



## Divine services for children

Suggested at least once a quarter, on a local or regional basis, a children's service should use the special Divine Service Guide that is provided for that quarter. Children's service Divine Service Guides replace the Sunday morning Divine Service Guide and should not be used in addition to the Sunday Divine Service Guide for that day.

The purpose is to:

- give the children a special word that is understandable, memorable, and relevant
- clearly put them in the center of the congregation
- create opportunity to connect multiple generations within the congregation
- strengthen the value of the divine service and increase their knowledge of Christ and the Bible

In order to help build excitement and to ensure that the entire congregation is prepared for these unique services, they should be announced well in advance. It is encouraged to consider setting a consistent frequency of the services (i.e. the last Sunday of the first month of each quarter). Where possible, the children can participate in some of the congregational functions (ushering, greeting, as the choir, etc.). The person giving the children's message should be someone that has the capability to communicate and connect well with the children. For example, a Sunday school teacher, young adult, etc. that is dedicated to prepare for this responsibility.

### Liturgy

The divine service is opened in the normal way with the invocation, opening prayer, Bible verse, and response hymn. Thereafter, the minister at the altar can introduce the theme and a few thoughts, which should not exceed 5 minutes.

The person giving the children's message then begins in front of the altar, speaking directly to the children, who should be sitting in the first rows.

The unique children's portion is per the recommendations set out by the Children's Work Group that accompanied the Children's service Divine Service Guide for that given quarter. This section of the divine service can be anywhere from 15-25 minutes, depending on the number of students and their ages, and can include methods such as speaking, props, skits, demonstrations, and simulation. Questions and dialogue between the children and facilitator are encouraged.

During this time, the priests should sit in the congregation. The children's component can end with a congregational hymn, which allows the priest to return to the altar. The officiant can then summarize the children's component and prepare the congregation for Holy Communion, which should take no longer than 10 minutes. From then on, the service liturgy continues as normal.

It is also suggested that lunch or refreshments with the congregation be available after the service to highlight and celebrate these children services, and to provide additional opportunity for generations to interact with each other.



## Everyone is invited to contribute

### **Bible Text:**

*For the kingdom of heaven is like a man travelling to a far country, who called his own servants and delivered his goods to them. And to one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one, to each according to his own ability; and immediately he went on a journey.*

--Matthew 25:14-15

**Message:** Together we are strong!

### **Introduction**

Our Bible text is taken from the parable of the talents in *Matthew 25:14-30*. A man preparing for a trip calls his three servants to entrust them with a great deal of money so that they can continue with the business and multiply his money while he is abroad. He will settle accounts with them (*verse 19*) after he returns.

The three servants are entrusted with varying amounts of money, each according to his abilities (*verse 15*).

What is important here is that

- The man entrusts each one of the servants with some money, showing that he has confidence in all of them.
- none of the servants has to do more than his capabilities will allow.

The course of the parable shows that the three servants obviously understood their responsibilities differently. The men who had received five and two talents had each doubled the capital with which they had been entrusted by the time their employer returned. They had quickly gone and worked with it. Their master told them that they had done well and that they were faithful servants. The master wants to entrust them with even more in the future and share his happiness with them.

The third servant was not successful. This was no wonder because he had buried the money entrusted to him. It goes without saying that he was not praised by his master.

### **Main part**

Some might think: "I can't do anything. I'm not good at anything. Surely God has no use for me." But that is not the case. God has loved us from the very beginning. He has created us in His image and given us many talents and gifts. God has given everyone special abilities. That is why we complement each other, can help one another, and be there for one another.





If we use our gifts for the good of others, then everyone benefits, and our fellowship will be strong. Then things will not develop as they did in the parable, where each servant only thought of himself but did not look out for his fellows. Instead, let us support each other and give one another helpful advice so that no one is excluded.

### Summary

Let us ask God how we can apply our gifts and talents in His work and use them to help our neighbor.

### Didactic tips

- To make it easier for the children to discover their own strengths, the following questions can help: “what do your friends like about you especially?” What were you praised for this week?”
- To remind them of the divine service, the children can write their skills on coins made from construction paper (or card stock) and take these home with them in a small bag. The teacher asks the children to use their strengths and talents.
- After the divine serve, each child receives a sheet of paper listing different gifts and talents. Each child then goes around and asks the other children to put their names behind the things they are good at. This way the children discover that everyone has special gifts and skills and that they all complement each other.

### Supplemental Notes and Activity Ideas:

#### ***Matthew 25:14-30***

<sup>14</sup> “Again, here is what the kingdom of heaven will be like. A man was going on a journey. He sent for his slaves and put them in charge of his money. <sup>15</sup> He gave five bags of gold to one. He gave two bags to another. And he gave one bag to the third. The man gave each slave the amount of money he knew the slave could take care of. Then he went on his journey. <sup>16</sup> The slave who had received five bags of gold went at once and put his money to work. He earned five bags more. <sup>17</sup> The one with the two bags of gold earned two more. <sup>18</sup> But the man who had received one bag went and dug a hole in the ground. He hid his master’s money in it.

<sup>19</sup> “After a long time the master of those slaves returned. He wanted to collect all the money they had earned. <sup>20</sup> The man who had received five bags of gold brought the other five. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you trusted me with five bags of gold. See, I have earned five more.’

<sup>21</sup> “His master replied, ‘You have done well, good and faithful slave! You have been faithful with a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’

<sup>22</sup> “The man with two bags of gold also came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘you trusted me with two bags of gold. See, I have earned two more.’





<sup>23</sup> “His master replied, ‘You have done well, good and faithful slave! You have been faithful with a few things. I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master’s happiness!’  
<sup>24</sup> “Then the man who had received one bag of gold came. ‘Master,’ he said, ‘I knew that you are a hard man. You harvest where you have not planted. You gather crops where you have not scattered seed. <sup>25</sup> So I was afraid. I went out and hid your gold in the ground. See, here is what belongs to you.’  
<sup>26</sup> “His master replied, ‘You evil, lazy slave! So you knew that I harvest where I have not planted? You knew that I gather crops where I have not scattered seed? <sup>27</sup> Well then, you should have put my money in the bank. When I returned, I would have received it back with interest.’  
<sup>28</sup> “Then his master commanded the other slaves, ‘Take the bag of gold from him. Give it to the one who has ten bags. <sup>29</sup> Everyone who has will be given more. They will have more than enough. And what about anyone who doesn’t have? Even what they have will be taken away from them. <sup>30</sup> Throw that worthless slave outside. There in the darkness, people will weep and grind their teeth.’

---

### Going Deeper...

#### **Serving One Another in the Body of Christ - Romans 12:3-6 (NIRV)**

<sup>3</sup> God’s grace has been given to me. So here is what I say to every one of you. Don’t think of yourself more highly than you should. Be reasonable when you think about yourself. Keep in mind the faith God has given to each of you. <sup>4</sup> Each of us has one body with many parts. And the parts do not all have the same purpose. <sup>5</sup> So also we are many persons. But in Christ we are one body. And each part of the body belongs to all the other parts. <sup>6</sup> We all have gifts. They differ according to the grace God has given to each of us. Do you have the gift of prophecy? Then use it according to the faith you have.

### Visual Aids

#### **A Little In - A Lot Out – Kidney Bean Demonstration**

At least a week before the service, remove a good amount of dry kidney beans from their bag and soak them in water overnight. Fold a paper towel to about the size of a zip-lock sandwich bag. Place the folded paper towels into sandwich bags and moisten them with water. Place a few of the soaked kidney beans in the bag and place them somewhere with the bean side down for at least a few days.

The beans will sprout after a few days, and the children will be able to see that a few little beans can make a big plant; the “little in” has the potential to become “a lot out.” Once the beans have fully sprouted, they can be eaten as bean sprouts, or they can be planted to produce more beans. Explain to the children that this is what God will do with the gifts He has given to us. If we stay close to Him and follow His commandments, and use our gifts and talents, He will bless and multiply our efforts.





The children could also do this after service and take them home to try the experiment. Write a message or memory verse on the bag to remind the children what they learned.

### **Each Room has a Purpose**

Hand out the paper and markers or pencils. Give the children 5-10 minutes to draw various rooms located within their homes. Make suggestions such as bedrooms, bathrooms, kitchen, dining room, living room, basement, etc.

Talk with the children about all the different types of rooms in a house. (*Allow children to describe the rooms they have drawn.*) There are bedrooms, bathroom(s), a kitchen, a family room/living room, etc. Some homes have a laundry room, a garage, a basement, and a few even have a workshop. It is kind of amazing when you think about it, all those different rooms each serving a different role; yet, they are all part of the same house.

Before the house was built, each room was designed for a specific purpose. It would be hard to sleep without a bedroom. Where would you wash up if you did not have a bathroom? Without a kitchen, you would have to leave the house to get a hot meal. Family room/living rooms are the perfect place to spend time with those you love. Each room in the house has an important function, and it is much the same with people.

Just as a house is made up of many different rooms, God's Kingdom is made up of many different people, each of whom contribute to the growth of God's Kingdom in one or more ways.

### **Community project**

Matthew 25:35-36

"For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me."

It is important for our children to learn to use the gifts God has given them to bring joy to others. It is equally important that they learn to live lives that overflow with the characteristics of the Fruit of the Spirit, and that they have experiences in which they learn to share the love of God and develop servant hearts. We need to give them opportunities to serve.

Helpful Tips for teaching children how to show others the love of Jesus:

- Find a way to help fill a need
- Smile a lot
- Use kind words
- Pray with and for them





## Children

Some suggestions/ideas:

- Make cards and treats for a local nursing home and visit the residents there. Children can talk with, pray with and sing a simple song to the residents, just to let them know that Jesus loves them too and has not forgotten about them.
- Get a rake, some yard waste bags, and head off some fall and rake as many leaves as you can for elderly or disabled individuals in your community. If it's winter, shovel snow. If it's summer, mow their grass. Before you leave, pray together with and for the person you worked so hard for, and encourage the children to show "love" (hug/high-five) for that special person too.
- Get together with some friends and go grocery shopping for a needy family. Pitch in a few dollars each and see how far you can stretch the money. Deliver the food with homemade cards. Pray together with the children (let them pray too) for the family/person who is receiving the food.
- Go to a children's hospital in your area and visit the kids there. The children can make pictures or cards to bring with them to share. Encourage the children to just go out of their way to help those they visit to know they are loved and prayed for.

