



AN OUTLINE FOR ALL-AGE WORSHIP FOR EDUCATION SUNDAY 2018

Gathering

Thank you Lord for bringing us all together to learn from you and be fed by your Word. Help us to learn from one another and share all that we have.

Focus on the diversity of those gathering for worship – female/male, children/grown-ups, or other distinctions that make sense for your congregation.

Songs

‘We’re all together again’ or ‘Welcome Everybody’ (Fischy Music)

‘Father Abraham has many children’

All-age conversation

Either:

Game – which is more valuable?

Prepare photos on powerpoint or bring items. Ask everyone to stand up or raise a hand for the one they think is the most valuable.

For example, a picture of sunflowers by Van Gogh and a picture of flowers by very young child; Buckingham Palace and a shanty town dwelling; a diamond tiara and a cheap badge; a superstar celebrity and a homeless person.

Discuss what makes something valuable. Is it how much it costs? Is it how much it is valued by someone? (e.g. if the child’s picture given to you by your grandchild; if the badge is memento of special occasion or achievement; if a simple dwelling is all a family has for a home). How much are we worth to God? Are different people worth different amounts?

Or:

Ask who has a pet and what their favourite nibbles are (e.g. fish for cats, meat for dogs, lettuce for tortoises, carrots for rabbits, fruit for birds, chocolate for mice, mints for horses). If possible, ask each pet owner to come out and draw their pet’s favourite snack on a paper plate and hold it up. Alternatively, have soft toys for as many different pets as possible and get people to hold one up and suggest what its favourite snack might be.

Next, tell everyone that you are going to invite them to a special meal and try to include all the foods you have mentioned in the menu (e.g. smoked salmon and salad for starter, roast beef and vegetables, pears in chocolate sauce, coffee and mints). Make a big deal about how delicious it will be. Then explain that you are very sorry, but you have in fact given all the food to the pets!

Prime someone to argue that the food should be for the people – the pets should only get the leftovers or scraps.

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Readings

Proverbs 22:1-2, 8-9, 22-23

Ps 125 or 124

James 2:1-10 (11-13), 14-17

Mark 7:24-37

Focus on Education

It's not fair to give the children's bread to the dogs? No one is 'a dog' – all are children!

It's not fair to treat people differently – all are God's children.

What about education – is that valuable? Is it something we need like our daily food? (Perhaps discuss what we mean by education and what it means to different people.)

Should only important people be educated? Should girls have the same educational opportunities as boys? Should those with special needs have the same educational opportunities? Should those coming from other parts of the world have the same educational opportunities? Should those in care and custody have the same educational opportunities? Should those of different faiths and beliefs have the same educational opportunities?

Churches set up the earliest schools in this country – Sunday schools served the poor in teaching children to read and write when they had no other access to education. They met a real need – and gave the children's bread to the dogs!

What need could the church help to meet now? What 'bread' needs sharing more equally?

Hymns/songs

Big Family of God – *Becky Drake*

How much do you think you are worth?

(Is a rich man worth more than a poor man?'), – *Graham Kendrick*

Help us, O Lord, to learn – *William Reid*

Lord, you call us to your service – *Marjory Dobson*

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Prayers

Use Jelly Babies, Smarties/M&Ms (but be aware of food allergies, dietary requirements and age-appropriate choking hazards).

Give a small bag of sweets to every group of people. Explain that the different coloured sweets represent different people in education as follows. (Put this up on a projector slide or include in your order of service or provide on separate piece of paper.)

red – teachers/lecturers

green – teaching assistants/technicians

purple/pink – heads/principals

yellow – local government education department staff (LEA)

orange – national government education department (DfE)

black/brown – pupils and students

blue/other – all those currently excluded from, or unable to access, education

Invite the group to share the sweets – and to pray for everyone involved in education:

Lord Jesus – we pray for...

Help us to share the bread of education

ALL: with all your children

Blessing/commissioning

See Commissioning Prayer for Education Sunday

