



Worship service ideas

Scripture

Lectionary scriptures

Psalm 32:1-8; Isaiah 1:10-20; 2 Thessalonians 1:1-5, 11-12; Luke 18:1-10

Missional scripture

Matthew 28:18-20: “The Great Commission”

Gathering/Call to worship

Leader: We are here to worship you, God, our Creator, Redeemer and Enabler.

People: We bring all that we have and all that we are to this place of worship, acknowledging your love, grace and mercy to us.

Leader: Accept our worship of praise, thanksgiving and adoration in word and song. Free us from the burden of failure and despise.

All: *Pour your Holy Spirit upon us so that we may experience anew your call to share with all people the good news of Jesus Christ, the One who came to seek and to save the lost. Amen.*

Children’s story

Do you remember a time when you helped your parents, or grandparents, or teachers at school? What did you do? Why did you help? Was it because they asked you to help? Or did you feel guilty for not helping? Maybe you helped out of the goodness of your heart!

Just like you were asked to help, one time, the Mennonite church in Burkina Faso asked Bruce Yoder and Nancy Frey to come work with them. Bruce and Nancy also felt that God wanted them there, so they went with Mennonite Mission Network. They live in West Africa, in a country called Burkina Faso. They teach at lots of colleges and seminaries where people want

to learn about God. They also work at a house where the students stay during the school year.

Just like in our schools in *(insert location)*, at the schools in Burkina Faso, the students sometimes need help. Sometimes there are students who are left out, and don’t have any friends. Do you know people in your school who are left out? Maybe they don’t have any friends, and sit alone at lunch. But just like our parents sometimes ask us to help, God also asks us to help. Just like God asked Bruce and Nancy to help in Burkina Faso. What are some of the things that God asks our help for? *(Give to those who need something, do what is right, stand up for those who don’t have friends, be a friend, etc.)*

(Pray) Dear God, thank you for all of the ways that you have helped us in our lives by giving us friends and opportunities. Help us to hear when you ask us to help others. Let us be watchful for ways that we can show others your love. Amen.

Scripture

Matthew 28

Sermon starter

By Sandy Miller

Traditional mission emphasis on Matthew 28 has often focused the action at the end of the chapter with verses 18–20 and the emphasis on go and make disciples of all nations. Let’s sit back and read the chapter again and consider the movement within the chapter.

There is *divine interaction* at a cosmic level with the great earthquake as the angel of the Lord descends from heaven and rolls back the stone. A well-known angelic greeting of “do not be afraid” invites the women to *come* and see the place where Jesus is no more. Jesus is *going* ahead of them to Galilee, and they are instructed to inform

Note about your service

As usual, the songs, prayers and sermon suggestions listed here are taken from Mennonite resources and are just one way that you can incorporate the theme of mission into your worship. We encourage you to take a look at the ways your church does worship, and find ways to include the themes of mission and call at least once per year.

the disciples of this. When Jesus meets the women *on the way*, they fall at his feet and worship him.

As the women are *on their way*, we get a glimpse of the journey the guards are on. Instructed to change their story as to what they witnessed, they eliminate all divine and cosmic intervention related to the event, and their story is filled with untruth concerning Jesus' death and resurrection.

Joining the women, the 11 disciples *went* to Galilee as directed, and when they see Jesus, they worship him. Jesus gives them all the authority in heaven and earth and reminds them that he will be with them always. These last verses summarize the *ongoing* ministry of Jesus now given to his disciples and those who are baptized and believe.

In Matthew 28:19, the Greek verb *poreuomai* (por-yoo'-om-ahee), or *go*, is a participle, not an imperative, and notes ongoing action. A better way to understand this Great Commission is to consider *go* to mean *as you go*. In other New Testament texts, this Greek verb is interpreted as how one should conduct oneself, or how one should live and walk in faith. The Great Commission is for the entire congregation!

This message is for all of us; God's commission is for all of us to be making disciples *as we go*. As we go to work ... as we go to college ... as we go to family gatherings ... all that we do as individuals in our Christian journey is about making disciples. Rather than sending a select few to go and make disciples, we are all called to a discipleship lifestyle that invites others to join. Some people will be called to travel far away, but that does not release any of us from being about the work of Jesus where we are.

I also like to emphasize the importance of worship on the missional journey. Worship is one of the most important things that the body of Christ does collectively! The Mennonite Church is full of diversity, especially when we consider the worldwide Mennonite Church, and this is a gift. I've heard it said that Sunday-morning Christian worship is the most segregated time, and that is true in one respect. However, I believe it is also the most unified time as we worship the same God.

Believers around the world, baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,

join together in worship across the miles as God hears all of our praise. Thanks be to God that we have the promise of our Emmanuel, God with us, to the very end of time. To the end of time when all tribes and nations gather around the foot of the throne in praise to the Lamb ... but that's another sermon: Revelation 7:9.

Confessing/Reconciling

(Based on Psalm 32:1-7)

Leader: We confess our sins to you, O, God.

People: **We cannot hide them; you see our sins even in our silence.**

Leader: We confess our transgressions to you, O, God.

People: **We are tired and weak from fighting the floodwaters of judgment.**

Leader: We confess our rebellion to you, O, God.

People: **We are parched like sun-burnt clay, unable to absorb your overflowing love.**

Leader: O, God, You are our hiding place.

All: **You forgive us our sins. You love us in spite of our offenses. You protect us from the evil one. You restore us to right relationships and surround us with songs of victory. Amen.**

Sending/Benediction

(Based on Isaiah 1:17)

Go into the world. Seek justice. Help the oppressed. Defend the orphan. Plead for the widow. Share the good news of Jesus Christ. Go, with the Spirit of God, to witness to a world in need of healing and hope.

Giving project

Mission Bank Burkina Faso

No matter the age, you can participate in God's mission! Mennonite Mission Network's globe mission banks give teachers the resources to tell children about God's work in the world. Our most recent project is Burkina Faso. Involve all ages in mission, and get your mission bank tools here: www.MennoniteMission.net/Resources/MissionBank.

Suggested hymns and songs

HWB: 356, 367, 389, 395, 398,

SJ: 2, 13, 42, 54, 56, 61, 63, 64, 70, 81

SS: 40, 55, 124

Suggested worship songs

Mighty to Save
(Hillsong);

Surrender, I will follow (Chris Thomlin)

Suggested reading

HWB: 825

Suggested offering prayers

HWB: 683

SJ: 130

Suggested readings for sending

HWB: 761, 763

SJ: 158

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