

ARTS & SPIRITUALITY CURRICULUM

INTRODUCTION

We worship a God that is a Creative God. We only need to look at the world and people around us to know that the Creation that we exist in was made by a being full of creativity. We also know that we are made in the image of that God, each one of us, in our own unique way. Because of that, we can be assured that we ourselves are creative beings, capable of creating beautiful works regardless of our skill level or training.

As we worship within the structure of the church as it exists today, many people find that they have difficulty connecting with the ‘traditional’ ways of worshiping and are looking for alternative experiences. In some cases, people start looking outside of the church for ways to worship because the church is not meeting their needs. The church begins to dwindle in its membership and levels of participation because it cannot or will not imagine change.

In light of this, leaders within the church need to experiment with and explore alternative ways of worshiping, utilizing all the parts of a person, all the senses, and different ways that people express themselves and connect. One way to do this is to explore worshiping through the use and creation of art. We can connect not only through the experience of reading and hearing Scripture, praying together and listening to spiritual music, but also through creation, through the imitation of God and the use of our God-given creativity, and it is necessary for us to worship in this way. As John de Gruchy says, “art belongs to the soul of the church and that a church that neglects it is in danger of losing its soul.”¹

Art is a creative process, to be sure, but it is also one that requires attention and intelligence. As John Dewey states, “any idea that ignores the necessary role of intelligence in production of works of art is based upon identification of thinking with use of one special kind of material, verbal signs and words.”² We must expand our views of what should be present in worship, of what acts and methods are capable of conveying and relating the Word of God.

If we want to give people an opportunity to experience God, to worship God as fully as possible, and to get excited and passionate about their faith, then we also must provide an environment where excitement and expression through art are not only accepted but encouraged. John Dewey quotes Samuel Alexander as saying that “the artist’s work proceeds not from a finished imaginative experience to which the work of art corresponds, but from passionate excitement about the subject matter... The poet’s poem is wrung from him by the subject which excites him.”³ If people are not excited about their God, about their faith, about their religion, then they will not engage and express themselves. If they do not have a way to express themselves in the church that feels natural and exciting for them, they will not have a difficult time expressing themselves.

At the same time, I am in no way arguing for the practice of ‘art for art’s sake’. Just because something may interest someone does not mean that it has a place in worship. This idea is hardly one that needs to be explained. But when we automatically exclude acts from worship or from the church because they have not previously been utilized in the church, we do an extreme disservice to the church and to society. As John de Gruchy says, “churches and theologians should at least seek to understand the public role of the arts and discern what artists are really seeking to do before expressing an opinion or making a judgment.”⁴ Just because something is new or foreign does not make it evil or insignificant.

De Gruchy continues by saying that “art, then, has the potential to change both our personal and corporate consciousness and perception, challenging perceived reality and enabling us to remember what was best in the past even as it evokes fresh images that serve

¹ John de Gruchy, *Christianity, art, and transformation: theological aesthetics in the struggle for justice*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Print. 254

² John Dewey, *Art as experience*, . New York: Minton, Balch & Company, 1934. Print. 47

³ Ibid, 67

⁴ John de Gruchy, *Christianity, art, and transformation*, 197

transformation in the present.”⁵ The church needs to constantly be reevaluating itself, constantly renewing itself, constantly making sure that it is doing everything within its power to speak to the people of its day and the culture that those people exist within, no matter what that may be. We also must be aware that “art in the life of the church serves a variety of functions. But chiefly it is an aid to worship and a means of theological and spiritual formation. In that way art enables the church to fulfill its ministry in society.”⁶ Art is present in society in a way that encourages and inspires humanity, and therefore it should be present in the church in the same way.

De Gruchy also states that “great art, like authentic religion, seeks to express awe and wonder, and to overcome the superficiality of life by exploring its depths. It is concerned about personal integrity in its endeavor to communicate the truth as it is perceived’ it evokes deep emotion, whether of sadness or joy, dread or elation.”⁷ If we believe this statement to be true, if we believe that worship, at its heart, is meant to express awe and wonder towards God, worshipping God and praising God, then we must incorporate art into our worship practices.

All in all, it may be summed up by John de Gruchy, referring back to Sara Maitland:

“In her delightful essay on ‘Artful Theology’, Sara Maitland convincingly argues that the renewal of the church as a transforming community in society is related to the extent to which it takes seriously the creative arts. Her reason is profoundly theological: ‘because we create in this particular and conscious way only in the light of the creative power of our God.’ In other words, artistic creativity is not only God-given, but one of the main ways whereby the power of God is unleashed, awakening both a thirst for justice and a hunger for beauty. Artistic creativity, we may say, is a sacramental act that moves both heart and mind.”⁸

Acknowledging that we are creative beings, that we are only be creative because our God was first creative, I have designed a curriculum for a worship group that focuses on the connections between Arts and Spirituality and gives opportunity for people to worship God and express themselves through the making and creating of art, using a variety of mediums and by exploring and meditating on a variety of different Scripture passages. Each medium and Scripture passage (or liturgical references) have been paired together for a reason, in the hopes that the particular art medium will bring out more of the Scripture, and vice versa.

Resources Used

Bratcher, Dennis. "The Meaning of Church Colors." *Christian Resource Institute*. N.p., n.d. Web. 21 Apr. 2011. <<http://www.cresourcei.org/symbols/colorsmeaning.html>>.

Dewey, John. *Art as experience*, . New York: Minton, Balch & Company, 1934. Print.

Gruchy, John W.. *Christianity, art, and transformation: theological aesthetics in the struggle for justice*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Print.

⁵ Ibid, 200

⁶ Ibid, 213

⁷ Ibid, 239-240

⁸ Ibid, 241

Arts and Spirituality Curriculum

Goals for Arts and Spirituality Group:

- Embrace our God-given creativity
- Experiment with different expressions of worship through art
- Express ourselves, our prayers, our thoughts, etc., through art
- Commune with God and others through creative expression
- Recognize holiness in the things that we can create

Week 1

Art Medium: Finger-Painting

Scripture: Genesis 1 and 2 (combined)

Materials Needed:

- Finger Paints
- Butcher paper or finger-painting paper
- Brushes
- Cups with water
- Paper towels
- Stereo with music
- Copy of the combined Creation story from Genesis 1 and 2 (see resources section)
- Extra copies of combined story for participants to refer back to if needed.

Set up Instructions for Leader:

- Set out paper around a table, with enough spots for all participants
- Have extra paper ready in case participants want to make more than one piece of art
- Set out paints periodically around the table, either still in containers or put into small bowls, whatever works best for your group size and abilities
- Set out cups or bowls with water and paper towels so that participants can clean off their hands in between using different colors
- Place a few copies of the Creation story around the tables so that participants can refer back throughout the group time
- Set up stereo with selected music in a convenient location that can be reached easily and can be heard by all participants

Worship Time Instructions for Leader:

- Open with Prayer
- Welcome everyone and go over the expectations for the group, goals as well as emphasizing the fact that the group is a worship group, not an arts class, and that there will be no sort of evaluation of any kind. (See Goals for Group)
- Read “Introduction to the Lesson” which discusses the 2 Creation stories and how we are to look at the finger-painting as a means of creation.
- Read the combined stories of Creation from Genesis 1 and 2
- Turn on music and allow participants to begin making art with the finger paints, encouraging them to use their hands and fingers to make the art. Also encourage them to stay on the quieter side so that the group stays a time of worship rather than a social gathering
- Allow for a minimum of 20 minutes for the making of the art. It can be longer if your group is able or wants to go longer.
- When you are nearing the end of time, give the group about a 5-10 minute warning so they can finish up what they are doing.
- When time is “up”, begin with the Questions for Discussion (see below). Feel free to allow the conversation to get off course a little bit as people will have different experiences. Allow the participants to be as open as they want and to discuss their experience freely.

- Close in prayer, perhaps asking one of the participants to lead the prayer.
- Clean up

Introduction to the Lesson: Genesis---The Creation Story: The two stories side by side

Two different accounts of the same events doesn't make them contradictory. One has God speaking creation into existence. Merely the words and thoughts of God bring about everything that we have ever known. The other account has God involved on a more tactile level, shaping man out of the dust of the earth and breathing the breath of life into his nostrils, and making woman from a rib of the man.

Looking at this account of creation, we're going to participate in a type of creation of our own today. We're going to create our own version of the Creation stories that we find in Genesis.

Today's method of expression and creation is going to be finger-painting. It may seem very simplistic, but that is the idea. We're going to use our hands and fingers to form the images that come to our mind when we think about the Creation stories.

Every so often, I'll read portions of the story over again. You can paint something that encompasses the entire story, or one small part. Or you can just paint something that looks like the swirling mass of light and water that existed before God took Creation into his hands. Or something completely different. It's totally up to you. There is no right or wrong way to do this.

When we're done, those who want to can share about what we've created, how the scripture spoke to us, and how we felt making the paintings. Don't worry about making it look "right". There is no "right" when it comes to art and creative expression. How God speaks to you isn't going to look the same as how God speaks to someone else.

Questions for Discussion:

- What stood out to you in the scripture that you incorporated into your artwork?
- What was surprising about the scripture?
- What surprised you about what you created, how it came about, what it turned into?
- How was it for you finger-painting the Creation story? How did this medium help you to understand or connect with the Scriptures?
- How was the experience of worshiping through art for you?
- How were you able to connect or worship in ways that were new or different for you?
- Anything else that you would like to share? Any other thoughts?

Helpful Information and Resources:

Side-by-Side Creation Account: Genesis 1 and 2 (Genesis 1 in regular font, **Genesis 2 in Bold**)

"In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.

And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. God saw that the light was good, and He separated the light from the darkness. God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day.

When the LORD God made the earth and the heavens, and no shrub of the field had yet appeared on the earth and no plant of the field had yet sprung up---for the LORD God had not sent rain on the earth and there was no man to work the ground, but streams came up from the earth and watered the whole surface of the ground-

And God said, "Let there be an expanse between the waters to separate water from water." So God made the expanse and separated the water under the expanse from the water above it. And it was so. God called the expanse "sky." And there was evening, and there was morning—the second day. And God said, "Let the water under the sky be gathered to one place,

and let dry ground appear." And it was so. God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, "Let the land produce vegetation: seed-bearing plants and trees on the land that bear fruit with seed in it, according to their various kinds." And it was so. The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good. **And the LORD God made all kinds of trees grow out of the ground—trees that were pleasing to the eye and good for food.** And there was evening, and there was morning—the third day.

And God said, "Let there be lights in the expanse of the sky to separate the day from the night, and let them serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years, and let them be lights in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth." And it was so. God made two great lights—the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night. He also made the stars. God set them in the expanse of the sky to give light on the earth, to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the fourth day.

And God said, "Let the water teem with living creatures, and let birds fly above the earth across the expanse of the sky." So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living and moving thing with which the water teems, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. God blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and increase in number and fill the water in the seas, and let the birds increase on the earth." And there was evening, and there was morning—the fifth day.

And God said, "Let the land produce living creatures according to their kinds: livestock, creatures that move along the ground, and wild animals, each according to its kind." And it was so. God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. **Now the LORD God had formed out of the ground all the beasts of the field and all the birds of the air.** And God saw that it was good.

Then God said, "Let us make humans in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." **The LORD God formed the man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being. The LORD God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.**

But for Adam no suitable helper was found. So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs and closed up the place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

So God created humans in God's own image, in the image of God they were created; male and female God created them. God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Then God said, "I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food. And to all the beasts of the earth and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move on the ground—everything that has the breath of life in it—I give every green plant for food." And it was so. God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day. Thus the heavens and the earth were completed in all their vast array.

By the seventh day God had finished the work he had been doing; so on the seventh day he rested from all his work. And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy, because on it he rested from all the work of creating that he had done.

This is the account of the heavens and the earth when they were created."

Week 2

Art Medium: Finger-Painting

Scripture: Colossians 1:15-20

Materials Needed:

- Finger Paints
- Butcher paper or finger-painting paper
- Brushes
- Cups with water
- Paper towels
- Stereo with music
- Bible (read Colossians 1:15-20)
- Extra Bibles for participants

Set up Instructions for Leader:

□ (See Week 1)

Worship Time Instructions for Leader:

- Open with Prayer
- Welcome everyone and go over the expectations for the group, goals as well as emphasizing the fact that the group is a worship group, not an arts class, and that there will be no sort of evaluation of any kind. (See Goals for Group)
- Read Colossians 1:15-20 through at least twice.
- Turn on music and allow participants to begin making art with the finger paints, encouraging them to use their hands and fingers to make the art. Also encourage them to stay on the quieter side so that the group stays a time of worship rather than a social gathering
- Allow for a minimum of 20 minutes for the making of the art. It can be longer if your group is able or wants to go longer.
- When you are nearing the end of time, give the group about a 5-10 minute warning so they can finish up what they are doing.
- When time is “up”, begin with the Questions for Discussion (see below). Feel free to allow the conversation to get off course a little bit as people will have different experiences. Allow the participants to be as open as they want and to discuss their experience freely.
- Close in prayer, perhaps asking one of the participants to lead the prayer.
- Clean up

Introduction to the Lesson:

Today’s method of expression is going to be finger-painting. It may seem very simplistic, but that is the idea. We’re going to use our hands and fingers to form the images that come to our mind when we think about scripture reading from Colossians. Consider the different shapes, colors, or designs that might express what we read in the Scripture.

Every so often, I’ll read portions of the scripture over again. You can paint something that encompasses the entire passage, or one small part. Or something completely different. It’s totally up to you. There is no right or wrong way to do this.

When we’re done, those who want to can share about what we’ve created, how the scripture spoke to us, and how we felt making the paintings. Don’t worry about making it look

“right”. There is no “right” when it comes to art and creative expression. How God speaks to you isn’t going to look the same as how God speaks to someone else.

Questions for Discussion:

- What stood out to you in the scripture that you incorporated into your artwork?
- What was surprising about the scripture?
- What surprised you about what you created, how it came about, what it turned into?
- How was it for you finger-painting about the supremacy of Christ? How did this medium help you to understand or connect with the Scriptures?
- How was the experience of worshiping through art for you?
- How were you able to connect or worship in ways that were new or different for you?
- Anything else that you would like to share? Any other thoughts?

Week 3

Art Medium: Watercolors

Scripture: Psalm 77:11-20 and Psalm 107:1-9

Materials Needed:

- Sets of Watercolor paints
- Watercolor paper
- Painters tape or masking tape
- Brushes
- Cups with water
- Paper towels
- Spreadsheet of the Psalms (See Appendix A)

Set up Instructions for Leader:

- ☐ Tape down pieces of watercolor paper at each seat around the table. It is helpful to tape down the paper because it starts to warp when it gets wet
- ☐ Place the paint sets periodically around the table or work area.
- ☐ Distribute brushes
- ☐ Fill cups with water and place around the table
- ☐ Set up stereo with music
- ☐ Set out paper towels next to each piece of paper
- ☐ Set out extra pieces of paper in case participants want to do multiple paintings.

Worship Time Instructions for Leader:

- ☐ Open with Prayer
- ☐ Welcome everyone and go over the expectations for the group, goals as well as emphasizing the fact that the group is a worship group, not an arts class, and that there will be no sort of evaluation of any kind. (See Goals for Group)
- ☐ Read “Introduction to the Lesson” about painting the Psalms.
- ☐ Read Psalm 77:11-20 and Psalm 107:1-9, twice each
- ☐ Turn on music and allow participants to begin making art with the watercolors. Also encourage them to stay on the quieter side so that the group stays in a time of worship rather than a social gathering
- ☐ Allow for a minimum of 20 minutes for the making of the art. It can be longer if your group is able or wants to go longer.
- ☐ When you are nearing the end of time, give the group about a 5-10 minute warning so they can finish up what they are doing.
- ☐ When time is “up”, begin with the Questions for Discussion (see below). Feel free to allow the conversation to get off course a little bit as people will have different experiences. Allow the participants to be as open as they want and to discuss their experience freely.
- ☐ Close in prayer, perhaps asking one of the participants to lead the prayer.
- ☐ Clean up

Introduction to the Lesson:

The Psalms are poetry that was written to express different feelings and occurrences that

happen in people's lives. Some are cries to God for help. Others are exasperated writings from a confused soul. Others are praise and thanks for God and the blessings in the authors life. Still others are requests for relief from suffering and oppression.

They are very vivid and very diverse. You would be hard-pressed to try and find a feeling or situation that is NOT in the book of Psalms in one way or another. We can read them and pray them no matter what we are experiencing in life.

Today we will be reading and meditating on two Psalms and reflecting on them through watercolor painting. As we read through the Psalms, try and focus on one image or idea that jumps out at you that you might be able to put onto the paper.

If nothing jumps out at you from the Scripture, or if there is something else that is on your mind, feel free to paint that. There is no right or wrong way to go about this, as long as you are worshiping and connecting with God.

Questions for Discussion:

- What stood out to you in the scripture that you incorporated into your artwork?
- What was surprising about the scripture?
- What surprised you about what you created, how it came about, what it turned into?
- How was it for you to paint the Psalms? How did watercolors help you to understand or connect with the Scriptures?
- How was the experience of worshiping through art for you?
- How were you able to connect or worship in ways that were new or different for you?
- Anything else that you would like to share? Any other thoughts?

Helpful Information and Resources:

- Appendix A: This is a spread sheet of the entire book of Psalms, organized into 8 categories of Assurance, Blessing, Cursing, Faithfulness, Help!, Lament, Praise, and Repentance. Each Psalm has also been "re-titled" from what you might typically find in Scripture, and also has the number of verses in each individual Psalm. This was put together by Luke Baehr over the course of the summer of 2010 and used with permission. It is an excellent resource for finding Psalms quickly depending on theme or specific focus.

Week 4

Art Medium: Watercolors

Scripture: Psalm 10, 47, 113

Materials Needed:

- Sets of Watercolor paints
- Watercolor paper
- Painters tape or masking tape
- Brushes
- Cups with water
- Paper towels

Set up Instructions for Leader:

□ (See Week 3)

Worship Time Instructions for Leader:

- Open with Prayer
- Welcome everyone and go over the expectations for the group, goals as well as emphasizing the fact that the group is a worship group, not an arts class, and that there will be no sort of evaluation of any kind. (See Goals for Group)
- Read “Introduction to the Lesson” about painting the Psalms.
- Read Psalm 10, 47, 113
- Turn on music and allow participants to begin making art with the watercolors, . Also encourage them to stay on the quieter side so that the group stays a time of worship rather than a social gathering
- Allow for a minimum of 20 minutes for the making of the art. It can be longer if your group is able or wants to go longer.
- When you are nearing the end of time, give the group about a 5-10 minute warning so they can finish up what they are doing.
- When time is “up”, begin with the Questions for Discussion (see below). Feel free to allow the conversation to get off course a little bit as people will have different experiences. Allow the participants to be as open as they want and to discuss their experience freely.
- Close in prayer, perhaps asking one of the participants to lead the prayer.
- Clean up

Introduction to the Lesson:

The Psalms are poetry that was written to express different feelings and occurrences that happen in people’s lives. Some are cries to God for help. Others are exasperated writings from a confused soul. Others are praise and thanks for God and the blessings in the authors life. Still others are requests for relief from suffering and oppression.

They are very vivid and very diverse. You would be hard-pressed to try and find a feeling or situation that is NOT in the book of Psalms in one way or another. We can read them and pray them no matter what we are experiencing in life.

Today we will be reading and meditating on two Psalms and reflecting on them through watercolor painting. As we read through the Psalms, try and focus on one image or idea that jumps out at you that you might be able to put onto the paper.

If nothing jumps out at you from the Scripture, or if there is something else that is on

your mind, feel free to paint that. There is no right or wrong way to go about this, as long as you are worshiping and connecting with God.

Questions for Discussion:

- ☐ What stood out to you in the scripture that you incorporated into your artwork?
- ☐ What was surprising about the scripture?
- ☐ What surprised you about what you created, how it came about, what it turned into?
- ☐ How was it for you to paint the Psalms? How did watercolors help you to understand or connect with the Scriptures?
- ☐ How was the experience of worshiping through art for you?
- ☐ How were you able to connect or worship in ways that were new or different for you?
- ☐ Anything else that you would like to share? Any other thoughts?

Week 5-6 (or 7)

Art Medium: Chalk Pastels

Scripture: Different depending on the part of the Liturgical Year being emphasized.

Materials Needed:

Sets of Chalk Pastels
Charcoal or Pastel paper
Stereo with music

Set up Instructions for Leader:

- ☐ Set out pieces of paper around table
- ☐ Set out chalk pastel sets periodically around the table. Participants can move around to get the colors they need
- ☐ Set out extra pieces of paper in case participants want to make extra drawings

Worship Time Instructions for Leader:

- ☐ Open with Prayer
- ☐ Welcome everyone and go over the expectations for the group, goals as well as emphasizing the fact that the group is a worship group, not an arts class, and that there will be no sort of evaluation of any kind. (See Goals for Group)
- ☐ Read “Introduction to the Lesson” about the Liturgical year
- ☐ Read Scripture taken from selected options based on the particular part of the Liturgical Church year. (See Resources section)
- ☐ Turn on music and allow participants to begin making art with the pastels, encouraging them to use their hands and fingers to make the art. Also encourage them to stay on the quieter side so that the group stays a time of worship rather than a social gathering
- ☐ Allow for a minimum of 20 minutes for the making of the art. It can be longer if your group is able or wants to go longer.
- ☐ When you are nearing the end of time, give the group about a 5-10 minute warning so they can finish up what they are doing.
- ☐ When time is “up”, begin with the Questions for Discussion (see below). Feel free to allow the conversation to get off course a little bit as people will have different experiences. Allow the participants to be as open as they want and to discuss their experience freely.
- ☐ Close in prayer, perhaps asking one of the participants to lead the prayer.
- ☐ Clean up

Introduction to the Lesson:

Each time we journey through the church year we are different. Over time the seasons transform us. As we pass through each day, each season, the end of one journey positions us to step into the beginning of the next. The season of this calendar allow us to return again and again to the expectancy of Advent of the solemnity of Lent, to reconsider our lives and the way in which we are living them.

The patterns of the church year allow us to see afresh the new things God is working in us and in our world. The sequence of the seasons organizes our journey, yet in some ways we live all the seasons at all times. We are always waiting in hope, always called to take our light into the world, always summoned to spend time in self-reflection. We are forever engaged in an

act of new creation. We are repeatedly invited to celebrate the diversity of our gifts and to work on behalf of God's reign.

The scriptures that we have pertain to different seasons in the church year, different days, moods and events that we remember and focus on in our faith journey.

You are free to pick any or the scriptures to focus on, or a particular season and a combination of scriptures that go with the general feel of a given season. Pay close attention to the colors that are attributed with each season, how they can tie into the scripture, and what the colors are meant to represent. Think about what you feel when you see each color in context of the scriptures having to do with that particular season. Try to see how the scripture can come alive through the color. Once you have an image in your mind, you can sketch something out in pencil, or you can just start with the pastels.

Questions for Discussion:

- What stood out to you in the scripture that you incorporated into your artwork?
- What was surprising about the scripture?
- What surprised you about what you created, how it came about, what it turned into?
- How was it for you to draw scenes or images that pertained to different parts of Scripture?
- How was it to consider the different parts of the liturgical year and why we celebrate them?
- How did the chalk pastels help you to understand or connect with the Scriptures?
- How was the experience of worshiping through art for you?
- How were you able to connect or worship in ways that were new or different for you?
- Anything else that you would like to share? Any other thoughts?

Helpful Information and Resources:

- This lesson can be condensed into one week, or expanded to multiple weeks depending on how much time is available. If condensed into one week, then I would suggest printing out copies of the Scripture passages and descriptions of the different seasons of the church year so that the participants can choose which season or seasons they would like to draw from.
- The following are different sections of Scripture, taken from the Gospels as well as the Daily Lectionary for the PCUSA that connect with the different seasons of the Liturgical Year. They are by no means exhaustive or exclusive. Feel free to add to them as you feel your group needs. There are explanations of each season for use in talking to your group about the different seasons, what they mean, and what they are to commemorate. Following the explanation for each season are the colors that are commonly associated with each season and what they mean and represent.

Advent

Luke 1:26-38

Advent is a season of spiritual preparation for the celebration of the birth of Christ (Christmas) and looks forward to the future reign of Christ. Eschatological expectation rather than personal penitence is the central theme of the season. Advent is a preparation for rather than a celebration of Christmas, so Advent hymns should be sung instead of Christmas carols. The first Sunday of Advent is not the beginning of the Christmas season. The Christmas celebration begins on Christmas Eve and continues for the next "twelve days of Christmas."

Purple is normally Advent's liturgical color, associated both with the sovereignty of Christ and with penitence. Deep Blue is also sometimes used to distinguish the season from Lent. As the color of the night sky, Blue symbolizes Christ who in one ancient Advent song is called the "Dayspring" or source of day. As the color associated with Mary, Blue also reminds us that

during Advent the church waits with Mary for the birth of Jesus.

Advent Colors

Purple has traditionally been the primary color of Advent, symbolizing repentance and fasting. Purple is also the color of royalty, demonstrating the anticipation and reception of the coming King celebrated during Advent. Today, however, many churches have begun to use **blue** instead of purple, as a means of distinguishing Advent from Lent.

Pink or **rose** is also one of the colors of Advent used during the third Sunday. It represents joy or rejoicing and reveals a shift in the season away from repentance and toward celebration. In various churches it is used either for the Third or Fourth Sunday of Advent, the Sunday of Joy at the impending birth of Jesus.

White is the color of the center Advent calendar, representing purity. Christ is the sinless, spotless, pure Savior. Also, those who receive Christ as Savior are washed of their sins and made whiter than snow.

Royal Blue is the color of royalty to welcome the coming of a King. It can also symbolize the night sky in which the star appeared to announce the birth of Jesus. While purple has traditionally been the liturgical color for Advent, Royal Blue is increasingly used for Advent, especially in Protestant churches, to distinguish it from Lent.

Bright Blue symbolizes the sky or heaven, where heralds proclaimed Jesus' birth. In Roman Catholic tradition, it symbolizes Mary, who is known as "the Queen of Heaven." It can also symbolize the waters of Genesis 1, the beginning of a new creation. It is increasingly used for Advent in Protestant churches to distinguish this season from Lent.

Christmas and Christmas Season

John 1:1-5, 14

Luke 2:1-20

The Lectionary readings for Christmas and the following twelve days (culminating in the feast of the Epiphany) invite the church to reflect on the Incarnation (or embodiment) of God as a human being: "The Word became a human being and lived among us, and we have seen his glory...." (John 1:14). In Christ, God enters human history and identifies fully with the human condition.

The traditional colors of the season are White or Gold, symbolizing joy in the light of day. **White** symbolizes purity, holiness, and virtue, as well as respect and reverence. White is used for all high Holy Days and festival days of the Church Year, especially the seasons of Christmas and Easter, as well as for baptism, marriage, ordination, and dedications. It is also used for funerals as a symbol of the resurrection.

Silver Because of its brightness, metallic silver is sometimes used as an alternate color for white.

Gold symbolizes what is precious and valuable, and so symbolizes majesty, joy, and celebration. Because of its brightness metallic gold also symbolizes the presence of God. It is most often used with white for high Holy Days and festival days of the Church Year, especially the seasons of Christmas and Easter. It is also sometimes used as a secondary color for other seasons.

Season after Epiphany

Matthew 2:9-11

Luke 2:25-38

The season following Epiphany continues the theme established on Epiphany Day: the spread of the Good News of Christ from its source in the Jewish community to all nations on earth. The Lectionary therefore explores the mission of the church in the world. The theme of

this season (along with the sequence of readings from the Gospel) continues in the season after Pentecost, so both seasons together can be called the "Time of the Church." The traditional liturgical color for both seasons, Green, is the color of growth.

Green symbolizes the renewal of vegetation and generally of living things and the promise of new life. It is used for the Season of Epiphany between Transfiguration Sunday and the beginning of Lent, and for Ordinary Time between Trinity Sunday (first Sunday after Pentecost) and the beginning of Advent.

Light Green is sometimes used as an alternate color for Green during Ordinary Time. Some churches use Light Green before Lent (Season of Epiphany) and Green after Pentecost.

Olive and Aqua are sometimes used as Church colors during Ordinary Time.

Lent

Matthew 4:1-11

Mark 1:12-13

Luke 4:1-13

Matthew 26:36-46

Luke 22:39-46

John 16:16-24

The traditions of Lent are derived from the season's origin as a time when the church prepared candidates, or "catechumens," for their baptism into the Body of Christ. It eventually became a season of preparation not only for catechumens but also for the whole congregation. Self-examination, study, fasting, prayer and works of love are disciplines historically associated with Lent. Conversion—literally, the "turning around" or reorientation of our lives towards God—is the theme of Lent. Both as individuals and as a community, we look inward and reflect on our readiness to follow Jesus in his journey towards the cross. The forty days of Lent correspond to the forty-day temptation of Jesus in the wilderness and the forty-year journey of Israel from slavery to a new community.

On Ash Wednesday, ashes are placed on the foreheads of the congregation as a symbol that we have come from dust and one day will return to dust. It is one of many Lenten and Easter customs that remind us of our historical connection with Jewish tradition. With this sobering reminder of life's fragility, we begin a spiritual quest that continues until the Easter Vigil, when new members of the church are often baptized and the entire congregation joins in a reaffirmation of baptismal vows. Most of this time of preparation is symbolized by the color Violet, though the season is bracketed by the mourning Black of Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. As an alternative to Violet, some churches have begun to use brown, beige or gray (the colors of rough unbleached cloth like burlap) to reflect the season's mood of penitence and simplicity. The somber colors are a reminder of the unbleached "sackcloth" worn by mourners and penitents in the Jewish tradition.

Purple can symbolize pain, suffering, and therefore mourning and penitence. It is the liturgical color for the Season of Lent. It is also the color of royalty, so traditionally has also been used for Advent and is still used in Catholic churches. However, Blue is replacing purple for Advent in many Protestant churches.

Red Violet or Violet is also a symbol for pain and suffering, and is used as an alternate color for the Season of Lent.

Gray is the color of ashes, and therefore a biblical symbol of mourning and repentance. It can be used on Ash Wednesday, during Lent, or on special days of fasting and prayer.

Holy Week

Maundy Thursday

Matthew 26:14-30

Mark 14:12-25

Luke 22:7-23

Good Friday
Matthew 27:32-66
Mark 15:21-47
Luke 23: 26-56
John 19:16-42

During Holy Week, the congregation follows the footsteps of Jesus from his entry into Jerusalem (Palm/Passion Sunday) through the Last Supper (Maundy Thursday) to his death on the Cross (Good Friday). Red, the color of blood and therefore of martyrs, is the traditional color for Palm/Passion Sunday and the next three days of Holy Week. On Maundy Thursday, White or Gold symbolizes the church's rejoicing in the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. But at the end of the Maundy Thursday celebration, the mood changes abruptly: all decorations are removed and the Holy Table is stripped bare. The church becomes as empty as a tomb. On Good Friday, either Black or Red is customary—although the use of no color at all is also appropriate. The Red of Holy Week is sometimes a deeper red than the brighter scarlet color associated with Pentecost.

Black represents death and mourning. It is used only on Good Friday and Holy Saturday before the Easter Vigil, with no other decorations or colors. Sometimes black is used to cover other sanctuary symbols or to drape the sanctuary cross and altar on Good Friday.

Red is the color of fire and so symbolizes the presence of God. It is the liturgical color for Pentecost. It is considered the color of the Church, since red can also symbolize the blood of martyrs. It is sometimes used for Maundy Thursday and during Eastertide. In Roman Catholic tradition it is used for Palm Sunday in anticipation of the death of Jesus. In some traditions it is used to commemorate special days for martyrs or saints.

Easter and Pentecost

Easter
Matthew 28:1-10
Mark 16:1-11
Luke 24: 1-12
John 20:1-29

Pentecost
Acts 2: 1-42

Instead of finding a sealed tomb, the women who had come at dawn on Sunday are surprised by an angel who announces astonishing news: "Jesus has been raised from the dead" (Matt. 28:7). The heavenly messenger invites the mourners to see the empty tomb and then go and tell the disciples that the Crucified One is alive!

The season from Easter to Pentecost is also called the Great Fifty Days, a tradition inspired by the Jewish season of fifty days between Passover and Shavuot—the feast celebrating the giving of the Torah to Moses.

The liturgical color for this season is celebratory White or Gold. When the season ends on Pentecost Sunday, White is replaced with Red. This color reminds the congregation of fire—the symbol of the Holy Spirit. On Pentecost the Holy Spirit overpowered the barriers of culture and race. The first Sunday after Pentecost celebrates the Trinity, and the color again is White or Gold.

White symbolizes purity, holiness, and virtue, as well as respect and reverence. White is used for all high Holy Days and festival days of the Church Year, especially the seasons of Christmas and Easter, as well as for baptism, marriage, ordination, and dedications. It is also used for funerals as a symbol of the resurrection.

Silver Because of its brightness, metallic silver is sometimes used as an alternate color

for white.

Gold symbolizes what is precious and valuable, and so symbolizes majesty, joy, and celebration. Because of its brightness metallic gold also symbolizes the presence of God. It is most often used with white for high Holy Days and festival days of the Church Year, especially the seasons of Christmas and Easter. It is also sometimes used as a secondary color for other seasons.

Yellow symbolizes light which in turn is a symbol of the presence of God. It is also symbolic of renewal and hope, especially in the resurrection of Jesus. It is often used as an alternate color for gold when white is used as a sanctuary color. It is sometimes used with white for Easter.

Red is the color of fire and so symbolizes the presence of God. It is the liturgical color for Pentecost. It is considered the color of the Church, since red can also symbolize the blood of martyrs. It is sometimes used for Maundy Thursday and during Eastertide. In Roman Catholic tradition it is used for Palm Sunday in anticipation of the death of Jesus. In some traditions it is used to commemorate special days for martyrs or saints.

Ordinary Time

Ordinary Time

Acts 2:42-47

1 Corinthians 12-14

Christ the King/Reign of Christ

Luke 1:68-79

Colossians 1:15-20

Revelation 21:1-4

1 Thessalonians 4:13-17

This longest season of the liturgical year is a continuation of the "Time of the Church" that began on the Sunday after Epiphany. It explores the mission of the church and uses the color of Green, symbolizing growth. During this season, the Lectionary offers two options for readings from Hebrew Scripture: the first, topical option selects readings thematically related to the Epistle or Gospel texts. The second, sequential option reads through an entire book of Hebrew Scripture in sequence.

Green symbolizes the renewal of vegetation and generally of living things and the promise of new life. It is used for the Season of Epiphany between Transfiguration Sunday and the beginning of Lent, and for Ordinary Time between Trinity Sunday (first Sunday after Pentecost) and the beginning of Advent.

Light Green is sometimes used as an alternate color for Green during Ordinary Time. Some churches use Light Green before Lent (Season of Epiphany) and Green after Pentecost. (**The Meaning of Church Colors** taken from Dennis Bratcher)

Week 8

Art Medium: Collage

Scripture: Romans 6:1-10, 2 Corinthians 5:16-21

Materials Needed:

Construction paper or card stock paper to collage on. (Other items can be used, like boxes or other objects.

Glue sticks

Mod-Podge (for final coating)

Images and/or words cut out from magazines

Magazines so that participants can look for other images or words if they want

Scissors (usually about 1 pair for every 2-3 people)

Foam brushes to spread the Mod-Podge over the finished collages.

Stereo with music

Set up Instructions for Leader:

- Have a separate table set up with all of the cut out images and words on it, so that the participants can move around the entire table.
- Set out the paper on the same table with the images.
- Spread out the glue sticks and Mod-Podge around the table where the participants will be sitting

Worship Time Instructions for Leader:

- Open with Prayer
- Welcome everyone and go over the expectations for the group, goals as well as emphasizing the fact that the group is a worship group, not an arts class, and that there will be no sort of evaluation of any kind. (See Goals for Group)
- Read “Introduction to the Lesson, Part A”
- Read Romans 6:1-10 and 2 Corinthians 5:16-21
- Read “Introduction to the Lesson, Part B”
- Turn on music and allow participants to begin making collages. Also encourage them to stay on the quieter side so that the group stays a time of worship rather than a social gathering
- Allow for a minimum of 20 minutes for the making of the art. It can be longer if your group is able or wants to go longer.
- When you are nearing the end of time, give the group about a 5-10 minute warning so they can finish up what they are doing.
- When time is “up”, begin with the Questions for Discussion (see below). Feel free to allow the conversation to get off course a little bit as people will have different experiences. Allow the participants to be as open as they want and to discuss their experience freely.
- Close in prayer, perhaps asking one of the participants to lead the prayer.
- Clean up

Introduction to the Lesson:

Part A:

We are all cherished, loved, and created equal by God. Our identity, those things that we define ourselves by, are varied and unique to each one of us. But something holds us together. We are all children of God. Listen to these Scriptures, and recognize in them ways in which your identity in God is affirmed. Write down specific words, phrases or ideas that jump out to you. Think about what makes you YOU, what characterizes you as the specific individual that you are, and how you see yourself in relationship to God, to how your life is the way it is because of your relationship with the Creator.

Part B:

Now take some time to go through the images that are on the table. Pick out ones that you identify with, that you see yourself in, that you wish you were, or that just look interesting or that jump out to you. Feel free to cut, tear, or layer them. Then assemble them on the paper that you have. They don't have to fit together perfectly. They can overlap or hang off the edge. It can be organized or messy and chaotic, or somewhere in between. When you're finished, you can cover the whole thing with Mod-Podge so that it will be a little more sturdy. When everyone is finished, we will talk about them.

Questions for Discussion:

- What stood out to you in the scripture that you incorporated into your artwork?
- What was surprising about the scripture?
- What surprised you about what you created, how it came about, what it turned into?
- Are there any new words that you identify with, any images that you were drawn to that you weren't expecting to be drawn to?
- How did the act of collage help you to understand or connect with the Scriptures?
- What were things that you realized about yourself that were surprising?
- How was the experience of worshiping through art for you?
- How were you able to connect or worship in ways that were new or different for you?
- Anything else that you would like to share? Any other thoughts?

Helpful Information and Resources:

- Magazines are the best place to find words and images for collage.
- Photography magazines and National Geographic's are especially great.

Week 9

Art Medium: Collage

Scripture: Psalm 122, Psalm 37:1-11, Revelation 21: 1-5

Materials Needed:

Construction paper or card stock paper to collage on. (Other items can be used, like boxes or other objects.

Glue sticks

Mod-Podge (for final coating)

Images and/or words cut out from magazines

Magazines so that participants can look for other images or words if they want

Scissors (usually about 1 pair for every 2-3 people)

Foam brushes to spread the Mod-Podge over the finished collages.

Stereo with music

Set up Instructions for Leader:

- (See Week 8)

Worship Time Instructions for Leader:

- Open with Prayer
- Welcome everyone and go over the expectations for the group, goals as well as emphasizing the fact that the group is a worship group, not an arts class, and that there will be no sort of evaluation of any kind. (See Goals for Group)
- Read “Introduction to the Lesson”
- Read Philippians 1:3-11
- Turn on music and allow participants to begin making collages. Also encourage them to stay on the quieter side so that the group stays a time of worship rather than a social gathering
- Allow for a minimum of 20 minutes for the making of the art. It can be longer if your group is able or wants to go longer.
- When you are nearing the end of time, give the group about a 5-10 minute warning so they can finish up what they are doing.
- When time is “up”, begin with the Questions for Discussion (see below). Feel free to allow the conversation to get off course a little bit as people will have different experiences. Allow the participants to be as open as they want and to discuss their experience freely.
- Close in prayer, perhaps asking one of the participants to lead the prayer.
- Clean up

Introduction to the Lesson:

This week we will be worshipping through the medium of collage again. We will be making collages of prayers for other people. You can choose anyone, and you don't need to share who specifically it is that you are praying for. The prayers can be about anything or for anything.

Now take some time to go through the images that are on the table. Pick out ones that you identify with, that you see yourself in, that you wish you were, or that just look interesting or that jump out to you. Feel free to cut, tear, or layer them. Then assemble them on the paper that you have. They don't have to fit together perfectly. They can overlap or hang off the edge. It can be

organized or messy and chaotic, or somewhere in between. When you're finished, you can cover the whole thing with Mod-Podge so that it will be a little more sturdy. When everyone is finished, we will talk about them.

Questions for Discussion:

- ☐ What stood out to you in the scripture that you incorporated into your artwork?
- ☐ What was surprising about the scripture?
- ☐ What surprised you about what you created, how it came about, what it turned into?
- ☐ Are there any new words that you identify with, any images that you were drawn to that you weren't expecting to be drawn to?
- ☐ Who did you choose to pray for? What did you pray for them?
- ☐ How did the act of collage help you to understand or connect with the Scriptures?
- ☐ How was the experience of worshiping through art for you?
- ☐ How were you able to connect or worship in ways that were new or different for you?
- ☐ Would you consider giving this collage to the person you prayed for? How would you share it with them?
- ☐ Anything else that you would like to share? Any other thoughts?

Helpful Information and Resources:

- ☐ Magazines are the best place to find words and images for collage.
- ☐ Photography magazines and National Geographic's are especially

Week 10

Art Medium: Collage

Scripture: Psalm 122, Psalm 37:1-11, Revelation 21: 1-5

Materials Needed:

Construction paper or card stock paper to collage on. (Other items can be used, like boxes or other objects.

Glue sticks

Mod-Podge (for final coating)

Images and/or words cut out from magazines

Magazines so that participants can look for other images or words if they want

Scissors (usually about 1 pair for every 2-3 people)

Foam brushes to spread the Mod-Podge over the finished collages.

Stereo with music

Set up Instructions for Leader:

- (See Week 8)

Worship Time Instructions for Leader:

- Open with Prayer
- Welcome everyone and go over the expectations for the group, goals as well as emphasizing the fact that the group is a worship group, not an arts class, and that there will be no sort of evaluation of any kind. (See Goals for Group)
- Read “Introduction to the Lesson”
- Read Psalm 122, Psalm 37:1-11, Revelation 21: 1-5
- Turn on music and allow participants to begin making collages. Also encourage them to stay on the quieter side so that the group stays a time of worship rather than a social gathering
- Allow for a minimum of 20 minutes for the making of the art. It can be longer if your group is able or wants to go longer.
- When you are nearing the end of time, give the group about a 5-10 minute warning so they can finish up what they are doing.
- When time is “up”, begin with the Questions for Discussion (see below). Feel free to allow the conversation to get off course a little bit as people will have different experiences. Allow the participants to be as open as they want and to discuss their experience freely.
- Close in prayer, perhaps asking one of the participants to lead the prayer.
- Clean up

Introduction to the Lesson:

This week we will be worshipping through the medium of collage again. WE will be making collages of prayers of hope for the Future. These can be hopes for ourselves, for the church, for our community or for the world. They can be about anything or for anything.

Now take some time to go through the images that are on the table. Pick out ones that you identify with, that you see yourself in, that you wish you were, or that just look interesting or that jump out to you. Feel free to cut, tear, or layer them. Then assemble them on the paper that you have. They don't have to fit together perfectly. They can overlap or hang off the edge. It can be organized or messy and chaotic, or somewhere in between. When you're finished, you can cover

the whole thing with Mod-Podge so that it will be a little more sturdy. When everyone is finished, we will talk about them.

Questions for Discussion:

- What stood out to you in the scripture that you incorporated into your artwork?
- What was surprising about the scripture?
- What surprised you about what you created, how it came about, what it turned into?
- Are there any new words that you identify with, any images that you were drawn to that you weren't expecting to be drawn to?
- What were some of the things that you prayed for?
- How did the act of collage help you to understand or connect with the Scriptures?
- How was the experience of worshiping through art for you?
- How were you able to connect or worship in ways that were new or different for you?
- Anything else that you would like to share? Any other thoughts?

Helpful Information and Resources:

- Magazines are the best place to find words and images for collage.
- Photography magazines and National Geographic's are especially great.

Week 11

Art Medium: Acrylic Paints

Scripture: Ecclesiastes 3:1-14

Materials Needed:

Acrylic Paints
Acrylic painting paper or small canvases, whatever you can afford for the group
Palettes, bowls, or plates for participants to put their paint choices onto
Brushes
Cups or bowls with water
Paper towels
Stereo with music

Set up Instructions for Leader:

- Set up pieces of the paper or the canvases around the table, enough for each participant to have one.
- Set out paints around the table
- Set out palettes around the table, either one for each participant, or 1 for every 2 participants
- Spread out brushes around the table
- Set out extra pieces of paper or canvases so that participants can make more than one painting if they want.

Worship Time Instructions for Leader:

- Open with Prayer
- Welcome everyone and go over the expectations for the group, goals as well as emphasizing the fact that the group is a worship group, not an arts class, and that there will be no sort of evaluation of any kind. (See Goals for Group)
- Read “Introduction to the Lesson: Part A”
- Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-14
- Read “Introduction to the Lesson: Part B”
- Read Ecclesiastes 3:1-14 again
- Turn on music and allow participants to begin making paintings. Also encourage them to stay on the quieter side so that the group stays a time of worship rather than a social gathering
- Allow for a minimum of 20 minutes for the making of the art. It can be longer if your group is able or wants to go longer.
- When you are nearing the end of time, give the group about a 5-10 minute warning so they can finish up what they are doing.
- When time is “up”, begin with the Questions for Discussion (see below). Feel free to allow the conversation to get off course a little bit as people will have different experiences. Allow the participants to be as open as they want and to discuss their experience freely.
- Close in prayer, perhaps asking one of the participants to lead the prayer.
- Clean up

Introduction to the Lesson:

Part A:

In our lives, God has set things in order. We cannot possibly hope to see all of our lives, or why everything happens the way that it does. It can be frustrating, or even liberating. But it doesn't change the fact that we do not know the plans that God has for our lives.

Part B:

Looking at the passage, we see that things happen at different times, and that there is a time set aside for everything. We cannot work things of our own accord, but we follow God because he knows what has happened, the meaning of those events, and the meaning of the times to come.

As we read through the passage again, and think of one image, one set of events that are in opposition to each other that has significant meaning for your life. After you have determined which one or two of those are the most significant for you, paint your interpretation of them. Try to focus more on the colors and shapes that you can create, that represent the actions or events, rather than trying to paint the events or words themselves. Don't worry about being neat, or getting the colors perfect. Just paint. Let God and the Spirit work through you, and just paint. Embrace the spirituality and creativity that is within you, and paint.

Questions for Discussion:

- What stood out to you in the scripture that you incorporated into your artwork?
- What was surprising about the scripture?
- What surprised you about what you created, how it came about, what it turned into?
- Are there any new words that you identify with, any images that you were drawn to that you weren't expecting to be drawn to?
- What section or verse from the scripture did you focus on?
- How did the act of painting help you to understand or connect with the Scriptures?
- How was the experience of worshiping through art for you?
- How were you able to connect or worship in ways that were new or different for you?
- Anything else that you would like to share? Any other thoughts?

Week 12

Art Medium: Acrylic Paints

Scripture: The Lord's Prayer: Matthew 6:9-13 (and alternative ending)

Materials Needed:

Acrylic Paints
Acrylic painting paper or small canvases, whatever you can afford for the group
Palettes, bowls, or plates for participants to put their paint choices onto
Brushes
Cups or bowls with water
Paper towels
Stereo with music

Set up Instructions for Leader:

- (see Week 11)

Worship Time Instructions for Leader:

- Open with Prayer
- Welcome everyone and go over the expectations for the group, goals as well as emphasizing the fact that the group is a worship group, not an arts class, and that there will be no sort of evaluation of any kind. (See Goals for Group)
- Read "Introduction to the Lesson"
- Read Lord's Prayer
- Turn on music and allow participants to begin making paintings. Also encourage them to stay on the quieter side so that the group stays a time of worship rather than a social gathering
- Allow for a minimum of 20 minutes for the making of the art. It can be longer if your group is able or wants to go longer.
- When you are nearing the end of time, give the group about a 5-10 minute warning so they can finish up what they are doing.
- When time is "up", begin with the Questions for Discussion (see below). Feel free to allow the conversation to get off course a little bit as people will have different experiences. Allow the participants to be as open as they want and to discuss their experience freely.
- Close in prayer, perhaps asking one of the participants to lead the prayer.
- Clean up

Introduction to the Lesson:

When we pray, we pray in many different ways. We ask for different things, give praise and thanks for many things, and relate to God in different ways.

But one way that we can all pray together is through the Lord's Prayer, which we find in Matthew 6, given to us in Jesus' words. It is a prayer that can cover all areas of our lives, and can make sure that we address the many different needs and praises that we have to relate to God.

As we read the prayer, think about the different images that come to your mind, the different aspects that the prayer covers, and how you relate to the prayer. Listen to the prayer at least once, and then begin painting whenever you want.

Questions for Discussion:

- What stood out to you in the scripture that you incorporated into your artwork?
- What was surprising about the scripture?
- What surprised you about what you created, how it came about, what it turned into?
- Are there any new words that you identify with, any images that you were drawn to that you weren't expecting to be drawn to?
- What section or verse from the scripture did you focus on?
- How did the act of painting help you to understand or connect with the Scriptures?
- How was the experience of worshiping through art for you?
- How were you able to connect or worship in ways that were new or different for you?
- Anything else that you would like to share? Any other thoughts?

Week 13

Art Medium: Mosaics

Scripture: 1 Corinthians 12:12-27

Materials Needed:

Broken pieces of pottery, plates, glasses, and bottles
Forms to glue the pieces into. (usually I can find wooden crosses or window-boxes at craft store that work really well)

Tacky glue

Mod-Podge

Foam brushes

Hammer (depending on the ages and abilities of the participants, you may feel comfortable providing a hammer for them to break pieces up during the group)

Sturdy paper bags to put the pieces in to break them up

Stereo with music

Band-aids (just in case)

Set up Instructions for Leader:

- ☐ Break up all the pieces ahead of time. This may take a few hours depending on how many participants you have in the group. Always use caution when breaking glass and ceramic items.
- ☐ Spread mosaic pieces around in the center of the table
- ☐ Place crosses, window-boxes or other objects around the table
- ☐ Place the bottles of tacky glue around the table, with at least one bottle for every 2 people
- ☐ Place the Mod-Podge on the table. This will be used to cover over the tops of the mosaics after they are finished

Worship Time Instructions for Leader:

- ☐ Open with Prayer
- ☐ Welcome everyone and go over the expectations for the group, goals as well as emphasizing the fact that the group is a worship group, not an arts class, and that there will be no sort of evaluation of any kind. (See Goals for Group)
- ☐ Read "Introduction to the Lesson: Part A"
- ☐ Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-27
- ☐ Read "Introduction to the Lesson: Part B"
- ☐ Turn on music and allow participants to begin making mosaics. Also encourage them to stay on the quieter side so that the group stays a time of worship rather than a social gathering
- ☐ Allow for a minimum of 35 minutes for the making of the art. It can be longer if your group is able or wants to go longer.
- ☐ When you are nearing the end of time, give the group about a 5-10 minute warning so they can finish up what they are doing.
- ☐ When time is "up", begin with the Questions for Discussion (see below). Feel free to allow the conversation to get off course a little bit as people will have different experiences. Allow the participants to be as open as they want and to discuss their experience freely.

- Close in prayer, perhaps asking one of the participants to lead the prayer.
- Clean up

Introduction to the Lesson:

Part A

We are all different people, the people in this room, the people in this church, and the people in the world. We all have different stories and backgrounds, experiences and skills. But we make up the Body of Christ, and are all valued and equal in that body.

Part B:

Look at the different bits of materials here, the different textures, shapes, sizes, colors and designs. They are all from different things, taken apart. When we bring them together today, they will be a part of something new.

As you spend time picking out the pieces for your mosaic, pray over your actions, and consider the Scripture from 1 Corinthians. Build a mosaic that not only speaks of your part in the Body of Christ, but also of others. Because we can't be the Body of Christ by ourselves. All the parts and all the people are needed to make it complete, and no one part is better or worse than any other.

Questions for Discussion:

- What stood out to you in the scripture that you incorporated into your artwork?
- What was surprising about the scripture?
- What surprised you about what you created, how it came about, what it turned into?
- Are there any new words that you identify with, any images that you were drawn to that you weren't expecting to be drawn to?
- What section or verse from the scripture did you focus on?
- How did the act of making a mosaic help you to understand or connect with the Scriptures?
- How was the experience of worshipping through art for you?
- How were you able to connect or worship in ways that were new or different for you?
- Anything else that you would like to share? Any other thoughts?

Week 14

Art Medium: Mosaics

Scripture: Revelation 21:1-5

Materials Needed:

Broken pieces of pottery, plates, glasses, and bottles
Forms to glue the pieces into. (usually I can find wooden crosses or window-boxes at craft stores that work really well)
Tacky glue
Mod-Podge
Foam brushes
Stereo with music
Hammer (depending on the ages and abilities of the participants, you may feel comfortable providing a hammer for them to break pieces up during the group)
Sturdy paper bags to put the pieces in to break them up
Band-aids (just in case)

Set up Instructions for Leader:

- (See Week 13)

Worship Time Instructions for Leader:

- Open with Prayer
- Welcome everyone and go over the expectations for the group, goals as well as emphasizing the fact that the group is a worship group, not an arts class, and that there will be no sort of evaluation of any kind. (See Goals for Group)
- Read “Introduction to the Lesson: Part A”
- Read Revelation 21:1-5
- Read “Introduction to the Lesson: Part B”
- Turn on music and allow participants to begin making mosaics. Also encourage them to stay on the quieter side so that the group stays a time of worship rather than a social gathering
- Allow for a minimum of 35 minutes for the making of the art. It can be longer if your group is able or wants to go longer.
- When you are nearing the end of time, give the group about a 5-10 minute warning so they can finish up what they are doing.
- When time is “up”, begin with the Questions for Discussion (see below). Feel free to allow the conversation to get off course a little bit as people will have different experiences. Allow the participants to be as open as they want and to discuss their experience freely.
- Close in prayer, perhaps asking one of the participants to lead the prayer.
- Clean up

Introduction to the Lesson:

Part A

In our lives and in our world, we are broken. Our world is broken. The human race and our entire existence has been broken in one way or another, sometimes so badly that we cannot

even recognize it. But even within that despair, that frustration, there is hope. We have hope through the saving grace of Jesus Christ.

Part B:

Look at the different bits of materials here, the different textures, shapes, sizes, colors and designs. They are all from different things, all broken. It seems that they can no longer serve the purpose for which they were originally created. But just as there is hope for the world, for humanity, there is hope, in a way, for these pieces. They can never be formed back into exactly what they were. But they can be used and shaped into something new, with a new purpose.

As you spend time picking out the pieces for your mosaic, pray over your actions, and consider the Scripture from Revelation. Build a mosaic that not only speaks of the brokenness of the world, but of the hope for the future, the promise of a new age, the assurance that we are made new in Christ and that Christ will bring about a new world.

Questions for Discussion

- What stood out to you in the scripture that you incorporated into your artwork?
- What was surprising about the scripture?
- What surprised you about what you created, how it came about, what it turned into?
- Are there any new words that you identify with, any images that you were drawn to that you weren't expecting to be drawn to?
- What section or verse from the scripture did you focus on?
- How did the act of making a mosaic help you to understand or connect with the Scriptures?
- How was the experience of worshiping through art for you?
- How were you able to connect or worship in ways that were new or different for you?
- Anything else that you would like to share? Any other thoughts?