



YOUTH WORSHIP

This lesson provides an outline for designing a youth worship service.

ENHANCER OF JOY

Sacred Narrative

LESSON DEVELOPED BY

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GOAL

Parts of Our Story

TIPS TO PREPARE

- Gather student leaders for a planning session.
- Ask one each to reflect on one of the questions in the activity - might they be willing to expand and speak for 2-3 minutes about their question?
- Work with them on their reflection.
- Work with any student musicians to choose a few songs, or even one to teach the group and sing together.
- Ask members to write/read opening/closing prayers, scripture.
- Ask leaders to help serve communion.

MATERIALS CHECKLIST

- Fishing line
 - 5"x5" aluminum foil squares (roughly)
 - Sharpie markers
 - Mini clothes pins
 - Newsprint paper with reflection questions
 - Votive Candles
 - Communion Elements
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SETTING THE ATMOSPHERE

- Prepare your worship space by stringing the fishing line above the heads of the congregation (this may require small hooks), with the ability to lower the lines.
 - Set up three stations around the room with enough sharpie markers for each student and enough tinfoil squares for each student to have 1-2 at each station.
 - Write the reflection questions on large newsprint at each station so students can move into personal space and see what is asked.
 - Have piles of the mini clothes pins available.
 - Use votive candles and lower lighting to create a relaxed environment.
 - Arrange communion materials.
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SCRIPTURE FOCUS

Hebrews 12:1

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before



US,

Purpose

Too often our young people do not see themselves reflected in the style, topics, and community of our congregational worship. While integrating them into the body of our faith communities continues to be a goal, so too is creating a space for them to worship in ways that reflect their dynamic community.

Youth Worship allows for students to help plan, lead, and fully participate in worship. This worship focuses on having students name and see their cloud of witnesses and place themselves within the Greater Story.

Objectives

Students will engage in worship tuned to the interests, needs, and abilities of young adults.

Student leaders will engage in planning of worship.

Students will engage in leadership of liturgical elements.

Students will think about and respond to questions about their participation in the sacred narrative.

Further Study

UCC – consider reading or sharing the UCC Statement of Faith. Are there phrases your students might find particularly resonant? For more reading on the statement and ideas of sacred narrative, God’s Greater story/our Lesser story, consider reading *Confessing Our Faith* by Roger L. Shinn.

Amanda Hontz Drury, *Saying is Believing: The Necessity of Testimony in Adolescent Spiritual Development*, (InterVarsity Press, 2015). For the importance of sacred narrative and how to work adolescent storytelling into the life of your faith community.

Gather

Gather [5 minutes]



Greeting One Another:

- The group will gather in a space adjacent to the worship space.
- Have adult or student leaders welcome each student as they arrive.
- If it is early in the year, consider having people wear name tags.

Introducing the Session:

- Once amassed, have the group form a circle to shape the worship ahead.
- Share the theme of sacred narrative, the idea of placing ourselves within God's story and seeing how we are connected to others in our faith.
- Have students set an intention for the evening and perhaps light a votive in silence to place somewhere in the worship space.
- Move into the worship space with the music leaders in place to welcome students with an opening song.

Engage

Engage [50 minutes]

Prayer of Invocation

Scripture Reading

Student Reflection(s)

Leaders Reflection and instruction for the activity. Share the questions and elaborate as necessary.

(Have music (contemplative/familiar/calming) playing during the activity. But encourage students to stay as silent as possible)

The group activity is for each student to rotate as they are ready from table to table, answer each of the following questions on their foil. Students should feel free to do more than one response at each table. Once they have recorded their responses they can clip their foil to the lowered fishing line with the mini clothes pins. All answers are anonymous and will be added to the chorus of the ages as such.

Station 1: [side one] Who is someone who early on in your faith journey taught/mentored you?

[side two] What did you take away from that person?

Station 2: [side one] Who is someone you would turn to with doubts or questions about your faith?



[side two] What might you ask them?

Station 3: [side one] Who is someone you want to teach something about God?

[side two] What would you teach them?

As students finish they can return to their seats. Have other leaders pull the fishing line tight to raise the foil responses up over the heads of the congregation. Secure in place.

Read the scripture again as students gaze up at the tinkling shimmering names and faith suspended above them. Recap the wonder and power of being surrounded by a cloud of witnesses.

Worship song

Communion and The Lord's Prayer

Closing Song

Send Forth

Send Forth [5 minutes]

- Announcements/reminders (if needed)
- Offer a closing prayer