

NOISE

A Youth Led Worship

Silent Meditation

“Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom, and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs to God” (Colossians 3:16).

This service is a celebration of the Book of Psalms. Many youth have a natural connection to Psalms and Proverbs because of their love of music and poetry. All the parts of the service are based on a different psalm. The order of worship is traditional with the content of each part of the service customized for this service. The proclamation of the word is a collection of favorite psalms presented in a variety of easy dramas. All the psalms are from the NRSV unless otherwise indicated.

The service opens with the youth calling everyone to worship with a drum circle. Use lots of homemade percussion instruments like paint buckets, coffee cans, and paper towel tubes filled with dried beans; and use them with traditional instruments like tambourines, wood blocks, congas, and bongo drums. As people enter the worship space, invite them to select an instrument to use in the drum circle. Use a lead drummer on the congas to keep the beat and signal the group to start and stop.

Drum Circle

Call to Worship (from Psalm 95)

O come, let us sing to the LORD;

Let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation

Let us come into his presence with thanksgiving

Let us make a joyful noise to God with songs of praise!

Let us make a joyful noise!

Let us make a joyful noise to our LORD and Maker!

Opening Song

Glory to God, 637 “O Sing to the Lord”

Confession (based on Psalm 51)

Call to Confession

The psalmist writes that the sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit and a broken, contrite heart is something God will never despise. Bring your broken hearts and contrite spirits to our loving God:

Prayer of Confession (unison)

Have mercy on me, O God, for I am a sinner. You know my transgressions. You know my weaknesses. You know my faults and failures. You know my mistakes. You know me, God, and yet you love me still. Remove my sin from me, I am guilty.

Create in me a clean heart, ready to love you and love my neighbor. Make my slate clean. Forgive me and love me; restore to me the joy of your salvation.

Assurance of Pardon

The knowledge that you forgive us is our joy! We open our lips and declare your praise for you have delivered us from our sin and made us new! Alleluia! Amen!

Sing

Gloria Patri

Prayer of Illumination (based on Psalm 119)

O LORD, your Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Give us grace to receive your truth in faith and love, and strength to follow on the path you set before us; through Jesus Christ, amen.

First Reading: Second Chronicles 5:11-14

Now when the priests came out of the holy place (for all the priests who were present had sanctified themselves, without regard to their divisions), all the levitical singers, Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun, their sons and kindred, arrayed in fine linen, with cymbals, harps, and lyres, stood east of the altar with one hundred twenty priests who were trumpeters. It was the duty of the trumpeters and singers to make themselves heard in unison in praise and thanksgiving to the Lord, and when the song was raised, with trumpets and cymbals and other musical instruments, in praise to the LORD, "For he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever," the house, the house of the LORD, was filled with a cloud, so that the priests could not stand to minister because of the cloud; for the glory of the LORD filled the house of God.

This is the Word of the LORD.

Thanks be to God.

Anthem or Hymn

If you prefer to do a hymn instead of an anthem, a good option might be the praise song, “Better is One Day in Your Courts.” Its chorus is based on Psalm 84:10. Possible hymns from Glory to God that would be good congregational songs are:

- 626—“As the Deer” (Psalm 42)
- 802—“The King of Love My Shepherd Is” (Psalm 23)
- 679—“Let the Whole Creation Cry” (Psalm 148)
- 54—“Make a Joyful Noise to God” (Psalm 66)
- 37—“Let All Things Now Living” (Psalm 148)

Second Reading: Psalm 117

Praise the LORD, all you nations!

Extol him, all you peoples!

For great is his steadfast love toward us,

and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever.

Praise the LORD!

The Word of the LORD.

Thanks be to God.

Proclamation of the Word: Noises from the Psalter

As our proclamation of God’s Word for this service, six psalms will be presented in six different ways. Listen anew to the ancient hymnbook of our faith.

Psalm 148

The idea for this piece comes from the “Fat Heads” used at basketball games. The youth work together to create their own posters that illustrate different aspects of creation named in the psalm. As the narrator reads the psalm, the youth hold up the corresponding posters. On the back of all the posters the phrase, “Praise the Lord!” is spelled out, and at the end of the psalm the posters are flipped over and all the youth shout, “Praise the Lord!”

Praise the LORD!

Praise the LORD from the heavens; praise him in the heights!

Praise him, all his angels; praise him, all his host!

Praise him, sun and moon; praise him, all you shining stars!

Praise him, you highest heavens, and you waters above the heavens!

Let them praise the name of the LORD, for he commanded and they were created.

He established them forever and ever; he fixed their bounds, which cannot be passed.

Praise the LORD from the earth, you sea monsters and all deeps,

fire and hail, snow and frost, stormy wind fulfilling his command!

Mountains and all hills, fruit trees and all cedars!
 Wild animals and all cattle, creeping things and flying birds!
 Kings of the earth and all peoples, princes and all rulers of the earth!
 Young men and women alike, old and young together!
 Let them praise the name of the LORD, for his name alone is exalted; his glory is
 above earth and heaven.
 He has raised up a horn for his people, praise for all his faithful, for the people of
 Israel who are close to him.
 Praise the LORD!

Psalm 47

This psalm is presented in the style of a Greek Chorus. Three different youth alternate the lines and all the other youth serve as the chorus. When the words are in bold capitals, the entire group says the words together. Anytime the word “clap” is said, all of the youth clap. After the word “Awesome,” the chorus whispers it over and over to sound like an echoing crowd. Finally, one youth with a trumpet plays a fanfare when the phrase “sound of a trumpet” is said. This takes some practice, but the effect is really cool, especially the surprise of the trumpet.

Clap your hands, all you peoples! (*clap!*)
SHOUT to God with **LOUD** songs of **JOY!**
 For the LORD, the Most High, is **AWESOME**, (Awesome, Awesome, Awesome, etc.)
 a great king over all the earth.
 Clap your hands, all you peoples! (*clap!*)
 God subdued peoples under us, and nations under our feet.
 He chose our heritage for us, the pride of Jacob whom he loves (**HE LOVES US!**)
 God has gone up with a **SHOUT**,
 the LORD with the sound of a trumpet (*trumpet sounds*) Sing praises to God,
SING PRAISES;
 Sing praises to our King, **SING PRAISES.**
 For God is **THE KING** of all the earth; sing praises with a psalm. **SING PRAISES!**
 Clap your hands, all you peoples (*clap!*)
 God is **KING** over the nations; God sits on his holy throne.
 The princes of the peoples gather as the people of the God of Abraham.
 For the shields of the earth belong to God. **WHO IS HIGHLY EXALTED.**
 Clap your hands, all you peoples (*clap!*)

Psalm 19

This reading borrows a technique called a “scripture tableau” from Friends from the Groom. (A wonderful article, “Freeze Frame: Dramatic Scripture Telling Using Tableaux” in Reformed Worship explains this process.) You will need a chime or a triangle, a narrator, and a group of youth who serve as the actors in the tableaux. The psalm is broken down into shorter phrases that make good visual pictures and does not always follow the verse breaks. As the psalm is read in short phrases, the actors create positions that they freeze into and illustrate each phrase. Allow the actors to choose their positions, but feel free to make suggestions if the positions do not read well from the congregation. It is good to have someone standing at the back of the room looking at the tableaux to make sure that they make sense and are dramatic. The narrator begins by reading the following instructions:

Narrator: For our reading from Psalm 19, we will present a tableau. When you hear this sound (ring the chime or triangle), please close your eyes and listen as I read. When you hear the chime the second time, open your eyes and look at the tableau. I will ring the chime again and you will then close your eyes and wait for the chime to ring a second time to open them. The chime will tell you when to open and close your eyes as the psalm is presented. Now as I ring the chime, please close your eyes and listen for the word of God from Psalm 19.

The heavens are telling the glory of God;
and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.
Day to day pours forth speech,
and night to night declares knowledge.
There is no speech, nor are there words;
their voice is not heard;
yet their voice goes out through all the earth,
and their words to the end of the world.
In the heavens he has set a tent for the sun,
which comes out like a bridegroom from his wedding canopy,
and like a strong man runs its course with joy.
Its rising is from the end of the heavens,
and its circuit to the end of them;
and nothing is hid from its heat.
Let the words of my mouth
and the meditation of my heart
be acceptable to you,
O Lord, my rock and my redeemer.

Psalm 100

This psalm is presented in what is called a “scripture pyramid.” The 10 youth participating stand in a pyramid shape: with four on the front row, three on the second, two on the third, and one on the fourth row. Make sure to match voice pitches on each row with the lowest voices together on the front row and the highest voice on the fourth. The psalm is broken down as shown below. Whenever there is one word on the line the single voice on row four reads it; whenever there are two words, the two voices on row three read it; and so on. Suggestion: place the youth on the fourth row on a box so that she/he stands above the youth in front of her/him.

Make
a joyful
noise to the Lord,
all the earth.

Worship
the Lord with gladness;
come
into his presence
with singing.

Know
that the Lord
is God.
It is he
that made
us
and we are his.

Enter
his gates with
thanksgiving
and his courts
with praise.

Give thanks
To him, bless his name
For the Lord
is good
his steadfast love
endures forever
and
his faithfulness
to all generations. (all voices)

Psalm 121 from *The Message*

This psalm is presented as a drama. Four youth speak the different lines and they should be encouraged to memorize their lines because voices 2–4 move as they speak. Voice 1 stands in the center with voices 2–4 standing around voice 1 in a half circle. As voices 2–4 say their lines, they move around voice 1 changing positions. After voices 2–4 read their last lines, they walk away leaving voice 1 alone to say the final four lines.

Voice 1: I look up to the mountains;
does my strength come from mountains?
No, my strength comes from God,
who made heaven, and earth, and mountains.

Voice 2: God won't let you stumble,
Voice 3: your Guardian God won't fall asleep.
Voice 4: Not on your life!
Voice 2: Israel's Guardian will never doze or sleep.

Voice 3: God's your Guardian,
Voice 4: right at your side to protect you—
Voice 2: Shielding you from sunstroke,
Voice 3: sheltering you from moonstroke.

Voice 4: God guards you from every evil,
Voice 2: he guards your very life.
Voice 3: God guards you when you leave and when you return,
Voice 4: God guards you now, he guards you always.

Voice 1: I look up to the mountains;
does my strength come from mountains?
No, my strength comes from God,
who made heaven, and earth, and mountains.

Psalm 150

This is a lot of fun! Youth enjoy playing the different instruments. One youth serves as a narrator and other youth are assigned to each instrument: trumpet, lute, harp, tambourine, strings, pipe, finger cymbals, and crash cymbals. If you do not have access to a lute or harp, use a guitar for the lute and an autoharp for the harp. For strings, use a couple of violins and a viola. If you have youth learning these instruments, it is an opportunity to share their gifts. For the pipe, use a penny whistle or a flute if you have a youth who is a flutist. You may be able to borrow crash cymbals from a local high school. As the psalm is read, the narrator pauses long enough for each instrument to be played.

Praise the LORD!
Praise God in his sanctuary;
 praise him in his mighty firmament!
Praise him for his mighty deeds;
 praise him according to his surpassing greatness!
Praise him with trumpet sound;
 praise him with lute and harp!
Praise him with tambourine and dance;
 praise him with strings and pipe!
Praise him with clanging cymbals;
 praise him with loud clashing cymbals!
Let everything that breathes praise the LORD!
Praise the LORD!

Hymn

Glory to God, 327 “From All that Dwells Below the Sky” (Psalm 117)

Affirmation of Faith (based on Psalm 23)

Please remain standing as we affirm our faith using words based on Psalm 23.

Let us say together:

The Lord is our shepherd, we have everything we need from our God.

 God gives us rest in the green meadows and beside the cool waters;
You, O God, restore our souls.

 We are lead down right paths that bring honor to your name.
Even when we walk through dark and difficult valleys we will not fear;
For our God is with us,

 protecting, comforting, guarding and guiding every step we take.

You prepare a table before us
 in the presence of our enemies;

You lavish us with blessings to the point of overflowing.

We know with confidence that your goodness and mercy will follow us
 all the days of our lives,

And our eternity shall be in the house of the LORD forever and ever. Amen.

Prayers of the People

Our youth had so much fun using instruments in the drum circle and presentation of Psalm 150 that they decided it would be a different way to lead the Prayers of the People. As each instrument was played, people were allowed to speak their prayer concerns. Ask a few parents in advance to help encourage the congregation by speaking up loudly with their petitions. The instruments that we used were trumpet, tambourine, autoharp, congas, violin, and egg shakers, but any instruments could be used, even a single instrument repeated throughout the prayers. The youth leading the prayers gives instructions for the congregation. After the instructions are given, a trumpeter may play a short fanfare as a call to prayer.

Leader: As we prepare to lift up our prayers to God, please keep in mind all of the names on our Prayer List today.

In all the noise around us, how can God hear us? How can we hear God?
In the deep silence of this time and space, let us lift up our prayers to God.

When you hear the sound of one of the instruments, feel free to speak aloud the petitions on your hearts. Once the instrument stops playing, keep silent again.
Let us pray.

Trumpet sounds

Oh God, we know you are listening and that you can hear us over the noise around us, but listen, for your children are praying.

First instrument plays

Hear our prayers as we pray for the world . . . the powerful and powerless . . .
the hungry and angry . . . the places at war and the places living in peace.

Second instrument plays

Hear our prayers as we pray for the hurting and lost . . . the despairing . . .
the friendless . . . the downtrodden people.

Third instrument plays

Hear our prayers as we pray for the church . . . for unity and diversity . . . for leaders
and dreamers . . . for missions and services here and around the world.

Fourth instrument plays

Hear our prayers as we pray for the sick and dying . . . the hopeless and the grieving . . . the young and the old . . . the neighbors and strangers.

Final instrument plays or all the instruments play

Hear the prayers of your people, O God, for we are bold to pray as our Savior and your Son taught us saying together:

“Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.”

Call to Offering (Psalm 37)

Hear the words of the Psalmist: “The righteous are generous and keep giving.” May we be generous and share our gifts of lives and labors to our God. Let us receive our tithes and offerings.

Offertory

If possible, have the offertory provided by a youth who is proficient at playing the piano. However, if you have youth who are learning a variety of musical instruments or who are gifted singers, present their musical talents during the offertory.

Doxology: Prayer of Thanksgiving (from Psalm 138)

Let us give thanks to the LORD with our whole hearts for great are the works of the LORD. He provides for us and the works of his hands are faithful and just. We offer to God the gifts of our very selves and dedicate them to the use of the Kingdom. In the name of Christ we pray. Amen.

Closing Hymn

Glory to God, 364 “Lift Up the Gates Eternal” (Psalm 24)

This hymn is a lot of fun and is based on a folk song that is easy to dance to. Work with the church pianist to increase the tempo after the refrain so that by the end of the song, folks are singing and dancing to a quick rhythm.

Charge & Benediction (from Psalm 67)

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us.
Let the peoples, praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you.
And all of God's people said: AMEN!

Response to the Benediction: "Revolution"

It is our group's tradition to end each Youth Sunday with an energizer. The favorite of the group is "Revolution" by Kirk Franklin. Instructions can be found in Holy Motion. Although this resource is now out of print, there are videos of "Revolution" being led on YouTube.

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