Shaping a Culture of
Spiritual Formation

THE WAY WE WORSHIP



"Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks. God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in the Spirit and in truth."
– John 4:23-24

Worship can happen anywhere! Every place can be a sacred space where we pause with an openness to recognize God's love. Worship is one way God meets the gathered community as we sing, pray, listen to scripture, share Holy Communion and head back into the world to love our neighbors. This doesn't always happen in a sanctuary. Even our homes and cars can become a sacred space to worship God.

Are we worshipping the golden calf? In Exodus, we read about the Israelites, who have been enslaved by the Pharaoh for hundreds of years, are finally freed with the help of Moses. The people are quite vulnerable as they are still figuring out what is next as a freed people. While in the wilderness, Moses leaves the people and goes up Mount Sinai to talk with God. While their leader is away the Israelites think Moses might not come back and they begin to freak out. So, they gather all the gold jewelry, melt it down and build a statue they can worship. When Moses comes back down the mountain with the commandments, with instructions about how they will live life together, he finds the people have become completely oriented away from worshipping YHWH. Sometimes, we too can turn away from God as the central focus in life and worship other people, stuff, media, etc.

Discuss: What have you turned into a "golden calf" in your life?

Let's explore worship together!

Worship is mostly thought about as what we do together on Sunday mornings in our church buildings. In the Lutheran Christian experience, as with many other traditions, worship is practiced in four parts:

1. Gathering - The community comes together in prayer and song.
2. Word - Scripture is read; preaching and music proclaim the gospel.
3. Meal - Holy Communion is shared together at Christ's table.
4. Sending - The gathered community is sent out to love our neighbors.

Yet, worship doesn't always happen in a church building or exactly like this. Worship is about honoring God. Some of the most transformative worship experiences can be at camp, in online community, and around the kitchen table in our homes.

The beauty of worship in a congregation's sanctuary, with the gathered community, means the space itself can help us feel God's presence that is truly with us everywhere.

Discuss:
+ What part of worship speaks to your heart?
+ Share about a transformative worship you have experienced.

PLAN THANKSGIVING WORSHIP



Creating space to honor God is something you can do at any point and in any place. Jesus tells us to worship God in the Spirit and in truth. Plan a short worship service for your Thanksgiving!

Supplies to Gather: Bible, cross, candle for the center of your table, and other faith symbols you would like to add.

OUTLINE:
INVITE - One person lights the candle and says, "We begin in the name of the Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer."
SHARE - Each person shares a high or low from their week (something that was great and something that was hard).
READ - Together read Philippians 1:3-6.*
TALK - Discuss what you are thankful for in each other.
PRAY - Pray for each other's highs and lows.
SEND - Together say: "Go from here to love God with everything and love your neighbors everywhere" and blow out the candle.

**The Apostle Paul helped start many of the first churches after Jesus' death and resurrection. To help these new churches, Paul wrote them letters to give advice and encourage them. Philippians is Paul's letter to the church in Philippi.*

This worship outline is an adaption of Faith5 daily devotions.

The Disclaimer:

Worship should come from a joyful place inside of us. No need to make it perfect, it won't be. No need to fake it if you are not feeling the joy in the moment. Be open to what God is doing in the midst of your time together. We wait upon the Lord together.