



WAIT UPON
THE LORD

*Family
Worship*



WAIT UPON
THE LORD

Family Worship

WORSHIP SERIES



Family Worship

INDEX

About the Series5

Newsletter/Bulletin Notices6-9

How to Use the Series 10-13

Week One (Wait Upon the Lord with Faith)..... 14-46

Week Two (Wait Upon the Lord with Hope) 47-76

Week Three (Wait Upon the Lord with Rejoicing)..... 77-109

Week Four (Wait Upon the Lord with Gratitude).....110-139

Music Guide 140-188

By Jeremy Klaustermeier with crafts by Karin Klaustermeier. Art and design: Lindsay Taylor. © 2021 Creative Communications for the Parish, a division of Bayard, Inc., 1564 Fencorp Dr., Fenton, MO 63026. 800-325-9414. www.creativecommunications.com. All rights reserved. Printed in the USA. Purchase of this kit gives the purchaser the copyright release to use the material in any format for use in worship.



Family Worship

ABOUT THE SERIES

In this Advent series for family worship, we look back at those who waited upon the Lord in Scripture for his promises to come to pass through the Christ Child and we contemplate how we as families should wait upon the Lord together as God continues to make himself known to us in his time.

Week 1 • Wait Upon the Lord with Faith (Galatians 3:8): We take a look at the story of Abraham and Sarah who waited in faith for the birth of their son, Isaac, as we wait as a family for the birth of God's Son. A homemade Advent wreath is the craft for the week.

Week 2 • Wait Upon the Lord with Hope (Psalm 130:5): We read from the book of the prophet Isaiah, who told us all to have hope as we wait for the coming of the Lord. Hoping in the Lord helps us to stay strong as a family. A bead candy cane is the craft for the week.

Week 3 • Wait Upon the Lord with Rejoicing (Isaiah 25:9): We recall the rejoicing of Elizabeth and Mary as they waited for their children to be born. Rejoicing is part of what we do as a family, too, during our waiting in Advent. An angel cutout is the craft for the week.

Week 4 • Wait Upon the Lord with Gratitude (Psalm 9:1): We remember that Zechariah waited nine months not able to speak until John was born. With gratitude, Zechariah spoke praise to God. We speak gratefully to God for the birth of his Son. A paper ornament is the craft for the week.



Family Worship

NEWSLETTER/BULLETIN NOTICES

WEEK ONE NEWSLETTER NOTICE

Everyone is invited to attend our Family Advent worship as we wait upon the Lord! Parts of these special Advent services are written especially for children, but we are all children of God. In our first service we take a look at the story of Abraham and Sarah who waited in faith for the birth of their son, Isaac, as we wait as a family for the birth of God's Son. As our Advent craft, we will make homemade Advent wreaths.

WEEK ONE BULLETIN NOTICE

Today in our first Advent service, we wait upon the Lord with faith as Abraham and Sarah did for the birth of their son, Isaac. For an Advent craft project, we will make homemade Advent wreaths.



Family Worship

NEWSLETTER/BULLETIN NOTICES

WEEK TWO NEWSLETTER NOTICE

Everyone is invited to attend our Family Advent worship as we wait upon the Lord! Parts of these special Advent services are written especially for children, but we are all children of God. In our second service we read from the book of the prophet Isaiah, who told us all to have hope as we wait for the coming of the Lord. As our Advent craft, we will make bead candy canes.

WEEK TWO BULLETIN NOTICE

Today in our second Advent service, we wait upon the Lord with hope as we read from the book of the prophet Isaiah, who told us all to have hope. For an Advent craft project, we will make bead candy canes.



Family Worship

NEWSLETTER/BULLETIN NOTICES

WEEK THREE NEWSLETTER NOTICE

Everyone is invited to attend our Family Advent worship as we wait upon the Lord! Parts of these special Advent services are written especially for children, but we are all children of God. In our third service we recall the rejoicing of Elizabeth and Mary as they waited for their children to be born. As our Advent craft, we will make angel cutouts.

WEEK THREE BULLETIN NOTICE

Today in our third Advent service, we wait upon the Lord with rejoicing as we recall the rejoicing of Elizabeth and Mary as they waited for their children to be born. For an Advent craft project, we will make angel cutouts.



Family Worship

NEWSLETTER/BULLETIN NOTICES

WEEK FOUR NEWSLETTER NOTICE

Everyone is invited to attend our Family Advent worship as we wait upon the Lord! Parts of these special Advent services are written especially for children, but we are all children of God. In our fourth service we remember that Zechariah waited nine months to speak praise to God when his son John was born. As our Advent craft, we will make paper ornaments.

WEEK FOUR BULLETIN NOTICE

Today in our fourth Advent service, we wait upon the Lord with gratitude as we remember that Zechariah waited nine months to speak praise to God when his son John was born. For an Advent craft project, we will make paper ornaments.



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, let that serve as a practice session before the service!

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 four candles on the Advent wreath, three purple or blue, one pink or rose. The pink candle, a sign of joy, is lit the third week in Advent.

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

Scripture Readings: Brief readings from the Old Testament, Epistles and the Gospels express the theme for the worship service.

Message: The message is for children 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 may also be sent home at the end of the service.

Offering Song: While the offerings are collected, everyone sings a song.

Benediction: At the close of worship, we leave with the blessing of God, who is with us in Christ Jesus. After the benediction, we sing a hymn that reflects the theme of the service.

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 you are making the crafts during the worship time, it will be helpful to provide take-home bags to be used to carry the craft project home. If the crafts are to be done at home, printed instructions can be distributed after the worship service. Some of the necessary craft supplies can be sent home in clear plastic bags. Families can then supply any other materials needed to assemble the crafts at home.

Crafts

Week 1: Paper Advent Wreaths

Needed: Advent wreath image (on p. 42), green, purple (or blue), pink, and orange (or yellow) construction paper, scissors, tape or glue

1. Cut out the green as a base in the shape of leaves and tape or glue the ends together.
2. Cut out three purple strips and one pink strip. Bend and tape the ends of each strip to form the shape of a candle. Tape or glue the ends each candle to the green base.
3. Cut out four small pieces of orange (or yellow) construction paper into the shape of flames.
4. Put one flame on each candle for each of the four weeks of Advent.
5. People can each do their own, or a table/family can work on one wreath together and leave it at the table for the Advent season.

Week 2: Bead Candy Canes

Needed: red and white beads, pipe cleaners, candy cane poem card (on p. 73), tape

Directions:

1. Make a bend on one of the ends of the pipe cleaner so that the beads don't come off.
2. String beads onto the pipe cleaner, alternating between red and white.
3. Put a bend in the other end so the beads don't fall off.
4. Bend into a "J" shape.
5. Cut out poem card (see p. 73) and attach to bead candy cane with tape.

Week 3: Rejoicing Angel Cutouts

Needed: paper angel template (on p. 105), white card stock, markers or crayons, scissors, glue, tape

Directions:

1. Print the template onto card stock in advance.
2. Color and cut out all of the pieces.
3. Before assembling the angel, add glitter onto the stars, if you wish. Give the glue enough time to dry.
4. Take the wings and fold on the dotted lines.
5. Add glue to where both sides of the angel dress meet. To make sure it doesn't come apart, add a piece of tape to the inside of the dress.
6. Glue the wings to the body of the angel.

Week 4: Gratitude Ornaments

Needed: construction paper and ornament templates (on p. 135, or have the paper already cut into ornament shapes), string or ornament hooks, markers, hole punch, other decorative materials if desired (glitter, stickers, scraps of colored paper or fabric, etc.)

Directions:

1. Cut out the ornaments or, if they are already cut, pick out one or two of your favorites.
2. On one side, write down or draw a picture of one thing you are grateful for. On the other side, write "Thank you, Lord!" or a Bible verse of gratitude. (See below.)

I give you thanks, O Lord, with my whole heart. Psalm 138:1

Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; for his steadfast love endures forever! 1 Chronicles 16:34

Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. 1 Corinthians 15:57

Let everything that has breath praise the Lord! Psalm 150:6

3. Decorate both sides.
4. Punch a hole in the top of your ornament, attach the hook or string, and hang it on the tree at church or at home.



Family Worship

WEEK ONE: WAIT UPON THE LORD WITH FAITH

INDEX

Order of Service 15-22

Complete Script For Worship Leaders..... 23-35

Scripture Readings 36-38

Message 39-40

Family Advent Craft..... 41-42

Family Advent Conversation 43

Prayers 44-46



WAIT UPON
THE LORD

Family Worship

WEEK ONE:

WAIT UPON THE LORD WITH FAITH

ORDER OF SERVICE

Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you." Galatians 3:8

Advent Praise

Invocation

- P** In the name of the Father who created us, *(point to yourself)*
- C** **In the name of the Father who created us,** *(point to yourself)*
- P** And of the Son, who came to earth for us, *(point to heaven and then down)*
- C** **And of the Son, who came to earth for us,** *(point to heaven and then down)*
- P** And of the Holy Spirit, who fills us with his love. *(give yourself a hug)*
- C** **And of the Holy Spirit, who fills us with his love.** *(give yourself a hug)*

P We worship as we wait in patient faith for Christmas and for Jesus to come again. (*tap wrist with index finger like tapping a watch*)

C **We worship as we wait in patient faith for Christmas and for Jesus to come again.** (*tap wrist with index finger like tapping a watch*)

P Amen.

C **Amen.**

Opening Song O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Rod of Jesse, free thine own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell thy people save, and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Dayspring, from on high, and cheer us by thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Key of David, come and open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

(The first blue or purple candle is lit.)

P We light the first candle on the Advent wreath as we ponder waiting upon the Lord with faith.

C **We wait for your coming, O faithful Lord!**

P Abraham and Sarah waited for their son, Isaac, long ago.

C **Now we wait for you, O Lord!**

P Jesus is the light of the world. (*hold index finger high up in the air*)

C **Jesus is the light of the world.** (*hold index finger high up in the air*)

P No one can put out that light! It will last forever! (*hold index finger high up in the air*)

C No one can put out that light! It will last forever! *(hold index finger high up in the air)*

Confession and Absolution

P Because we are human beings, we sin every day. When we do, the best thing we can do is go to God and tell him that we are very sorry. Let's do that right now.

(Everyone closes their eyes and puts their hand on their heart for a moment of silent reflection.)

C Lord, I have done bad things. I have had bad thoughts. I have said bad words. I haven't done the good things you want me to do either. I'm so, so sorry. Please forgive me.

P Open your eyes! Look up! Smile! Laugh! Jesus loves you so much that He died for all those sins! He forgives you! Have joy!

C Yay! Jesus loves me. Thank you, Jesus. *(saying loud)* Yay! Jesus loves me. Thank you, Jesus. *(saying louder)* Yay! Jesus loves me. Thank you, Jesus. *(saying loudest)*

Prayer of the Day

Song of Praise.....Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee

Joyful, joyful, we adore thee, God of glory, Lord of love;
Hearts unfold like flow'rs before thee, praising thee, their sun above.
Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; drive the dark of doubt away.
Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day!

All thy works with joy surround thee, earth and heav'n reflect thy rays,
Stars and angels sing around thee, center of unbroken praise.
Field and forest, vale and mountain, flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,
Chanting bird and flowing fountain, call us to rejoice in thee.

Thou art giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blest,
Wellspring of the joy of living, ocean depth of happy rest!
Thou our Father, Christ our brother, all who live in love are thine;
Teach us how to love each other, lift us to the joy divine.

Old Testament Reading Genesis 17:1-9

P This is the Word of God.

C Thank you, God.

Epistle Reading Romans 4:13-21

P This is the Word of God.

C Thank you, God.

Gospel Acclamation

P God had different people write his story, and Matthew was one of them. The reading that I will read is from Matthew 1.

C Thank you, God, for giving us your story!

Gospel Reading..... Matthew 1:1-25

Gospel Response

P This story from Matthew is called the Gospel. The word “Gospel” means good news.

C Thank you for giving us the good news!

Song..... Hark the Glad Sound

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

He comes the pris'ners to release, in Satan's bondage held.
The gates of brass before him burst, the iron fetters yield.

He comes the broken heart to bind, the bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of his grace to enrich the humble poor.

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

Message

Family Advent Craft: Paper Advent Wreaths

Family Advent Conversation

Offering

Offering Song..... Take My Life and Let It Be

(Sung during the collection of the offering)

Take my life and let it be consecrated, Lord, to thee.
Take my moments and my days; let them flow in ceaseless praise.

Take my hands and let them move at the impulse of thy love.
Take my feet and let them be swift and beautiful for thee.

Take my voice and let me sing always, only, for my King.
Take my lips and let them be filled with messages from thee.

Take my silver and my gold; not a mite would I withhold.
Take my intellect and use ev'ry pow'r as thou shalt choose.

Take my will and make it thine; it shall be no longer mine.
Take my heart, it is thine own; it shall be thy royal throne.

Take my love; my Lord, I pour at thy feet its treasure store.
Take myself, and I will be ever, only, all for thee.

Prayers

(spoken as an echo prayer between the pastor and the congregation)

P Dear Jesus,

C Dear Jesus,

P thank you for giving us all we have.

C thank you for giving us all we have.

P Remind us to be thankful every day.

C Remind us to be thankful every day.

P Father in heaven,

C Father in heaven,

P bless those who are sick with healing.

C bless those who are sick with healing.

P Give them more faith

C Give them more faith

P to be patient in their sickness

C to be patient in their sickness

P and to wait for you

C and to wait for you

P to keep your promises to them.

C to keep your promises to them.

P Holy Spirit,

C Holy Spirit,

P fill our hearts with faith

C fill our hearts with faith

P and our lives with your love.

C and our lives with your love.

P Help us to do all the things you want us to do

C Help us to do all the things you want us to do

P and to love who you want us to love.

C and to love who you want us to love.

P Lord Jesus,

C Lord Jesus,

P remind us to forgive those who hurt us

C remind us to forgive those who hurt us

P as much and as often as you forgive us.

C as much and as often as you forgive us.

P Don't let us hold grudges,

C **Don't let us hold grudges,**

P but make us live our lives in love.

C **but make us live our lives in love.**

P Lord God,

C **Lord God,**

P you have promised that you will come again

C **you have promised that you will come again**

P and that you will make everything

C **and that you will make everything**

P new and perfect when you do.

C **new and perfect when you do.**

P Give us the faith we need

C **Give us the faith we need**

P to remind us of that promise

C **to remind us of that promise**

P so we don't get down or discouraged,

C **so we don't get down or discouraged,**

P and so we can spread your joy to everyone.

C **and so we can spread your joy to everyone.**

P Amen.

C **Amen.**

Lord's Prayer

Benediction

P The Lord bless you and keep you.

C **He has blessed us with his love and holds us in his arms!**

P The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you.

C **What a warm and loving face it is!**

P The Lord look upon you with his favor and give you his peace.

C **Amen.**

Closing Song Abide, O Dearest Jesus

Abide, O dearest Jesus, among us with your grace
That Satan may not harm us nor we to sin give place.

Abide, O dear Redeemer, among us with your Word,
And thus now and hereafter true peace and joy afford.

Abide with heav'nly brightness among us, precious Light;
Your truth direct and keep us from error's gloomy night.

Abide with richest blessings among us, bounteous Lord;
Let us in grace and wisdom grow daily through your Word.

Abide with your protection among us, Lord, our strength,
Lest world and Satan fell us and overcome at length.

Abide, O faithful Savior, among us with your love;
Grant steadfastness and help us to reach our home above.



Family Worship

WEEK ONE:

WAIT UPON THE LORD WITH FAITH

COMPLETE SCRIPT FOR WORSHIP LEADERS

- If desired, an **Environmental Projection** is 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:

[shutterstock.com/image-photo/retro-alarm-clock-on-table-photo-196344845](https://www.shutterstock.com/image-photo/retro-alarm-clock-on-table-photo-196344845)

- 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:

Scripture foresaw that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, and announced the gospel in advance to Abraham: "All nations will be blessed through you." Galatians 3:8

- **Advent Praise** takes place: For about 15 minutes or so, invite individuals to select Advent or Christmas hymns to sing. It is usually best to just sing one or two verses of a hymn so that everyone can get their favorites in.
- The **Invocation** is spoken responsively as an echo prayer by the pastor and the congregation with motions as indicated:

P In the name of the Father who created us, *(point to yourself)*

C **In the name of the Father who created us,** *(point to yourself)*

P And of the Son, who came to earth for us, *(point to heaven and then down)*

C **And of the Son, who came to earth for us,** *(point to heaven and then down)*

P And of the Holy Spirit, who fills us with his love. *(give yourself a hug)*

C **And of the Holy Spirit, who fills us with his love.** *(give yourself a hug)*

P We worship as we wait in patient faith for Christmas and for Jesus to come again. *(tap wrist with index finger like tapping a watch)*

C **We worship as we wait in patient faith for Christmas and for Jesus to come again.** *(tap wrist with index finger like tapping a watch)*

P Amen.

C Amen.

- The **Opening Song** is sung by the congregation to the tune Veni Emmanuel LM 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:

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Rod of Jesse, free thine own from Satan's tyranny;
From depths of hell thy people save, and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Dayspring, from on high, and cheer us by thy drawing nigh;
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Key of David, come and open wide our heav'nly home;
Make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

- The **Lighting of the Advent Wreath** is spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation with motions as indicated, and includes the lighting of the first candle of the Advent wreath:

(The first blue or purple candle is lit.)

P We light the first candle on the Advent wreath as we ponder waiting upon the Lord with faith.

C **We wait for your coming, O faithful Lord!**

P Abraham and Sarah waited for their son, Isaac, long ago.

C **Now we wait for you, O Lord!**

P Jesus is the light of the world. *(hold index finger high up in the air)*

C **Jesus is the light of the world.** *(hold index finger high up in the air)*

P No one can put out that light! It will last forever! *(hold index finger high up in the air)*

C **No one can put out that light! It will last forever!** *(hold index finger high up in the air)*

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

P Because we are human beings, we sin every day. When we do, the best thing we can do is go to God and tell him that we are very sorry. Let's do that right now.

(Everyone closes their eyes and puts their hand on their heart for a moment of silent reflection.)

C **Lord, I have done bad things. I have had bad thoughts. I have said bad words. I haven't done the good things you want me to do either. I'm so, so sorry. Please forgive me.**

P Open your eyes! Look up! Smile! Laugh! Jesus loves you so much that he died for all those sins! He forgives you! Have joy!

C **Yay! Jesus loves me. Thank you, Jesus.** *(saying loud)* **Yay! Jesus loves me. Thank you, Jesus.** *(saying louder)* **Yay! Jesus loves me. Thank you, Jesus.** *(saying loudest)*

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

☐ Dear Jesus, you promised that you'd come, and you always keep your promises. Give me the faith I need to remember that every day. When I am anxious or scared, keep reminding me, so that I may grow in faith every day. Amen.

- A **Song of Praise** is sung by the congregation to the tune Hymn to Joy 87 87 D, or a selection from the contemporary music song suggestions list at the end of the music guide for this service can be sung instead:

Joyful, joyful, we adore thee, God of glory, Lord of love;
 Hearts unfold like flow'rs before thee, praising thee, their sun above.
 Melt the clouds of sin and sadness; drive the dark of doubt away.
 Giver of immortal gladness, fill us with the light of day!

All thy works with joy surround thee, earth and heav'n reflect thy rays,
 Stars and angels sing around thee, center of unbroken praise.
 Field and forest, vale and mountain, flow'ry meadow, flashing sea,
 Chanting bird and flowing fountain, call us to rejoice in thee.

Thou art giving and forgiving, ever blessing, ever blest,
 Wellspring of the joy of living, ocean depth of happy rest!
 Thou our Father, Christ our brother, all who live in love are thine;
 Teach us how to love each other, lift us to the joy divine.

- The **Old Testament Reading**, Genesis 17:1-9, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

☐ When Abram was ninety-nine years old the Lord appeared to Abram and said to him, "I am God Almighty; walk before me, and be blameless, that I may make my covenant between me and you, and may multiply you greatly." Then Abram fell on his face. And God said to him, "Behold, my covenant is with you, and you shall be the father of a multitude of nations. No longer shall your name be called Abram, but your name shall be Abraham, for I have made you the father of a multitude of nations. I will make you exceedingly fruitful, and I will make you into nations, and kings shall come from you. And I will establish my covenant between me and you and your offspring after you throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be God to you and to your offspring after you. And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God." And God said to Abraham, "As for you, you shall keep my covenant, you and your offspring after you throughout their generations."

☐ This is the Word of God.

☑ **Thank you, God.**

- The **Epistle Reading**, Romans 4:13-21, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

☐ For the promise to Abraham and his offspring that he would be heir of the world did not come through the law but through the righteousness of faith. For if it is the adherents of the law who are to be the heirs, faith is null and the promise is void. For the law brings wrath, but where there is no law there is no transgression. That is why it depends on faith, in order that the promise may rest on grace and be guaranteed to all his offspring—not only to the adherent of the law but also to the one who shares the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all, as it is written, “I have made you the father of many nations”—in the presence of the God in whom he believed, who gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist. In hope he believed against hope, that he should become the father of many nations, as he had been told, “So shall your offspring be.” He did not weaken in faith when he considered his own body, which was as good as dead (since he was about a hundred years old), or when he considered the barrenness of Sarah’s womb. No unbelief made him waver concerning the promise of God, but he grew strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised.

☐ This is the Word of God.

☑ **Thank you, God.**

- The **Gospel Acclamation** is spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation:

☐ God had different people write his story, and Matthew was one of them. The reading that I will read is from Matthew 1.

☑ **Thank you, God, for giving us your story!**

- The **Gospel Reading**, Matthew 1:1-25, is spoken by the pastor or other worship leader:

☐ The book of the genealogy of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham. Abraham was the father of Isaac, and Isaac the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Judah and his brothers, and Judah the father of Perez and Zerah by Tamar, and Perez the father of Hezron, and Hezron the father of Ram, and Ram the father of Amminadab, and Amminadab the father of Nahshon, and Nahshon the father of Salmon, and Salmon the father of Boaz by Rahab, and Boaz the father of Obed by Ruth, and Obed the father of Jesse, and Jesse the father of David

the king. And David was the father of Solomon by the wife of Uriah, and Solomon the father of Rehoboam, and Rehoboam the father of Abijah, and Abijah the father of Asaph, and Asaph the father of Jehoshaphat, and Jehoshaphat the father of Joram, and Joram the father of Uzziah, and Uzziah the father of Jotham, and Jotham the father of Ahaz, and Ahaz the father of Hezekiah, and Hezekiah the father of Manasseh, and Manasseh the father of Amos, and Amos the father of Josiah, and Josiah the father of Jechoniah and his brothers, at the time of the deportation to Babylon. And after the deportation to Babylon: Jechoniah was the father of Shealtiel, and Shealtiel the father of Zerubbabel, and Zerubbabel the father of Abiud, and Abiud the father of Eliakim, and Eliakim the father of Azor, and Azor the father of Zadok, and Zadok the father of Achim, and Achim the father of Eliud, and Eliud the father of Eleazar, and Eleazar the father of Matthan, and Matthan the father of Jacob, and Jacob the father of Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom Jesus was born, who is called Christ. So all the generations from Abraham to David were fourteen generations, and from David to the deportation to Babylon fourteen generations, and from the deportation to Babylon to the Christ fourteen generations. Now the birth of Jesus Christ took place in this way. When his mother Mary had been betrothed to Joseph, before they came together she was found to be with child from the Holy Spirit. And her husband Joseph, being a just man and unwilling to put her to shame, resolved to divorce her quietly. But as he considered these things, behold, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream, saying, “Joseph, son of David, do not fear to take Mary as your wife, for that which is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit. She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.” All this took place to fulfill what the Lord had spoken by the prophet: “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel” (which means, God with us). When Joseph woke from sleep, he did as the angel of the Lord commanded him: he took his wife, but knew her not until she had given birth to a son. And he called his name Jesus.

- The **Gospel Response** is spoken responsively by the pastor and the congregation:

Ⓟ This story from Matthew is called the Gospel. The word “Gospel” means good news.

Ⓒ Thank you for giving us the good news!

- 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.

He comes the pris'ners to release, in Satan's bondage held.
The gates of brass before him burst, the iron fetters yield.

He comes the broken heart to bind, the bleeding soul to cure,
And with the treasures of his grace to enrich the humble poor.

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

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

(Ask the kids to come up front if they are able. Begin with a picture of a tree with lots of branches on it—either on a large piece of paper so everyone can see it or projected on a screen.)

Ⓟ Look at this tree. *(Show picture.)* Has anyone ever heard of such a thing as a family tree? What is a family tree? Is it a tree that a family plants in their yard? Well, I guess it could be, but I am talking about something else. What do you think I am taking about? *(Wait for answers.)*

You are right! A family tree is a way to explain the history of a family and how people are related to each other. The bigger the family is, the more branches there will be on the family tree. God promised Abraham that he would have so many branches on his family tree that no one would be able to count them.

The problem with that was that Abraham did not have any children with his wife Sarah and was already way too old to even be a grandpa, much less a dad. But God didn't budge. He didn't take it back either. He double promised.

God didn't just promise that, but he also promised that through one of his descendants, (when we have kids and grandkids and great-grandkids they're called descendants), all of the nations of the earth would be blest. That means that there would be someone special who would be part of Abraham's family who would do something great for the whole world.

Was anyone paying attention when I read that second reading, the Epistle (Epistle is another word for letter) to the Romans? A man named Paul wrote that letter to tell the people in Rome about Jesus. In chapter four he reminds people of God's promise to Abraham, and then he tells them that God kept his promise when he sent Jesus.

He also talked about how the people, including Abraham and everyone after him, had to trust in God's promises. When we trust in God's promises and believe that he will keep them even though we can't see into the future, and even though we can't see him, we call that faith.

Even though Abraham and his wife Sarah were very old, and even though they didn't have any kids yet, they believed that God could do anything he wanted, and because God always keeps his promises, Abraham and Sarah had faith in God. And guess what! They had a boy named Isaac, and Isaac had two sons, Jacob and Esau, and Jacob had twelve sons, and from that time on the family grew and grew! God kept his promise!