



# **NE MN Synod Discipleship Challenge:**

## **KNOW...BE...TELL the Story!**

### **February 2015 Family Discussion Guide: WORSHIP**

#### **KNOW the Story: How is the faith practice “worship” part of God’s Story?**

Read 1 Chronicles 16:28-30a:

*“Ascribe to the Lord, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the Lord glory and strength! Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name; bring an offering and come before him! Worship the Lord in the splendor of holiness; tremble before him, all the earth.”*

Worship by definition means to “to bow down” – “to give worth.” Worship is one way we show honor to and love for God. Worship is a way we take time to be in God’s presence and focus on our relationship with God. There are examples of God’s people worshipping God throughout both the Old and New Testament. There are commands to worship and instructions on how to worship throughout our Biblical story.

As God’s disciples we can worship God on our own, but we are also called to come together as the family of God to worship.

Worship usually includes four things: a chance to gather, an opportunity to hear God’s Word, a chance to respond to and celebrate God’s Word, and a call/blessing that sends us out into the world to live out our faith. In worship we: GATHER, HEAR, CELEBRATE, and SEND.

As Christian families, we make a commitment to attend worship within our faith community. We also seek out opportunities to worship as a family in our homes and throughout our daily lives.

#### **BE the Story: *How has the faith practice “worship” been part of my Story, my faith journey?***

Discuss:

How do you worship as a family? Do you attend worship services at your church together? Why or why not?

Do you ever worship together beyond the worship service at your church? How?

Why do you think worship is important? What makes you want to worship? What keeps you from worship?

In many of the Biblical stories, people create a worship space or an altar to remind them to praise and honor God. While some Bible stories involve the elaborate creation of a tabernacle, other stories recount the building of an altar with ordinary rocks stacked together. Sometimes we need a physical reminder to worship and a defined space to gather around and make time for worship as a family.

Find a shoebox. As a family, assemble small objects to build a “worship space/altar.” All items must fit in the shoebox. Maybe you find rocks, maybe you include a candle or small cross.

Once your items are selected, choose a family member to be responsible for picking the space and time for a family worship. Maybe they decide it will be after dinner the next day or maybe they decide you will worship in the car on the way home from school. Maybe the space they choose is the dining room table, maybe they set up in the middle of the big bed, maybe outside under a tree. We can worship God anywhere. They should then set up the items in the shoe box at the time and in the space they decided. Then they should gather everyone around that space.

At that time and in that space, take part in a short worship together.

## **FAMILY WORSHIP TIME:**

### **GATHER:**

Share the peace with each other –

- Create a special handshake
- Give a high 5
- Share a group hug
- Hold hands and pass a squeeze around the circle

Prepare your heart for worship-

- Hold your hands in the shape of a heart (curl the fingers on both hands and put your hands together to make an “m” shape – then touch your thumbs together)
- You may choose to sing a song together. You could sing this short chorus to the tune of “Mary has a Little Lamb” – “Prepare our hearts to worship you, worship you, worship you. Prepare our hearts to worship you in all we say and do.”
- Take one minute to be totally still and quiet, focusing on your heart shaped hands. Remember God’s love for you, give thanks, and ask God to help you open your heart to God’s presence in this worship time.

Confession and Forgiveness –

- Hold your heart shaped hands to your mouth and consider or whisper anything you would like to confess and ask God’s forgiveness for.
- Open your hands – God has let go of your sins – reach out to the person on each side of you and use your thumb to make the sign of the cross on their forehead and saying “You are forgiven and you are loved.”

Prayer –

- Invite someone in your family to say a quick prayer thanking God for the day and the opportunity to be together in worship.

## **HEAR GOD'S WORD:**

Select a Psalm –

- Divide into two groups and take turns reading every other verse.

Select a Bible story from a Children's Bible –

- Read/Act out the Bible story together as a family.
- Ask: If you were the Pastor today, what is one thing you would tell people about this story? What do you think is something God is saying to us in this Bible story? After reading this story, what do we need to thank God for?

## **CELEBRATE THE WORD:**

Sing a Song –

- Is there a song you all know that you can sing together? Maybe you always sing "Jesus Loves Me" or this short chorus to the tune of "Mary Had a Little Lamb". "Thank you my God for this day, for this day, for this day. Thank you my God for this day, we worship and we praise." Maybe the scripture reading makes you think of a song you would like to sing.

Take an offering –

- Use your shoebox – invite every member to put in an offering in the shoebox as a way to worship God.
  - Maybe you each take a moment to lay your hands in the box and remember you are offering your hands back to God for God's work this day.
  - Maybe you decide you will collect coins for World Hunger.
  - Maybe your offering involves taking a piece of paper and writing a word of praise to God and putting those in the shoebox.

Pray –

- Give everyone a chance to lift up their prayer to God. This can be as simple as asking: What are you thankful for? What do you need help with? Who else would you like to pray for? Give everyone a chance to share and then simply say "Amen." God has heard your prayers.

Pray The Lord's Prayer together.

## **SEND:**

Bless each other –

- One person should say "Go in peace" and take someone's right hand in their right hand. Then they say "Serve the Lord" and take the same person's left hand in their left hand. Their partner then responds "Thanks be to God" and they should both throw their hands up in the air. Take time to do this with everyone in your family.

Box up your altar and choose the next family member who will select a time and space to set up the altar area for your next worship together.

Discuss:

What did you like about worshipping together as a family? What was hard?

How does it feel to make time and space to "give worth to", honor and praise God?

**TELL the Story: *How can I share this faith practice “worship” so it can be part of my neighbor’s story?***

Take your shoebox with you on the road. You can set up an altar and worship space wherever you are. Maybe your next “worship” takes place with an extended family member or friend. If you are unable to attend Sunday worship within your community – gather a community around your shoebox worship. Do you have hockey or dance Sunday morning? Set your altar up in your hotel room. Invite your teammates to join you. Maybe someone has something they want to add to your shoebox for your next worship.

Take time to ask a friend if they worship? Why or why not? Is the way they worship similar to the way you worship? What are some of the similarities and differences?