

God's Family Gathering

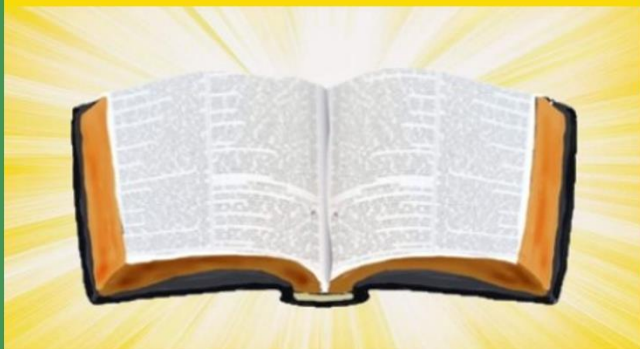
1. The Gathering



2. Joining Heavenly Worship



3. Feeding on God's Word



4. Preparing our Hearts



5. Feeding on the Eucharist



6. The Dismissal



Lesson 14: *God's Family Gathering* (Condensed Version)

Saint Matthew's Anglican Church Children's Ministries

THE CHURCH SERVICE (Matt. 18:20; Rev. 4,5,7)

Year 2. Kingdom Life
Unit 5: Kingdom Family

Objectives: To explain that: *Today's story is about God's Kingdom Family, the Church. *The Church is the Family of God. God is our Father, and we are his children. In our church service each Sunday we participate in the story of God's family gathering. *In our church service, we join **with** the heavenly worship. *The purpose of our church service, our Family Gathering, is to be with God and God's family, to worship God together with the angels and all God's family in Heaven and on earth, and to be cleansed and fed with spiritual food so we can be strengthened to go out and serve God in the world.

Review & "I Wonder" Questions: We have learned that God's Kingdom Family, the Church, is called the Body of Christ. Today we will hear more about the family of God. *I wonder what is hidden under the stickers. *I wonder what "God's Family Gathering" means. Did you know that you are part of your home family **and** part of God's Church family? Let's look more closely at our poster...

Lesson Props: Post-it notes (cover each poster picture and remove notes one by one through lesson). Liturgical elements on page 3.

Lesson Summary: Today each hidden picture is going to show us something **important** and **wonderful** that happens when God's family, the Church, gathers together. The Bible tells us that God is our Father and we, the Church, are his children. That makes us brothers and sisters in God's Kingdom Family. *(Remove first sticker)* Each week, when God's family gathers, we begin in the church sanctuary, which is our Heavenly Father's house. Let's look at this 1st picture and tell us what you see. *(Open doors, people, altar with bread and wine, lit candles.)* The altar is often called the table of the Lord. It is where our spiritual food, the Eucharist, is placed. When we see the lit candles, we are reminded that Jesus is here with us and that he is the Light of the World. What do you see in the 2nd picture? *(We join heavenly worship with saints and angels)* As we worship and sing in our church service, we are joining in with the worship that is **always** going on in Heaven, where the saints and angels see Jesus face-to-face. Isn't that wonderful? Let's stand up and sing a worship song now. *(Sing Doxology)* What do you see in the 3rd picture? *(A Bible)* When we read and hear teaching from the Bible, we are hearing and feeding on the Word of God. We speak to God through singing and prayers, and God speaks to us, particularly through the Bible. This is our Kingdom Food, that will strengthen us and help us to love Jesus and become more like him. Let's hear the Word of God now in our memory verse. *(Read memory verse)* What do you see in the 4th picture? *(Children praying)* Before we go to the table of the Lord for Holy Communion, we need to have our hearts cleansed from sin. When we pray the Prayer of Confession, our hearts are cleansed, and we are made ready to receive the Body and the Blood of Christ. Let's pray the Prayer of Confession now. *(Pray Prayer of Confession)* What do you see in the 5th picture? *(Bread and wine.)* We are now ready to come to the table of the Lord and be fed in the Eucharist, or Holy Communion. Everything we have done in our church service so far, has prepared us for this very special moment. In Holy Communion we remember Jesus and meet with him in a special way. We receive his life into us through the bread and the wine, the body and blood of Christ. What do you see in the 6th picture? *(People following behind a cross toward the doors.)* This last part is called the "dismissal" because we are sent out of the sanctuary, out of our Father's house and **into** the world to serve God. *(Point to all pictures)* These pictures remind us of how and why we participate in God's Family Gathering every Sunday. When we gather together to worship God, these wonderful things happen! Which parts of God's Family Gathering surprised you the most?

Suggested Questions: ***What does this story tell us about God?** (God is our Father. We, the family of God, are his children.) ***On Sundays, where do we gather with God's family?** (In the church sanctuary, our Heavenly Father's house) ***In our church service, do we join with the worship that is already going on in Heaven?** (Yes, we join the saints and angels in their worship) ***What is the spiritual food we receive?** (God's Word, and Holy Communion at the Lord's table. These strengthen us spiritually) ***What do we need to do before we come to the Lord's table to eat?** (We prepare and clean our hearts through confession.) ***At the end of the service, what are we sent out to do?** (Serve God and share the Good News of Jesus with the world.)

Bible Memory Verse: Jesus said: "For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them." Matthew 18:20 (NIV)

The Doxology	Bible Memory Verse	The Prayer of Confession
<p>Praise God, from whom all blessings flow Praise Him, all creatures here below Praise Him above, ye heavenly host Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen</p>	<p>Jesus said: “For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them.” Matthew 18:20</p>	<p>Leader: Let us confess our sins to Almighty God</p> <p>All: Dear Lord, I am very sorry for all the wrong things I have done</p> <p>Forgive me, and help me to become a better person in all that I think and in all that I say and in all that I do.</p> <p>Amen.</p> <p>Leader: Almighty God, + have mercy upon us, forgive and deliver us from all our sins, strengthen us in all goodness, and bring us to everlasting life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.</p>

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Year 2 - Lesson 15 – God’s Family Gathering