



## 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.



## Gathering treasures that will not perish

### **Bible Text:**

*Lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust destroys and where thieves do not break in and steal. Matthew 6:20*

**Message:** Let us gather treasures in heaven.

### **Elaboration:**

#### **Introduction**

In this divine service for children we will take the children with us on a trip into the time of Jesus. Together with the first disciples, He travels through the land and preaches the gospel everywhere. Many people follow Him. One day He goes up a mountain and teaches His listeners from the mountain. Among other things, He gives the counsel that comprises our Bible text today. This passage calls upon us to store treasure in heaven.

#### **Main Part**

Our children also collect things here and there, for example: pearls, animal stickers, soccer cards, shells, dolls, model cars, etc. They take care of the things they treasure and store them in albums or boxes, and take joy in their collections. For adults, such collections might take another form. Some enthusiasts may even collect old cars—classic automobiles—or perhaps valuable coins.

#### **Moths, Rust and Thieves**

Unfortunately, moths have a habit of gnawing holes into clothing or carpets, making them rather unsightly and causing them to lose their value. Many a collector has invested a great deal of time and money into an antique car in order to liberate it of its rust, only to give it up in the end because there was just too much rust. From time to time, we also hear about thieves who break into people's homes and steal their valuable collections.

#### **But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven...**

The Son of God advises His listeners to lay up treasures in heaven, that is, to collect treasures that will not fade away. After all, neither moths, nor rust, nor thieves have access to heaven!

What sorts of treasures might these be? Following are some examples.

- **Fellowship with God**

The twelve-year-old Jesus tells His parents the following when they finally find Him: "Why did you seek me? Did you not know that I must be about My Father's business?" (*Luke 2:49*). Learning to find joy in the divine services and the various church classes is the best way to enjoy fellowship with God already here today. This will lead to direct fellowship with Him on the day of the Lord, and will then remain an everlasting treasure.





- **Gentleness**

Jesus Christ is an example to us in gentleness (*Matthew 11:29*). He is the opposite of quarrelsomeness. The Lord advised the rich young man to follow Him – in other words, to strive after His example – so that he too might “have treasure in heaven” (*Mark 10:21*).

- **Love for God and our neighbor**

Those who love God will also keep His commandments (*1 John 5:3*). The commandment to love our neighbor calls upon us to treat all people with love (*CNAC 5.2.2; CNAC-QA 286*). In contrast to earthly treasures, love will never cease (*1 Corinthians 13:8*), and is thus an eternal treasure in heaven.

### Didactic tips

- Child appropriate collectables are presented.
- A skit can be performed by the children: gentleness/quarrelsomeness.

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### Supplemental Notes and Activity Ideas:

#### Props

Display a “treasure chest” filled with gold coins, play money, and strings of beads and pearls (craft stores have lots of look-a-like inexpensive items.) Talk with students about what they treasure, where they keep it, where adults keep things they treasure (like safety deposit box, safe, under the bed, jewelry box). What is so appealing about going on a treasure hunt?

#### Talk with the Children

What do you value? What is most important to you? [Give students a few moments to respond]. Let’s look at a few verses that tell us about treasures and treasuring things. Let’s begin with our memory verse in *Matthew 6:21*. Jesus spoke these words: “For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.” In other words, our treasure is what we really care about. Our treasure will be the focus of our life. I’m sure you’ve heard stories of men who have lived all their lives making lots and lots of money. It is only when they are faced with the end of their earthly life that they begin to understand that treasuring money was all for nothing – they can’t take that kind of treasure with them into eternity! So what kind of treasure can we take with us into eternity?

Let’s do a treasure hunt on paper, and see what our Bible tells us we can treasure.

Have a second treasure chest filled with 5 large gems of different shapes and sizes (made out of colored cardstock or something similar), and present it to the children as God’s treasure chest. On each gem write one of the following words: knowledge, respect, commandments, God’s Word, and wisdom.





The Following Scripture Verses can be looked up in the Bible (by children if possible with assistance as needed). The verses will reveal a different gem in God's treasure chest. An alternative might be to already have each verse written out on a large poster or sticky poster size post-it. Have the congregation read the verse altogether, then talk about it and have the children identify what treasure(s) are presented in the Bible verse.

- **Colossians 2:3** "...that is, Christ Himself, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."
- **Psalms 119:11** "Thy word I have treasured in my heart, that I may not sin against Thee."
- **Proverbs 7:1** "My son, keep my words, and treasure my commandments within you."
- **Isaiah 33:6** "And He shall be the stability of your times, A wealth of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge. The fear of the Lord is his treasure."

Review what the verses reveal about what treasures we want to have. Ask the children if these treasures will last for a little while or forever and why.

We treasure:

1. The Lord and our relationship with Him.  
*We treasure our relationship with Him. We talk to Him every day. We ask Him to help us do what He wants us to do each day. We want Him to be number one in our life. (Colossians 2:3)*
2. God's Word.  
*We want to read the Bible, God's Word and learn how He wants us to live. If we follow what God has said in His Word, we will live a life with many blessings. We need to treasure God's Word and do our best to apply it to our lives. (Psalm 119:11)*
3. God's Commandments.  
*God gave us certain rules to live by, including loving the Lord more than ANYTHING or ANYONE else, and loving our neighbor as ourselves. God wants us to treasure His commandments and do our very best to keep them. (Proverbs 7:1)*
4. Fear of the Lord.  
*This means that we have "awe" or "respect" or "reverence" for God. We know to whom we are speaking when we are praying – the Master and Creator of the Universe! We know He is omnipotent (all-powerful), omniscient (all-knowing), and omnipresent (everywhere). We want to treasure the awesomeness of the Lord. (Isaiah 33:6)*
5. Wisdom and Knowledge.  
*True wisdom and knowledge comes from God. Solomon desired God's wisdom and he was blessed with it. We need to seek after God's wisdom and knowledge, and treasure these things. (Isaiah 33:6)*



### **Earthly vs. Heavenly Treasure**

Material things of this earth, like toys, trees, houses, and cars are only temporary. They may last a long time, but they will never last forever. Eventually they will be destroyed by water, wind, fire, sun, or just age. So, if we store our treasures on earth, we are kind of wasting our time because they won't last. But by building up our relationship with God, and by doing His Will here on earth, we are storing up treasures in Heaven that will last forever. If time permits, create a list on the board. On one side, have the children list things that are temporary, and on the other side list things that are everlasting.

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### **Further Bible Reading ~ Matthew 6:19-21 (NIV)**

Treasures in Heaven

19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

