



GOD WITH US

# Family Worship

Creative  
Communications  
Community  
Sample





# Family Worship

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# Family Worship

## ABOUT THE SERIES

Help families celebrate the birth of Jesus, God with us, as you use this God With Us Family Advent Worship Series. Each week family members of all generations will come together to worship in an informal setting. We will learn that in Jesus, God is with us as our Potter, our Shepherd, our Living Branch and our Guide. The order of service each week includes the lighting of the Advent wreath, hymns, special responses for children, prayers, a message for children and adults, a family craft project and discussion questions for a family conversation.

**Week 1: Our Potter** (Isaiah 64:8-9): God is with us as our Potter, and we are the clay. Through faith in Jesus, we are formed as a new creation as God shapes us according to his will. Families will use air-dried clay to make a Christmas ornament.

**Week 2: Our Shepherd** (Isaiah 40:10-11): God is with us as our Shepherd. Jesus our Good Shepherd came to lay down his life and rise from the dead to bring us forgiveness and eternal life. Families will create paper and cotton ball sheep.

**Week 3: Our Living Branch** (Isaiah 11:1-2): God is with us as our Living Branch. Jesus, a shoot from the stump of Jesse, was born into the family tree of King David. By faith we are the branches, and Jesus is our true Vine. Families will plant and grow a little Bethlehem field from grass seed.

**Week 4: Our Guide** (Isaiah 2:3, 5): God is with us as our Guide. He leads us according to his Word. Jesus is our Way back to God, our Way to eternal life. Families will create Bible bookmarks to keep for themselves or to give as gifts.



# Family Worship

## NEWSLETTER/BULLETIN NOTICES

### SERVICE ONE NEWSLETTER NOTICE

Everyone is invited to attend our Family Advent worship! Some parts of these special Advent services are written especially for children, but we are all children of God, who was born among us and slept wrapped in swaddling cloths in a manger in Bethlehem. Jesus is Emmanuel, a name that means “God with us.” In our first service we will learn that God is with us as our Potter, and we are the clay. As our Advent craft, we will make Christmas ornaments from air-dried clay.

### SERVICE ONE BULLETIN NOTICE

Today we have come together to worship Jesus our Savior. He is Emmanuel, a name that means “God with us.” In this first Advent service we will learn that God is with us as our Potter, and we are the clay. For an Advent craft project, we will make Christmas ornaments from air-dried clay.



# Family Worship

## NEWSLETTER/BULLETIN NOTICES

### SERVICE TWO NEWSLETTER NOTICE

Everyone is invited to attend our Family Advent worship! Some parts of these special Advent services are written especially for children, but we are all children of God, who was born among us and slept wrapped in swaddling cloths in a manger in Bethlehem. Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us. In our second Advent service we will learn that God is with us as our Shepherd, who carries us close to his heart. As our Advent craft, we will make paper and cotton ball sheep.

### SERVICE TWO BULLETIN NOTICE

Today we have gathered to worship Jesus our Savior. He is Emmanuel, God with us. In our second Advent service we will learn that God is with us as our Shepherd, who carries us, his precious sheep, close to his heart. For our Advent craft project, we will make paper and cotton ball sheep.



# Family Worship

## NEWSLETTER/BULLETIN NOTICES

### SERVICE THREE NEWSLETTER NOTICE

Everyone is welcome at our Family Advent worship! Some parts of these special Advent services are written especially for children, but we are all children of God, who was born among us and slept wrapped in swaddling cloths in a manger in Bethlehem. Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us. In our third Advent service we will learn that God is with us as our Living Branch, who died and rose to give us forgiveness and eternal life. As our Advent craft, we will plant and grow a little Bethlehem field from seed.

### SERVICE THREE BULLETIN NOTICE

Today we have come together to worship Jesus our Savior. He is Emmanuel, God with us. In our third Advent service we will learn that God is with us as our Living Branch, who died and rose to win forgiveness and eternal life for us. We live joined to him by faith. For our Advent craft project, we will plant and grow a little Bethlehem field from seed.



# Family Worship

## NEWSLETTER/BULLETIN NOTICES

### SERVICE FOUR NEWSLETTER NOTICE

You are invited to attend our fourth Family Advent worship! Some parts of these special Advent services are written especially for children, but we are all children of God, who was born among us and slept wrapped in swaddling cloths in a manger in Bethlehem. Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us. In the fourth Advent service we will learn that God is with us as our Guide, who leads us according to his Word. As our Advent craft, we will make Bible bookmarks to use or give as gifts.

### SERVICE FOUR BULLETIN NOTICE

We are preparing to celebrate the birth of our Savior, and today we have come together to worship him. He is Emmanuel, God with us. In our fourth Advent service we will learn that God is with us as our Guide, who leads us according to his Word. For our Advent craft project, we will make Bible bookmarks to use or give as gifts.





# Family Worship

## HOW TO USE THE SERIES

### WORSHIP PLANNING

**Advent Praise:** Before the worship begins, enjoy an Advent sing-a-long. Ask children and adults to suggest favorite Advent and Christmas hymns. Sing one verse of each song. If a suggested song is one that will be used in the service, the congregation will have a practice session!

**Invocation:** We begin our worship in the name of the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who created and redeemed us and who makes us his holy people.

**Lighting the Advent Wreath:** The five candles on the Advent wreath, three purple or blue, one pink or rose and one white, represent the rising light, as we prepare to celebrate the birth of Jesus, the Light of the world. The pink candle, a sign of joy and anticipation, is lit on the third Sunday in Advent. The white Christ candle, along with the four weekly candles, is lit on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

**Confession and Absolution:** Advent is a season of joy, but also a time of repentance. We confess our sins, admitting that we need the Savior who was born for us.



**Sentences for Young Children:** This short, rhyming echo pantomime expresses the worship theme for children (and adults!). The leader says the words line by line and performs the motions that go with each line. The children and adults echo the leader, repeating the words and copying the motions.

**Scripture Readings:** Brief readings from the Old Testament book of Isaiah and from the Gospels express the theme for the day.

**Message:** The message is an object lesson about the worship theme for the children of God of all ages, toddlers to adults.

**Family Advent Craft:** Individuals and families work together to create a simple project based on the week's theme. If your worship setting does not allow space for such activities, instructions and supplies for the project can be sent home with the participants. If the projects are done at home, participants may wish to bring their completed crafts to share at the service the following week.

**Family Advent Conversation:** While they work on their craft projects, individuals and family members discuss questions based on the theme for the week. A handout with the discussion questions can also be sent home at the end of the service.

**Offering Prayer:** After the offerings have been brought forward, everyone participates in a simple echo pantomime prayer. The leader says the words line by line and performs the motions that go with each line. The children and adults echo the leader, repeating the words and copying the motions.

**Benediction:** At the close of worship, we leave with the blessing of God, who is with us in Christ Jesus.

## VOLUNTEERS

Work ahead of time with volunteers to gather craft materials each week, set up paper-covered tables in the worship space and set out supplies for each table. Volunteers should also be available to help participants during the craft activity and to clean up after the service. Volunteers might also help in leading the Family Advent Conversations. Invite families and individuals to serve as volunteers for the services.

## WORSHIP SPACE

Your worship space is a reverent place to celebrate the birth of Jesus. These services may be done in the sanctuary, with the project and conversation instructions sent home with the worshippers. The services may also be done in a fellowship hall, gym or similar space, where tables and chairs for the craft activity can be set up ahead of time.

## CRAFT ACTIVITIES

If the crafts are to be done at home, printed instructions can be distributed after the worship service. If you wish, some necessary craft supplies, such as small portions of clay, potting soil, grass seed, plastic cups, straws, plastic utensils, yarn or ribbon, cardstock and patterns, can be sent home in clear plastic bags.

### Week 1: Clay Christmas Ornament

Needed: Homemade or store-bought air-drying clay; straws to poke holes in finished ornaments; various Christmas cookie cutters (star, tree or simple circle shapes); plastic utensils to help in trimming or shaping ornaments; waxed paper or parchment paper (as used in baking); rolling pins; small, sturdy paper plates to be used to carry the wet ornaments home.

Salt Dough Recipe (make as many batches as needed or use store-bought, air-drying clay)

2 cups all-purpose flour

1 cup table salt

1 cup cold tap water

Mix salt and flour; gradually add water to the mix until it reaches the desired consistency; knead the dough, adding more water if needed. If made ahead of time, store the finished dough in a sealed container in the refrigerator. Divide the dough into smaller portions in clear plastic sealed bags for each table. Each recipe (as given above) makes enough dough for about 10 ornaments.

#### Directions:

1. Use a rolling pin or drinking glass to roll out a small piece of the prepared dough on waxed paper or parchment paper (have extra flour available to prevent dough and cookie cutters from sticking). Flatten the dough until it is about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an inch thick.
2. Use the cookie cutters to make an ornament. Use a straw to poke a hole at the top of the wet ornament. Carefully place the wet ornament on a small paper plate to dry and to carry home.
3. After the clay ornament is air-dried (which takes several days), it can be painted with acrylic (water-based) paint and decorated with glue, glitter, sequins or small buttons. String a ribbon or piece of yarn through the hole to hang the ornament on the Christmas tree.

## **Week 2: Paper and Cotton Ball Sheep**

Needed: Paper sheep pattern; 8½" by 11" white cardstock (90 lb. weight); scissors; felt markers or crayons; school glue; cotton balls; single-hole punch; colored ribbon.

Directions:

1. Print sheep patterns on white card stock so that each person has a sheep.
2. Cut out the sheep and fold the sheep so it stands upright. Draw an ear and face on both sides of your sheep.
3. Use school glue to attach cotton balls to both sides of the sheep body; slightly stretch each cotton ball to cover more space on the sheep. You will need about 12-14 cotton balls per sheep.
4. If you wish, punch a hole near the fold at the top of the sheep so that it can be strung with ribbon as a tree ornament.

## **Week 3: Bethlehem Field from Grass Seed**

Needed: small, clear plastic cups (9 oz. size); small plastic bags with potting soil for each table; small sealed plastic bags with grass seed for each table; plastic spoons (to use as “shovels” for the potting soil); white cardstock (90 lb. weight); paper sheep pattern; scissors.

Directions:

1. Print the small sheep pattern on white cardstock so that each participant has a small sheep.
2. Cut out the small sheep and fold it in half so that it will stand up.
3. Fill each cup  $\frac{3}{4}$  full with potting soil. Sprinkle grass seed on top of the soil. Cover the seed with a small amount of soil.
4. Take the planted cup home and place it near a window. Water very lightly every few days or when soil looks dry.
5. When grass has sprouted, place the small sheep in your “Bethlehem field.”

#### **Week 4: Bible Bookmark**

Needed: white cardstock (90 lb. weight), each sheet cut into four 2¾" x 8½" strips (you will get 4 bookmark strips from each 8½" x 11" sheet of cardstock); pencils, colored pencils, crayons and markers; Bibles; scissors (if cardstock is not cut ahead of time); single-hole punch; lengths of yarn or ribbon.

#### **Directions:**

1. Provide each participant with a strip of cardstock to decorate as a bookmark. Have extra cardstock strips available.
2. Use pencils, colored pencils, crayons and markers to decorate the strips as Bible bookmarks. Participants might use phrases such as "God With Us," "God is our Guide" or "Your Word is a Lamp" to decorate the bookmarks. Have Bibles on the tables to use for reference.
3. If you wish, punch a hole at the top of the finished bookmark and thread a piece of yarn or ribbon through the hole.

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# Family Worship

## SERVICE ONE: OUR POTTER

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# Family Worship

## SERVICE ONE: OUR POTTER

### ORDER OF SERVICE

*We are the clay, and you are our potter. Isaiah 64:8*

Advent Praise

*(Before the worship service, let children and adults suggest Christ-centered Advent and Christmas hymns and carols; sing with the organ, piano or a cappella; sing one verse of each song suggested.)*

Invocation

**P** We begin our worship in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

*(The first blue or purple candle is lit.)*

**P** We light the first candle on the Advent wreath with praise to God, who is with us as our Potter.  
We are the clay.

**C** Lord, shape us according to your will.

**P** God makes each of us a new creation through faith in Jesus our Savior.

**C** **Lord, help us to grow in faith and love.**

### Confession and Absolution

**P** Let us confess our sins to God and ask him to forgive us.

**C** **Almighty God, you formed us to serve you, yet we sin against you in our thoughts, words and actions. Forgive us and shape us according to your will.**

**P** Hear the good news! God sent his Son to be your Savior. Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead for you. Because Jesus died for you, God forgives all of your sins.

**C** **Jesus, you are God with us. Shape us as your people.**

### Prayer of the Day

#### Sentences for Young Children

*(The leader says the lines and performs the motions.*

*The children and adults repeat the words and copy the motions.)*

A potter takes some clay

*(Cup hands as if holding clay.)*

And shapes it in his hand.

*(Pretend to shape clay between your two hands.)*

He makes a bowl or plate or cup

*(Pretend to drink from a cup.)*

Just like he always planned.

*(Tap the side of your head, as if thinking.)*

God is the Potter; I am clay,

*(Point up, then point at self.)*

And I am his, you see!

*(Hug self.)*

Just like a potter shapes the clay,

*(Pretend to shape clay between your two hands.)*

I know that God made me!

*(Point to self with both thumbs.)*



Song.....St. Thomas SM

The advent of our King  
Our prayers must now employ,  
And we must hymns of welcome sing  
In strains of holy joy.

The everlasting Son  
Incarnate deigns to be,  
Himself a servant's form puts on  
To set his servants free.

Before the dawning day  
Let sin's dark deeds be gone,  
The sinful self be put away,  
The new self now put on.

Old Testament Reading ..... Isaiah 64:8-9

Gospel Reading ..... John 15:16-17

Song.....Gott Ist Die Liebe 55 54 and refrain

God loves me dearly, grants me salvation,  
God loves me dearly, loves even me.  
Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly,  
God loves me dearly, loves even me.

He sent forth Jesus, my dear Redeemer,  
He sent forth Jesus and set me free.  
Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly,  
God loves me dearly, loves even me.

Jesus, my Savior, himself did offer;  
Jesus, my Savior, paid all I owed.  
Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly,  
God loves me dearly, loves even me.

Message

Family Advent Craft: Clay Christmas Ornament

Family Advent Conversation

Offering

Offering Prayer

*(The offerings are brought to the altar. The leader speaks the offering prayer and performs the motions. Children and adults repeat the words and copy the motions.)*

Our offerings we bring to you,  
*(Hold up cupped hands.)*

Our words of love, and actions, too.  
*(Place both hands over your heart.)*

Use these gifts, dear Lord, we pray,  
*(Fold hands in prayer.)*

To share with people every day  
*(Cup hands around mouth as if shouting.)*

News of great joy for all the earth  
*(Sweep hands up and around in a big circle.)*

Of Jesus Christ our Savior's birth!  
*(Rock a "baby" in your arms.)*

Song..... Lobt Gott, Ihr Christen 86 866

The people that in darkness sat  
A glorious light have seen;  
The light has shined on them who long  
In shades of death have been,  
In shades of death have been.

To us a Child of hope is born,  
To us a Son is giv'n,  
And on his shoulder ever rests  
All pow'r in earth and heav'n,  
All pow'r in earth and heav'n.

His name shall be the Prince of Peace,  
The Everlasting Lord,  
The Wonderful, the Counselor,  
The God by all adored,  
The God by all adored.

Closing Prayer

Benediction

**P** The prophet Isaiah said, “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,

**C** **And they shall call his name Immanuel,” which means, God with us.**

**P** May God who is with us, God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, shape you according to his will,  
and may he bless you and keep you in his care, now and forever.

**C** **Amen.**

Closing Song .....Freu Dich Sehr 87 87 77 88

“Comfort, comfort ye my people,  
Speak ye peace,” thus saith our God;  
“Comfort those who sit in darkness,  
Mourning 'neath their sorrows' load.  
Speak ye to Jerusalem  
Of the peace that waits for them;  
Tell her that her sins I cover  
And her warfare now is over.”

Make ye straight what long was crooked;  
Make the rougher places plain.  
Let your hearts be true and humble,  
As befits his holy reign.  
For the glory of the Lord  
Now o'er earth is shed abroad,  
And all flesh shall see the token  
That his Word is never broken.



# Family Worship

## SERVICE ONE: OUR POTTER COMPLETE SCRIPT FOR WORSHIP LEADERS

- If desired, an **Environmental Projection** of the following image (purchased by you from shutterstock.com) can be shown on a screen or on the walls of your worship space to set the tone for the service before the service begins or throughout the service at various points:

<https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/creating-jar-vase-white-clay-closeup-537960268>

- The **Theme Verse** is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader at the start of the service or is read silently by the congregation before the service begins:

*We are the clay, and you are our potter. Isaiah 64:8*

- **Advent Praise** take place: Before the worship service, let children and adults suggest Christ-centered Advent and Christmas hymns and carols; sing with the organ, piano or a cappella; sing one verse of each song suggested.

- The **Invocation** is spoken by the pastor:

Ⓟ We begin our worship in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

- The **Lighting of the Advent Wreath** is spoken responsively by the pastor or worship leader and the congregation, and includes the lighting of the first candle of the Advent wreath:

*(The first blue or purple candle is lit.)*

Ⓟ We light the first candle on the Advent wreath with praise to God, who is with us as our Potter. We are the clay.

Ⓒ **Lord, shape us according to your will.**

Ⓟ God makes each of us a new creation through faith in Jesus our Savior.

Ⓒ **Lord, help us to grow in faith and love.**

- The **Confession and Absolution** is spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation:

Ⓟ Let us confess our sins to God and ask him to forgive us.

Ⓒ **Almighty God, you formed us to serve you, yet we sin against you in our thoughts, words and actions. Forgive us and shape us according to your will.**

Ⓟ Hear the good news! God sent his Son to be your Savior. Jesus died on the cross and rose from the dead for you. Because Jesus died for you, God forgives all of your sins.

Ⓒ **Jesus, you are God with us. Shape us as your people.**

- The **Prayer of the Day** is spoken by the pastor:

Ⓟ Almighty God, in Jesus you came to be God with us. You are our Potter and you shape each one of us into a new creation through faith in Jesus. Form us through your Word, so that each day we will show our love for you by loving others. Hear our prayer in Jesus' name. Amen.

- The **Sentences for Young Children** take place. The leader says the lines and performs the motions. The children and adults repeat the words line by line and copy the motions:

A potter takes some clay  
*(Cup hands as if holding clay.)*

And shapes it in his hand.  
*(Pretend to shape clay between your two hands.)*

He makes a bowl or plate or cup  
*(Pretend to drink from a cup.)*

Just like he always planned.  
*(Tap the side of your head, as if thinking.)*

God is the Potter; I am clay,  
*(Point up, then point at self.)*

And I am his, you see!  
*(Hug self.)*

Just like a potter shapes the clay,  
*(Pretend to shape clay between your two hands.)*

I know that God made me!  
*(Point to self with both thumbs.)*

- A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune St. Thomas SM, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

The advent of our King  
 Our prayers must now employ,  
 And we must hymns of welcome sing  
 In strains of holy joy.

The everlasting Son  
 Incarnate deigns to be,  
 Himself a servant's form puts on  
 To set his servants free.

Before the dawning day  
Let sin's dark deeds be gone,  
The sinful self be put away,  
The new self now put on.

- The **Old Testament Reading**, Isaiah 64:8-9, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ But now, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Be not so terribly angry, O LORD, and remember not iniquity forever. Behold, please look, we are all your people.

- The **Gospel Reading**, John 15:16-17, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

- A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Gott Ist Die Liebe 55 54 and refrain, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

God loves me dearly, grants me salvation,  
God loves me dearly, loves even me.  
Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly,  
God loves me dearly, loves even me.

He sent forth Jesus, my dear Redeemer,  
He sent forth Jesus and set me free.  
Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly,  
God loves me dearly, loves even me.

Jesus, my Savior, himself did offer;  
Jesus, my Savior, paid all I owed.  
Therefore I'll say again: God loves me dearly,  
God loves me dearly, loves even me.



- The **Message** is delivered by the pastor or other worship leader:

*(Hold a lump of modeling clay in your hands.)*

Ⓟ I have some clay, just like we are going to use in our craft time. I could make all kinds of things—a cup, a bowl, a dog or a horse or a Christmas decoration. What should I make?

*(Let children make suggestions.)*

Those are good ideas, but some of those things sound hard to make! Maybe I will just make something simple.

*(Form the clay into a ball and then shape a simple bowl by pressing your thumbs into the clay ball.)*

How's that? Can you guess what it is? With my clay I can make whatever I want to make. Our Bible reading said, "O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand." A potter is a person who makes all kinds of useful things out of clay, things like bowls, cups, plates or flower vases. We are like clay, and God is the Potter. God made you and me. He formed and shaped each one of us just how he wants us to be. He created us to love each other and to bring him glory. Sometimes, when we make things from clay, the clay doesn't cooperate. It doesn't turn out the way we want it to look.

*(Make several dents and bends in the clay bowl.)*

Now my bowl is ruined. It looks all bent and misshapen. We are like this clay. We do not always do what God wants us to do. We do not love people as we should. We do not always obey his commands. When we do not do what God wants us to do, what is that called?

*(Let children respond.)*

When we do not do what God wants us to do, when the clay does not do what the Potter shaped it to do, that is called sin. But God loves us. He does not just throw out the bent and broken clay. God sent his Son Jesus to make us right again. Jesus came and took all of our sin and brokenness onto himself. He died on the cross for us and rose from the dead. Because of Jesus, God forgives our sins. God our Potter shapes us into new people in Jesus.

*(Smooth and reshape the clay bowl.)*

Now we are forgiven and made new in Jesus. God shapes us in his love so that we can love and help others. We can tell others that God loves them too and sent Jesus to be their Savior and shape them into his own new people. We can bring glory to God, who gave us the best Christmas gift of all, his Son Jesus, our Savior!

Now we are going to use clay to make Christmas ornaments. You can hang your ornament on your Christmas tree, or you can use it as a gift for someone. When you make your ornament, remember that God is the Potter who shapes you in his love.

- The **Family Advent Craft: Clay Christmas Ornament** instruction sheets (see pp. 33-34 for reproducible handouts) are handed out for families to do now or on their own during the week:

Needed: Homemade or store-bought air-drying clay; straws to poke holes in finished ornaments; various Christmas cookie cutters (star, tree or simple circle shapes); plastic utensils to help in trimming or shaping ornaments; waxed paper or parchment paper (as used in baking); rolling pins; small, sturdy paper plates to be used to carry the wet ornaments home.

Salt Dough Recipe (make as many batches as needed or use store-bought, air-drying clay)

2 cups all-purpose flour

1 cup table salt

1 cup cold tap water

Mix salt and flour; gradually add water to the mix until it reaches the desired consistency; knead the dough, adding more water if needed. If made ahead of time, store the finished dough in a sealed container in the refrigerator. Divide the dough into smaller portions in clear plastic sealed bags for each table. Each recipe (as given above) makes enough dough for about 10 ornaments.

Directions:

1. Use a rolling pin or drinking glass to roll out a small piece of the prepared dough on waxed paper or parchment paper (have extra flour available to prevent dough and cookie cutters from sticking). Flatten the dough until it is about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an inch thick.
2. Use the cookie cutters to make an ornament. Use a straw to poke a hole at the top of the wet ornament. Carefully place the wet ornament on a small paper plate to dry and to carry home.
3. After the clay ornament is air-dried (which takes several days), it can be painted with acrylic (water-based) paint and decorated with glue, glitter, sequins or small buttons. String a ribbon or piece of yarn through the hole to hang the ornament on the Christmas tree.

- The **Family Advent Conversation** (see p. 35 for reproducible handout) can be handed out for use at the craft tables or at home or displayed on a screen and discussed among the families while they work with the clay or after the craft is complete:

1. Have you ever made a Christmas gift for someone? What did you make?
2. God made each member of your family. What special talents or abilities did he give to each person in your family?
3. How can you use your talents or abilities to serve God and help other people, now during Advent and all through the year?

- The **Offering** is gathered.
- After the Offering is brought to the altar, the **Offering Prayer** takes place. The leader speaks the offering prayer and performs the motions. Children and adults repeat the words line by line and copy the motions:

Our offerings we bring to you,  
*(Hold up cupped hands.)*

Our words of love, and actions, too.  
*(Place both hands over your heart.)*

Use these gifts, dear Lord, we pray,  
*(Fold hands in prayer.)*

To share with people every day  
*(Cup hands around mouth as if shouting.)*

News of great joy for all the earth  
*(Sweep hands up and around in a big circle.)*

Of Jesus Christ our Savior's birth!  
*(Rock a "baby" in your arms.)*

- The **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Lobt Gott, Ihr Christen 86 866, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

The people that in darkness sat  
 A glorious light have seen;  
 The light has shined on them who long  
 In shades of death have been,  
 In shades of death have been.

To us a Child of hope is born,  
 To us a Son is giv'n,  
 And on his shoulder ever rests  
 All pow'r in earth and heav'n,  
 All pow'r in earth and heav'n.

His name shall be the Prince of Peace,  
 The Everlasting Lord,  
 The Wonderful, the Counselor,  
 The God by all adored,  
 The God by all adored.

- The **Closing Prayer** is spoken by the pastor or worship leader:
  - ☐ Heavenly Father, you are the Potter and we are the clay. You shape us and make us new in Jesus. Help us to be kind toward others and to share the good news of Jesus with them. Amen.
- The **Benediction** is spoken responsively by the pastor or worship leader and the congregation:

☐ The prophet Isaiah said, “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son,

☑ **And they shall call his name Immanuel,” which means, God with us.**

☐ May God who is with us, God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, shape you according to his will, and may he bless you and keep you in his care, now and forever.

☑ **Amen.**

- The **Closing Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Freu Dich Sehr 87 87 77 88, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

“Comfort, comfort ye my people,  
Speak ye peace,” thus saith our God;  
“Comfort those who sit in darkness,  
Mourning ’neath their sorrows’ load.  
Speak ye to Jerusalem  
Of the peace that waits for them;  
Tell her that her sins I cover  
And her warfare now is over.”

Make ye straight what long was crooked;  
Make the rougher places plain.  
Let your hearts be true and humble,  
As befits his holy reign.  
For the glory of the Lord  
Now o’er earth is shed abroad,  
And all flesh shall see the token  
That his Word is never broken.



# Family Worship

## SERVICE ONE: OUR POTTER

### SCRIPTURE READINGS

- The **Old Testament Reading**, Isaiah 64:8-9, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ But now, O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand. Be not so terribly angry, O LORD, and remember not iniquity forever. Behold, please look, we are all your people.

- The **Gospel Reading**, John 15:16-17, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

Ⓟ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. These things I command you, so that you will love one another.



# Family Worship

## SERVICE ONE: OUR POTTER

### MESSAGE

- The **Message** is delivered by the pastor or other worship leader:

*(Hold a lump of modeling clay in your hands.)*

- Ⓟ I have some clay, just like we are going to use in our craft time. I could make all kinds of things—a cup, a bowl, a dog or a horse or a Christmas decoration. What should I make?

*(Let children make suggestions.)*

Those are good ideas, but some of those things sound hard to make! Maybe I will just make something simple.

*(Form the clay into a ball and then shape a simple bowl  
by pressing your thumbs into the clay ball.)*

How's that? Can you guess what it is? With my clay I can make whatever I want to make. Our Bible reading said, "O LORD, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand." A potter is a person who makes all kinds of useful things out of



clay, things like bowls, cups, plates or flower vases. We are like clay, and God is the Potter. God made you and me. He formed and shaped each one of us just how he wants us to be. He created us to love each other and to bring him glory. Sometimes, when we make things from clay, the clay doesn't cooperate. It doesn't turn out the way we want it to look.

*(Make several dents and bends in the clay bowl.)*

Now my bowl is ruined. It looks all bent and misshapen. We are like this clay. We do not always do what God wants us to do. We do not love people as we should. We do not always obey his commands. When we do not do what God wants us to do, what is that called?

*(Let children respond.)*

When we do not do what God wants us to do, when the clay does not do what the Potter shaped it to do, that is called sin. But God loves us. He does not just throw out the bent and broken clay. God sent his Son Jesus to make us right again. Jesus came and took all of our sin and brokenness onto himself. He died on the cross for us and rose from the dead. Because of Jesus, God forgives our sins. God our Potter shapes us into new people in Jesus.

*(Smooth and reshape the clay bowl.)*

Now we are forgiven and made new in Jesus. God shapes us in his love so that we can love and help others. We can tell others that God loves them too and sent Jesus to be their Savior and shape them into his own new people. We can bring glory to God, who gave us the best Christmas gift of all, his Son Jesus, our Savior!

Now we are going to use clay to make Christmas ornaments. You can hang your ornament on your Christmas tree, or you can use it as a gift for someone. When you make your ornament, remember that God is the Potter who shapes you in his love.



# Family Worship

## SERVICE ONE: OUR POTTER

### FAMILY ADVENT CRAFT: CLAY CHRISTMAS ORNAMENT

Needed: Homemade or store-bought air-drying clay; straws to poke holes in finished ornaments; various Christmas cookie cutters (star, tree or simple circle shapes); plastic utensils to help in trimming or shaping ornaments; waxed paper or parchment paper (as used in baking); rolling pins; small, sturdy paper plates to be used to carry the wet ornaments home.

Salt Dough Recipe (make as many batches as needed or use store-bought, air-drying clay)

2 cups all-purpose flour

1 cup table salt

1 cup cold tap water

Mix salt and flour; gradually add water to the mix until it reaches the desired consistency; knead the dough, adding more water if needed. If made ahead of time, store the finished dough in a sealed container in the refrigerator. Divide the dough into smaller portions in clear plastic sealed bags for each table. Each recipe (as given above) makes enough dough for about 10 ornaments.

Directions:

1. Use a rolling pin or drinking glass to roll out a small piece of the prepared dough on waxed paper or parchment paper (have extra flour available to prevent dough and cookie cutters from sticking). Flatten the dough until it is about  $\frac{1}{4}$  of an inch thick.
2. Use the cookie cutters to make an ornament. Use a straw to poke a hole at the top of the wet ornament. Carefully place the wet ornament on a small paper plate to dry and to carry home.
3. After the clay ornament is air-dried (which takes several days), it can be painted with acrylic (water-based) paint and decorated with glue, glitter, sequins or small buttons. String a ribbon or piece of yarn through the hole to hang the ornament on the Christmas tree.





# Family Worship

## SERVICE ONE: OUR POTTER

### FAMILY ADVENT CONVERSATION

1. Have you ever made a Christmas gift for someone? What did you make?
2. God made each member of your family. What special talents or abilities did he give to each person in your family?
3. How can you use your talents or abilities to serve God and help other people, now during Advent and all through the year?



# Family Worship

## WEEK 3: OUR LIVING BRANCH

### CONTEMPORARY MUSIC SONG SUGGESTIONS

- The following song suggestions can be used for a more contemporary worship service in place of the more traditional hymns included in this kit. Rights to use these songs in the service must be purchased by your parish through CCLI or other copyright licensing agencies.

“God With Us” by Jason Ingram and Leslie Jordan

“I Am the Vine” by John Michael Talbot

“Abiding in the Vine” by David Baroni

“Branches” by Blair Sanders, Jonathan Cole Novak, Jonathan Prickett, Josh Coad and Rachel Coad

“Rooted in God’s Love” by Jay Stocker

“I Will Delight” by John Andrew Schreiner and Walt Harrah

“Family Tree” by Jason Houser and Matthew West

“Spirit of the Living God” by Jacob Sooter and Mia Fieldes

“Only a God Like You” by Tommy Walker



# Family Worship

## SERVICE FOUR: OUR GUIDE MUSIC GUIDE

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Tune..... Chesterfield CM

The first system of music consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. It begins with a measure number '1'. The lower staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, also beginning with a measure number '1'. The music is written in a simple, homophonic style with chords and single notes.

The second system of music consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. It begins with a measure number '6'. The lower staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, also beginning with a measure number '6'. The music continues with chords and single notes.

The third system of music consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 3/4 time signature. It begins with a measure number '11'. The lower staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, also beginning with a measure number '11'. The music concludes with a final chord in both staves.

Creative Communications Sample

- A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Chesterfield CM, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Hark the glad sound! The Savior comes,  
The Savior promised long;  
Let ev'ry heart prepare a throne  
And ev'ry voice a song.

Our glad hosannas, Prince of Peace,  
Thy welcome shall proclaim,  
And heav'n's eternal arches ring  
With thy beloved name.

Creative  
Communications  
Sample



Tune..... Jesus Loves Me 77 77 and refrain

The first system of musical notation for 'Jesus Loves Me' is in 2/4 time. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff begins with a treble clef, a 2/4 time signature, and a first-measure rest. The melody starts in the second measure with a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The bass staff begins with a bass clef and a 2/4 time signature. The bass line starts with a quarter note G2, followed by quarter notes A2, B2, and C3. The system contains five measures.

The second system of musical notation continues the piece. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff begins with a treble clef and a first-measure rest. The melody starts in the second measure with a quarter note D5, followed by quarter notes E5, F5, and G5. The bass staff begins with a bass clef and a first-measure rest. The bass line starts in the second measure with a quarter note D3, followed by quarter notes E3, F3, and G3. The system contains five measures.

The third system of musical notation continues the piece. It consists of two staves: a treble clef staff and a bass clef staff. The treble staff begins with a treble clef and a first-measure rest. The melody starts in the second measure with a quarter note A4, followed by quarter notes B4, C5, and D5. The bass staff begins with a bass clef and a first-measure rest. The bass line starts in the second measure with a quarter note A2, followed by quarter notes B2, C3, and D3. The system contains five measures.

- A **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune *Jesus Loves Me 77 77* and refrain, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Jesus loves me! This I know,  
For the Bible tells me so.  
Little ones to him belong;  
They are weak, but he is strong.  
Yes, Jesus loves me!  
Yes, Jesus loves me!  
Yes, Jesus loves me!  
The Bible tells me so.

Jesus love me! He who died  
Heaven's gates to open wide,  
He has washed away my sin,  
Let his little child come in.  
Yes, Jesus loves me!  
Yes, Jesus loves me!  
Yes, Jesus loves me!  
The Bible tells me so.

Creative  
Communications  
Sample

Tune..... Dundee CM

The first system of musical notation consists of two staves, treble and bass clef, joined by a brace on the left. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The first measure of both staves contains a whole rest. The second measure begins with a quarter rest, followed by a series of chords: a triad of G2, B-flat2, and D3 in the bass clef; and a triad of G4, B-flat4, and D5 in the treble clef. This pattern of chords continues through the system, ending with a final chord in the second measure.

The second system of musical notation also consists of two staves, treble and bass clef, joined by a brace on the left. The key signature and time signature remain the same as the first system. The first measure of both staves begins with a quarter rest, followed by a series of chords: a triad of G2, B-flat2, and D3 in the bass clef; and a triad of G4, B-flat4, and D5 in the treble clef. This pattern of chords continues through the system, ending with a final chord in the second measure.

Creative  
Communications  
Sample

- The **Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Dundee CM, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

You are the way; through you alone  
Can we the Father find;  
In you, O Christ, has God revealed  
His heart and will and mind.

You are the way, the truth, the life;  
Grant us that way to know,  
That truth to keep, that life to win  
Whose joys eternal flow.

Creative  
Communications  
Sample

Tune.....Macht Hoch Die Tür 88 88 88 66

The image displays a piano accompaniment score for the hymn 'Macht Hoch Die Tür'. The score is written in 3/4 time and consists of five systems of music, each with a treble and bass clef staff. The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The piece begins with a first-measure rest in both staves. The melody in the treble clef is primarily composed of quarter and eighth notes, while the bass clef provides a harmonic accompaniment with chords and single notes. A large, semi-transparent watermark reading 'Creative Communications Sample' is overlaid diagonally across the center of the page. Measure numbers 1, 7, 13, 19, and 25 are indicated at the start of their respective systems.

- The **Closing Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Macht Hoch Die Tür 88 88 88 66, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates!  
Behold, the King of glory waits.  
The King of kings is drawing near;  
The Savior of the world is here.  
Life and salvation he doth bring;  
Therefore rejoice and gladly sing.  
To God the Father raise  
Your joyful songs of praise.

Fling wide the portals of your heart;  
Make it a temple set apart  
From earthly use for heav'n's employ,  
Adorned with prayer and love and joy.  
So shall your Sov'reign enter in  
And new and nobler life begin.  
To God alone be praise  
For word and deed and grace!

Redeemer, come and open wide  
My heart to thee; here, Lord, abide!  
O enter with thy grace divine;  
Thy face of mercy on me shine.  
Thy Holy Spirit guide us on  
Until our glorious goal is won.  
Eternal praise and fame  
We offer to thy name.



# Family Worship

## WEEK 4: OUR GUIDE

### CONTEMPORARY MUSIC SONG SUGGESTIONS

- The following song suggestions can be used for a more contemporary worship service in place of the more traditional hymns included in this kit. Rights to use these songs in the service must be purchased by your parish through CCLI or other copyright licensing agencies.

“God With Us” by Jason Ingram and Leslie Jordan

“I Will Follow” by Chris Tomlin, Jason Ingram and Reuben Morgan

“Lead Me” by Chris Rodriguez, Paige Elizabeth Lewis and Rachel Lampa

“Guiding Light” by Paul Baloche

“Lead Me Guide Me” by Monica Brown

“Make a Way” by Jason Ingram and Jon Egan

“God Will Make a Way” by Don Moen

“One Way” by Joel Houston and Jonathan Douglass

“You Are the Way” by Pat Sczebel

“Follow You” by Ed Cash, Jack Mooring and Leeland Mooring