

A Welcome Home!

[Jesus said,] Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Matthew 7:7-8

The doors of your church might look like the doors at your house, but maybe they are tall, heavy and wide enough to let lots of people in. They might have stained glass in them. They might lead to even more doors inside once you step through the first ones.

Whatever they look like, a church's doors are important because once you go through them, you know you're in God's house. It's time to stop and think about God and how much you love him. It's time to join your church family to praise God, thanking him for his goodness. What a great gift it is to worship our Lord together.

Lots of people who help at church gather near the doors. They might be ushers, greeters, lectors (the people who read Scripture aloud to us) or others. What types of helpers stand near the doors of your church? Look for them next time you enter!



Welcome to the Family!

In Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. Galatians 3:26-27

Maybe you were baptized as a baby. Maybe you were a little older. Maybe you'll be baptized soon! No matter when it happens, baptism welcomes you into the church of God, giving you new life in Jesus. Look for the baptismal font in your church. This is truly the place where we are welcomed not just into the church but into God's family!

During baptism, you'll see water poured over the baptized person's head. You may see a candle being lit to show that the light of Jesus will shine throughout our lives. You may see symbols of the Holy Trinity as you hear the words, "baptized in the name of our Triune God, in the name of God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit." Do you see a symbol for the Trinity in this picture? Color it gold!

Dear God, thank you for welcoming me to this place to worship you, and thank you for welcoming me into your family. Help me to feel your loving Spirit my whole life through. In Jesus name I pray. Amen.





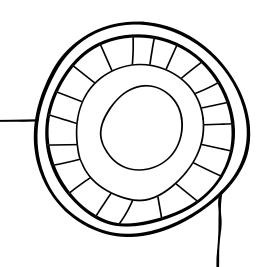
Though you have not seen him, you love him. Though you do not now see him, you believe in him and rejoice with joy that is inexpressible and filled with glory. 1 Peter 1:8

Does your church have colorful windows with pictures of characters from the Bible? Is there other art on the walls that feature images of Jesus? Maybe as a baby, or maybe standing by an empty tomb?

Years ago, when Bibles were difficult to produce and too expensive for families to afford, the pictures in church helped to tell the stories from Scripture in the same way that Bible story picture books show stories to children today. Even the walls and windows at church can help to shine out the Good News of God's salvation story.

Father in heaven, thank you for shining the light of creation. Thank you for sending Jesus, the light of the world. And thank you for filling my life with the light of your love. Help me to shine and show your Good News to others. Amen.





Bigger Than a Building!

For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them. Matthew 18:20

Take a look around. What do you see? Who is with you? Where are you?

Jesus tells us that wherever two or three are gathered in his name, he is there! That means that Jesus' church is ... anywhere ... and everywhere! Jesus' church isn't a place, it is the people who believe that he is Lord and Savior and who gather together with Jesus and in his name.

It's time to live each moment of your day as a moment spent with Jesus, a moment of praise, worship, thanksgiving and peace. What do you see in church? Well, look around! What do you see?

Dear Jesus, your church is not a building. Your church is all people in all creation who love and believe in you. Amen.