs or has answered prayers

**Supplication:** ask God to help or provide for specific people or situations

### Suggested Order of Worship

Call to Worship    **Psalm 98**

Song of Praise Wonderful, Merciful, Savior

[m.youtube.com/watch?v=9zH-jyiLOR4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9zH-jyiLOR4)

Scripture: **Acts 2:36-47**

Pastor's Devotional (Below)

Our Offering to God

When we hear the word “offering,” we naturally think of giving money to finance God’s work. We also think of the time that we volunteer to bless other people. Yet our “offering” also includes how we choose to live as “sent people” in the places where we live, work, and play.

- Short of living as a Christian commune, how could the people of our church show greater devotion to Christ and share more significantly?
- How would this be an attractive sign of Resurrection power?

Prayer (from your notes)

Song of Faith (optional) Blessed Be The Tie That Binds

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=P6IzTJfWdmk>

Pastor's Devotional

**Acts 2:42-47**

The Book of Acts is filled with one miracle after another—all after Jesus put the church in charge of advancing God’s Kingdom. Ten days after the Ascension, the Spirit-powered sign of miraculous speech was followed by Simon Peter’s compelling sermon, and the church gaining 3000 converts in a single day (2:41). Amazing growth when we consider that after three years of ministry, when Jesus ascended the whole church of Jesus Christ only numbered about 500 disciples (I erred last Sunday in stating that there were only 100 believers—1 Corinthians 15:6 says that there were 500 witnesses to Jesus’ resurrection prior to Pentecost—I looked it up!)

Nonetheless, to grow from 500 to 3000 persons overnight was a remarkable challenge for the early church. As we read through the next chapters in Acts, we’ll discover that the Holy Spirit continues to move powerfully among the apostles and their new disciples. Though many of the

new converts were Jewish pilgrims who came to the Pentecost festival from the far-away places listed in 22:8-11, many of them did not rush home. Instead, they lingered to relish the miracle of Christian community and devote themselves to becoming faithful disciples of Jesus Christ.

Verse 42 says the new disciples devoted themselves to four aspects of Christian community:

1. "Devoted to the apostles' teaching," evidenced by their daily meetings in the Temple courts, where the apostles taught them about Jesus and his teachings
2. "Devoted to fellowship;" by which they meant *koinonia* (the Greek word for radical sharing, from which the word "commune" is derived). Verse 45 tells us that "all believers were together and had everything in common; selling their possessions and good, they gave to anyone as he had need."
3. "Devoted to the breaking of bread," with verse 46 giving the detail that "they broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts."
4. "Devoted to prayer" (when we read 4:23-31 in a few days we'll marvel at their power manifested in their prayer gatherings).

No wonder that the chapter ends with the early church "enjoying the favor of all the people; and the Lord added to their number daily those were being saved." Christian community was attractive!

This intense level of fervor did not continue indefinitely. In Paul's letters, in Hebrews, and in the Book of Revelation, believers were challenged to regain this devotion. Over the centuries, some Christians have experimented with how to share their lives and possessions more radically. When I was in seminary, I spent a week at a Christian commune in south Georgia, appropriately called *Koinonia*. For 7 years 50 residents have farmed 1500 acres together, its adults receiving the same compensation for their work. Families live in separate houses. While small in size, many thousands have been inspired to strive to serve Jesus by sharing more of themselves and their money.

Recently Lynn and I had a conversation about loaning a car to someone while we were on vacation. I was a little apprehensive. We had to talk through our concerns about risks and our expectations, and also check with

the insurance company. We decided that God wanted us to loan it. As it turned out, our vehicle wasn't needed, but I was glad that we at least had the conversation.