

Scripture Songs

We can hide God's Word in our heart and worship Him as He deserves when we sing scripture songs.

I Will Enter His Gates

Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! Psalm 100:4

I will enter His gates with thanksgiving in my heart.

I will enter His courts with praise.

I will say this is the day that the Lord has made.

I will rejoice for He has made me glad.

He has made me glad; He has made me glad.

I will rejoice for He has made me glad.

He has made me glad; He has made me glad.

I will rejoice for He has made me glad.

This Is the Day

This is the day that the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it. Psalm 118:24

This is the day, this is the day, that the Lord has made, that the Lord has made.

We will rejoice, we will rejoice, and be glad in it, and be glad in it.

This is the day that the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.

This is the day, this is the day, that the Lord has made.

Blessed Be the Name

Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth and forevermore! Psalm 113:2

Blessed be the name, blessed be the name, blessed be the name of the Lord!

Blessed be the name, blessed be the name, blessed be the name of the Lord!

Glory to the name, glory to the name, glory to the name of the Lord!

Glory to the name, glory to the name, glory to the name of the Lord!

Behold What Manner of Love

See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God . . . 1 John 3:1

Behold what manner of love the Father has given unto us.

Behold what manner of love the Father has given unto us.

That we should be called the sons of God.

That we should be called the sons of God.

Worship – God’s Revelation and our Response

When we started this series on worship, we thought about the encounter Jacob had with God in Genesis 28. Do you remember Jacob’s dream and the ladder he saw that reached from heaven to earth? In that picture, we saw God reaching down to Jacob to establish a relationship with him, and we saw Jacob’s response—first of fear (because of his sin), then of reverent worship. We also read in John 1:51 that Jesus says He is the ladder that reaches down from heaven to establish a relationship between God and us. What’s more, in last week’s lesson, we saw that Jesus is also the perfect sacrifice that covers our sin and makes us able to come before God without fear. This pattern of God relating to us and then our responding to Him is what worship is all about.

Today we want to take a closer look at what we do each Sunday morning here at Covenant Community Church. We have said all along that we want to offer God worship that is pleasing to Him, and so we do what His word tells us to do – we sing, we pray, we read and hear the preaching of the Word, and we celebrate the sacraments. As we look at each part of our Sunday service, we’ll also see that our order of worship follows the pattern of God relating to us followed by our response to Him.

The Call to Worship – You can’t just walk into the White House to see the president or Buckingham Palace to see the queen. To appear before these important people, you need an invitation. And if you received an invitation, you wouldn’t say, “No thanks, I’m too busy.” Because of who sent it, you would see the invitation both as an honor and as a command that you are ready and willing to obey. In our Call to Worship, we hear from scripture an invitation and a command from God Himself to come before Him. The Call to Worship often includes a command to *praise*, or *sing*, or even *shout*. It also includes a reason to do so—a reminder of one of God’s attributes, like His holiness or mercy, or of one of His great acts, like creation or redemption. In the Call to Worship, **God speaks to us**.

The Prayer of Invocation – After we hear God’s invitation and command, the worship leader thanks God for what He has shown us about Himself and asks Him to accept the praise that we offer. That prayer is a **response to God**.

The Opening Hymn – The first hymn is always a hymn of praise and is usually sung directly to God. The hymn is often about whatever attribute or act of God we’ve just heard about in the Call to Worship. In the opening hymn, **we as a congregation respond to God**.

The Call to Confession – Since we’ve just been reminded through our opening hymn of how perfect God is, we are even more aware of how imperfect and sinful we are. At this time, the pastor will use scripture to invite us to confess our sins to God. In this invitation, **God speaks to us**.

The Prayer of Confession – After hearing God’s invitation to repent, we read a prayer together, confessing that as God’s people we fall short of His glory. A time of silence then allows us to confess privately the sins that we’ve committed individually. In these prayers, **we respond to God**.

The Assurance of Forgiveness – The pastor will close the time of prayer with words from scripture that remind us of God’s mercy and forgiveness. In those words, **we hear God speak to us**.

Hymn– A hymn follows the words of assurance. In that hymn we might praise Jesus for His work of redemption or praise God for His blessings to the church. In singing together, **we respond to God**.

Scripture Readings – Next, we turn again to the Word of God. Since we believe the entire Bible to be God’s special message for His people, we read from the Old Testament and from the New Testament. Through the words of scripture, **God speaks to us.**

The Affirmation of Faith – When we recite together what we believe, we agree to specific truths about God that are taught in scripture and that are necessary to the Christian faith. We often use the ancient creeds and confessions such as the Apostles’ Creed or the Heidelberg Catechism as **we respond to God** by affirming His truth.

The Pastoral Prayer – The pastor then prays on behalf of the congregation, offering up praise and thanksgiving to God and presenting to Him our requests for needs in our congregation, our nation, and our world. When we agree together in prayer **we respond to God.**

Hymn – Typically, we sing a hymn right before the sermon that ties into the theme for the message. This helps to prepare our hearts and minds for the teaching that we are about to receive. Again, **we respond to God.**

The Sermon – The pastor will read from scripture the text that he has been studying and praying about. Then he will deliver the message that has been given to him by God for the congregation. In the sermon, **God speaks to us.**

The Doxology – For a number of months now, we have been singing the Doxology following the message as a **response to God** of praise for the gift of His word.

The Benediction – Just as we hear from God’s Word in the Call to Worship at the beginning of the service, we hear the Word of God to end the service. Benediction means “good word,” and it is a blessing and reminder of God’s promise to keep us throughout the week. In the benediction **God speaks his blessing to us.**

When we pick up a bulletin on Sunday morning, let’s remember that the order of worship isn’t a list of things to be done and checked off the way we might follow the steps in a recipe or pick up the items on a shopping list. Instead, let’s remember that, through the life and work of Jesus, God has drawn us into a real, living relationship with Him where He speaks to us by His word and we respond to Him in worship.

Activity – Get busy worshipping!

Have you ever been to a play or a concert? If you have, you probably entered a big auditorium or theater and took your seat. Maybe you chatted with your family about the sights and sounds around you, or maybe you looked at the program to see what was going to happen in the performance. At the right time, the lights dimmed, and the audience got quiet and settled in to enjoy the show. After a while, the show was over, the people clapped, got up, and went home.

Performances like that can be wonderful, and we should be thankful for opportunities to see talented people using their gifts. But as nice as it can be to sit in an audience, that is *not* what we are called to do on Sunday mornings when we gather with God’s people to worship. Our worship is not pleasing to God if it’s just something that we watch other people doing. As we’ve seen, worship is our response to what God shows us about Himself. It may be that the proper response is to join our voices joyfully in song with the rest of the congregation or to sit quietly and pray, but it is never the proper response to just sit and watch what others do. We must participate.

Psalm 100 is a psalm that teaches about worship. It teaches us some truths about God, and some responses that are pleasing to Him. Talk about each one of these facts that Psalm 100 teaches about God. What does each fact tell you about what God is like and what He has done?

- The Lord is God (verse 3) – He is all-powerful, all-knowing, present everywhere, and more.
- God made us (verse 3) – He knows everything about us.
- We belong to Him (verse 3) – He’s the boss!
- We are the sheep of his pasture (verse 3) – He cares for us like shepherds care for sheep.
- The Lord is good (verse 5) – Everything He does is good.
- His love lasts forever (verse 5) – He’ll never stop loving us.
- His faithfulness lasts forever too (verse 5) – He’ll never break His promises.

Then act out these responses to who God is and what He has done:

- Make a joyful noise to the Lord (verse 1) – Shout something true about God.
- Serve the Lord with gladness (verse 2) – With a smile on your face, act out a way you can serve God.
- Come into His presence with singing (verse 2) – Sing your favorite praise song.
- Enter his gates with thanksgiving (verse 4) – Tell someone what you’re thankful for right now.
- Enter his courts with praise (verse 4) – Say a sentence prayer thanking God for who He is.
- Give thanks to him (verse 4) – Say a sentence prayer thanking God for one of His many gifts.
- Bless His name (verse 4) – Tell someone how God has been good to you.

As you get older, you will be able to join in more and more with what the congregation does on a Sunday morning, especially the reading and singing. But you don’t have to wait until you are old enough to get busy worshipping God!

Hymn of Praise – “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”

Robert Robinson (1735-1790) seems to have gotten mixed up with the wrong crowd as a young man, but when he heard the preaching of George Whitefield in 1752, the Holy Spirit began to do a work in him. He eventually became a Christian and a minister. He wrote several books and hymns, but his best-known work today is “Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing.” This hymn is a prayer asking for the Holy Spirit’s help to worship God the way He deserves to be worshiped. God’s mercy is pictured as an ever-flowing stream that ought to be praised with loud songs. The hymnwriter even wants God to teach him a song that angels sing in heaven, so that he can respond properly to God’s love. The original text (quoted here) refers in verse two to the Ebenezer stone that Samuel set up as a reminder that “The Lord helps us,” as He did in Israel’s defeat of the Philistines (1 Samuel 7:12). When we recall all that God has done for us, we should desire to worship Him rightly.

1 Come, thou fount of ev'ry blessing,
tune my heart to sing thy grace;
streams of mercy, never ceasing,
call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet,
sung by flaming tongues above;
praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it,
mount of God's unchanging love.

2 Here I raise my Ebenezer;
hither by thy help I'm come;
and I hope, by thy good pleasure,
safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger,
wand'ring from the fold of God:
he, to rescue me from danger,
interposed his precious blood.

3 O to grace how great a debtor
daily I'm constrained to be;
let that grace now, like a fetter,
bind my wand'ring heart to thee.
Prone to wander – Lord, I feel it –
prone to leave the God I love;
here's my heart, O take and seal it,
seal it for thy courts above.

As we sing this hymn, we ask God to make us into the worshipers that He deserves. We recall the times that God has helped us, especially the rescue provided by the blood of Jesus. We also acknowledge that even as believers we tend to wander, so we ask God to bind our hearts to Him and to preserve us until we reach the heavenly courts above.