



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.



How to Speak and Act Properly

Bible Text:

Listen, for I will speak of excellent things, and from the opening of my lips will come right things; for my mouth will speak truth; wickedness is an abomination to my lips. Proverbs 8:6-7

Message: Let us always speak and act truthfully.

Introduction

“Nobody believes a liar.”

Little Mary only invented a “good excuse” because she didn’t want to disappoint her mother with her poor grades at school. And her big brother, Joseph, only told some fibs to his classmates so that they would finally stop bothering him and give him a bit more respect in their group. White lies aren’t really lies, are they?

Main Part

Right from the start of human history, the evil one has proven himself to be the father of lies.

- Eve allowed herself to be enticed by the serpent, and Adam did not really inquire into the truth of God’s will either (*Genesis 3:4; John 8:44*). And that is how the burden of original sin came upon mankind.
- Cain did not heed the loving admonition and clear warning of God. He became the murderer of his brother Abel, and a liar to his parents (*Genesis 4:1-16*).

From the beginning, lies and deceit have been some of the evil one’s cruel instruments of power. And over the course of history, many bitter disappointments and emotional injuries have resulted from ungodly and untruthful words and deeds.

Peter also serves as an example of this, namely when he denied Jesus three times in a row – despite having been forewarned (*Matthew 26:34 et seq.*).

Thank the Lord we can count on the kindness and goodness of God again and again, even in all our imperfections!

- Through Jesus’ sacrifice, our sins can even be forgiven today if we sincerely regret them and do our best to improve (*CNAC-QA 643 et seq.*).
- In Holy Communion we receive spiritual strength in order to remain in the fellowship of life with Christ (*CNAC-QA 505*).





Conclusion

The importance of honest and truthful dealings with one another is also underlined by the commandment: “you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor” (*Exodus 20:16*). As children of God, let us heed this commandment, avoid that which is ungodly, and always make room for the truth!

Didactic tips

After the lead-in, it would be a good thing if the teacher were to explain how some animals interact with one another, for example, fish, birds, insects, etc. This is also a good opportunity to explain to the children the value of human speech. We are able to clearly communicate with each other. This includes both hearing and the willingness to do that which we hear, however.

At the end, we can summarize the value of honesty and truthfulness using the story of Socrates and the three sieves (possibly in the form of a skit or play):

One day a man came up to Socrates in excitement and said, “Listen, I have to tell you something about your friend who...”

“Wait a moment”, interrupted Socrates, “before you carry on, have you passed the story you are about to tell me through the three sieves?”

“What three sieves?” asked the man in surprise.

Socrates then explained as follows: “The first sieve is the sieve of truth. Are you certain that what you are about to tell me is really true?”

“No, I heard it from someone else.”

“Aha! Well, how about the second sieve, the sieve of goodness? Is it something good that you want to tell me about my friend?”

With some hesitation, the man replied, “No, not exactly. On the contrary...”

“Hmm,” said Socrates, “now there only one sieve left, namely the third one. Is the story you are about to tell me—the one you are so excited about – necessary?”

“No, not really,” replied the man.

“Well then,” said Socrates with a smile, “if the story you want to tell me is not true, not good, and not even necessary, it is best you forget about it and do not involve me either!”

Note: the directives of the respective District Church are to be taken into account when acting out a skit or play.

Supplemental Notes and Activity Ideas:

Thought-Provoking Questions

- Do you know who the father of lies is? (*Satan*)
- Who do you want as your Father?
- Do you think lying honors your Father (*God*) and your family?



Lying damages your relationship with your family/friends and God hates a lying tongue – so we must “put off” lying. If we truly love God with our whole heart, then we follow his word and do what is pleasing to Him. We choose to walk in the light, because that is right according to God.

Further Scripture Reading

- **Ephesians 4:25** – *“But that is not the way of life in Christ that you learned about. You heard about Christ and were taught about life in him. What you learned was the truth about Jesus. You were taught not to live the way you used to. You must get rid of your old way of life. That’s because it has been made impure by the desire for things that lead you astray. You were taught to be made new in your thinking. You were taught to start living a new life. It is created to be truly good and holy, just as God is. So each of you must get rid of your lying. Speak the truth to your neighbor. We are all parts of one body.”*
- **Proverbs 6:17** – *“The Lord hates...a lying tongue...”*
- **Proverbs 12:22** – *“The Lord hates those whose lips tell lies. But he is pleased with people who tell the truth.”*
- **Psalms 19:14** – *“Lord, may these words of my mouth please you. And may these thoughts of my heart please you also. You are my Rock and my Redeemer.”*
- **Ephesians 5:8-11, 18-20** – *“...Live like children of the light. The light produces what is completely good, right and true. Find out what pleases the Lord. Have nothing to do with the acts of darkness. They don’t produce anything good. Instead, be filled with the Holy Spirit. Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord. Always give thanks to God the Father for everything. Give thanks to him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”*

Object Talk – “Double Trouble”

Build a two-story house using a deck of cards. This will represent the instability of lying. Then build a house using blocks. This will represent the stability of telling the truth.

Use the demonstration to show the children that when we lie, our house just like the card house is unstable and eventually it will come crashing down around you. But when we build a house with truth it is strong and stable, just like the block house. It won’t fall down, and it is dependable and trustworthy. When you always tell the truth, your friends and family and others know that they can count on you. When you choose to lie, eventually those around you will not trust you or your word.

Please see: www.kidssundayschool.com → Grade School → Object Talks → Double Trouble for detailed instructions and more ideas on how to lead the discussion.

