



United Intergenerational Ministry

SS Series 66-08 Worship

"God's Strong Word"

Based on: Ephesians 6:10

"Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might."

Worship Leader's Guide

Preparations: Worship Bulletin: Reproduce as needed.

Interactive Lesson:

Opening Hymn: To include children, invite and encourage those sitting near them to help them listen for and sing the alleluia's at the end of each verse. Adding repetition allows all ages with a variety of challenges to participate. Encourage those with any challenges that keep them from singing this hymn to listen to the words and those with hearing challenges to read the words of this hymn as it is sung and be blessed by the message.

"Thy Strong Word Did Cleave the Darkness" LSB 578 /LW 328

"How Precious Is the Book Divine" TLH 285

Opening Sentences: Group responses can be read in a traditional style responsively. To include children and those with sight or reading challenges, ask them to repeat the responses. This kind of repetition increases participation of all generations and helps children enjoy worship and be enjoyed in worship. Ask those sitting near the hearing challenged to point to responses when they should be said to help them participate.

*** Denotes words children and visually challenged may repeat.**

Based on John 1:1 and 14

Leader: In the beginning was the Word,

Generations: And the Word became flesh,*

Leader: And the Word was with God,

Generations: And [Jesus] dwelt among us.*

Leader: And the Word was God.

Generations: We have seen His glory.*

Leader: Glory as of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth.

Generations: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen. *

A Psalm of Glory: Adapted from Psalm 4

Read or ask volunteers of all ages to read the verses. For very young readers, read a few words to them at a time that they can repeat after you. Instruct all ages to respond with the words **"For You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety"** each time they hear you read the words **"In peace I will both lie down and sleep."** Even practice these words and the response before you begin to help children learn them, and remind those sitting near children to help them respond to keep them involved. Remind those sitting near the hearing challenged to point to responses when they should be said to help them participate in worship.

Response: **Leader:** In peace I will both lie down and sleep;

Generations: For You alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety.

Verse 1: You have given me relief when I was in distress.

Response

Verse 2: The Lord has set apart the godly for Himself.

Response

Verse 3: The Lord hears when I call to Him.

Response

Verse 4: Offer right sacrifices, and put your trust in the Lord.

Response

Dramatic Reading: **"God's Word Has Great Power"** Invite children to listen as a story is told to keep them involved.

There are two options for presenting this drama:

- Ask two volunteers to practice this drama ahead of time and present the two parts as a Chancel Drama: Turn lights off to bring characters onstage. Turn lights on to present the drama. Turn lights off to exit characters. Turn lights on for the reading of the Gospel.
- To read this drama as a responsive reading, Generations may be the "Reader" and the Worship Leader or a volunteer may be the "Leader." Share how important it is to read all parts "dramatically."

Leader: God's Word has great power!

Reader: God's Word gives us His power!

Leader: Jesus Christ is the Word.

Reader: The Word who became flesh.

Leader: He brings peace and joy to earth.

Reader: He makes faith and forgiveness possible.

Leader: He offers hope and salvation.

Reader: There is no greater love than His.

Leader: When we read His Word we are blessed.

Reader: When we share His Word the world is blessed.

Confession: You may read this confession in unison. To include children and those with vision and reading challenges, read a few words at time so they can repeat them after you to help them participate in worship. Remind those sitting near those with hearing challenges to point to words as they are repeated to help them participate in worship.

All Generations: We do not read Your Word as we should. We often fail to share Your Word. Sometimes we do not understand Your Word. There are times we do not obey Your Word. Therefore, we do not possess the power of Your Word. Forgive us, O Lord. Change us, O Christ. Fill us with a deep desire for Your Word.

Absolution: If this absolution is being spoken by someone other than a pastor, omit the last sentence in the brackets. Pastors may omit the last sentence in this absolution before the brackets.

Leader: Through Christ, we are forgiven and saved and changed, and God will give us new opportunities and time and desire to read and understand and share His Word. For this reason, as a fellow servant of Christ the crucified and one redeemed through God's love, I can declare to you that all our sins are forgiven. [As a called and ordained servant of Christ and by His authority, I, therefore, forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.]

Leader: And All God's people say: **All Generations:** Amen

Interactive Lesson FOR ALL GENERATIONS: **"Knowing the Scriptures"**

Based on: 2 Timothy 3:15 And how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

INSTRUCTIONS: If you have children present, invite them to come forward to help them participate in worship, but present this lesson even if you do not have children present. UIM Interactive Lessons are for all generations. As you present this lesson, speak to the children but bring the entire congregation into your conversation.

- Ask members to name Bible stories and Bible characters and passages from the Bible. Then say: We all know stories and passages from the Bible. But how many of us know that all of these stories and characters and passages lead us to Jesus? In fact, the Old Testament leads us to Jesus and in the New Testament Jesus speaks to us personally. After Jesus ascended into heaven His disciples continued to tell the world all about His message of salvation and they even wrote it all down for us to share in the Holy Scriptures, the Word

we are learning about in this service, the Word of God that has great power and is a great blessing for us and for the whole world.

- Our sermon will help us understand why studying the Scriptures blesses us and the world even more and it will reveal a secret hidden in the Scriptures. But for now, all we need to remember is that the Scriptures are filled with knowledge of Jesus and His righteousness that blesses us and the whole world as we share it with people all around us.
- If you are offering the UIM SS Lesson that complements this service, add: Those who attend UIM SS (learned/will learn) about striving for the righteousness only Christ can offer and how to share it to lead and welcome people to Him.
- Invite everyone to join you in singing the following UIM Song in which we ask God to help us strive for the righteousness of Christ so that we can share it to lead people to Him.

Those who have come forward may return to their seats.

UIM Song: Encourage children and those with sight or any reading challenges to listen to the words of this hymn and those with hearing challenges to read the words of this hymn and be blessed by the message.

“Help Us To Strive, O Christ”

Sung to the tune of “Crown Him With Many Crowns” LSB 525 /TLH 341 /LW 278

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Note: This is the Opening Song for the UIM SS Lesson that complements this UIM Worship Service. Opening Songs introduce and clarify lessons. They do the same for UIM Worship services.

1. Help us to strive, O Christ, For righteousness from You
To show You are our Savior, Lord, In all we say and do
So people come to know All You have done to save;
Your life, Your suffr'ing, and Your death, Your rising from the grave.
2. We are God's children now, And for what's yet to come,
We strive to have Your righteousness, O Righteous One, God's Son.
You forgive and You save, Open Scriptures to us
So when, O Lord, You come again, We'll be like You, Jesus.

Options for Readings:

- *Option 1:* Worship Leader reads all readings.
- *Option 2:* Invite different generations to read the first two readings during the service. Remember, you can help very young readers by reading words to them that they can repeat after you. Always have the Worship Leader read the Gospel to give it reverent significance.
- *Option 3:* Invite all generations to repeat the words of the first two readings a few words at a time in unison to include all generations.

Notes:

- Always remind readers to state chapter and verse after every reading to teach generations where these passages are located so they can use them in their times of need.
- The readings are made shorter intentionally so that they can be read more easily by all ages.

Old Testament Reading : Acts 3:17

[Peter Speaks in Solomon's Portico] 17 “And now, brothers, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did also your rulers. 18 But what God foretold by the mouth of all the prophets, that His Christ would suffer, He thus fulfilled.

Epistle Reading: 1 John 3:6-7

[John wrote,] 6 No one who abides in Him keeps on sinning; no one who keeps on sinning has either seen Him or known Him. 7 Little children, let no one deceive you. Whoever practices righteousness is righteous, as He is righteous.

The Gospel Reading: Ask generations to stand out of reverence (1) for words that our Lord actually said when He walked on earth or (2) for words that were said about Him. *Option:* For deeper effect, process with a cross to the middle of the center aisle and read the Gospel.

Read Luke 24:44-45:

44 Then he said to them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” 45 Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures.

Creed: Type in the page number from the hymnal for the Creed you will be using.

Communion Service: Nicene Creed (LSB back page, TLH pg. 22, LW pg. 166)

Non-Communion Service: Apostle’s Creed. (LSB back page, TLH pg. 12, LW pg. 167)

Sermon Hymn: To include children, alert the congregation to sing and have the organist replay the last phrase of each verse specifically so that children can sing it. Encourage those sitting near children to point to the last phrase so they can listen for it and repeat it. Adding this repetition can also allow others with sight or learning challenges to participate. Encourage those with any challenges that keep them from singing this hymn to listen to the words and those with hearing challenges to read the words of this hymn as it is sung so all can be blessed by the message.

“O Word of God Incarnate” LSB 523/ TLH 294 /LW 335

UIM Sermon: “The Secret of the Ages is Revealed”

Based on Colossians 1:26

The mystery hidden for ages and generations but now revealed to His saints.

Introduction: What is most wonderful about UIM Worship is that it can involve all generations. Explain to generations that each time they hear the worship leader say “**Welcome all people,**” they should respond with the words “**In Jesus’ name.**” This response is also the title of the sermon to make it easy to remember. Always remind children to listen for the worship leader’s cue so they can respond and participate. Give those with hearing challenges printed copies of the sermon or of this outline and ask those seated near them to point to the responses so they can respond right along with everyone else! If you are uncomfortable with having worshipers respond or would like to ask for a response for some sermons and not others to add variety and meet the needs of those who may like one or the other, you may omit the response, but do try to make it part of your sermon by saying it yourself for stronger emphasis and effect.

- I. Our Christian congregation is united in our belief that the Bible is the only inspired, infallible, authoritative Word of God. We believe what 2 Timothy 3:16-17 affirms, *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.* However, believing the Bible is God’s Word does not mean we understand it or understand why we need to study it for our faith and every day lives. This sermon is designed to help us by revealing the secret of the ages or the divine wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 2:7) that we need in our faith and lives because it keeps us striving for the righteousness of Christ, righteousness that is good for us and blesses us and the world, because it helps us to be more like Jesus. One verse of our Gospel, Luke 24:45, tells us Jesus opened the minds of the disciples to understand the Scriptures that lead to Him. Today, this same Jesus opens our minds through the Holy Spirit because while we may say we believe all that the Bible teaches we may not be aware of all that the Bible teaches to strengthen and bless

us. And it is very important for us not to be ignorant of the Scriptures because as we heard in our Old Testament Reading, ignorance of all that the Scriptures prophesied about Jesus caused men to crucify Him. So, while we may know a verse of the Bible here or a story there, and we may even have memorized favorite passages that we can turn to in our times of need, there are deep things written in the Holy Scriptures we may not know and need to know because

Leader: It is through the knowledge of the Scriptures that

Generations: The secret of the ages is revealed.

II. First, there is one remarkable thing about the Holy Scriptures I want to share, and that is that even if we read the Bible through many times and study it thoroughly each time, there is always more to learn. Another important fact we need to know is that the Bible itself has no power to instruct and influence us until we meet the “Word” behind the words in the Bible, and as we are learning in this service, Jesus is the “Word.” Thousands of Bible students can study the entire Old and New Testaments, but unless they know the Christ revealed through the Word they remain unchanged. Only the Spirit can reveal the secret of the ages to Bible readers, and what the Spirit reveals is magnificent! The Apostle Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 2:9-10, “*No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him’ — but God has revealed it to us by His Spirit*” Paul is speaking of the Spirit of the risen Lord, the life of God in our souls that reveals the truth of God’s Word. Through study we may have accurate knowledge of what the Bible says, but only when we are touched by the Spirit of God do we begin to understand that

Leader: It is through the knowledge of the Scriptures that

Generations: The secret of the ages is revealed.

III. Of course, the secret of the ages or mystery hidden for generations is Jesus, He is the secret wisdom of God Paul speaks about in 1 Corinthians 2:7, a wisdom that has been hidden and that God destined for our glory before time began. Yet, Jesus does not act alone, the Father and Son and Spirit work together as One God. They are a combined force of Three Persons, and the more we study the Scriptures we see the need for all three. In Ezekiel 36:27, God says, “*And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in My statutes and be careful to obey My rules.*” Knowing that sinners cannot obey Him all the time, God sent Jesus (John 3:16), who in turn promised and sent the Spirit at Pentecost (John 14:26; Acts 2). Then, through the Spirit, as we read in John 1:12, *...all who did receive [Christ], who believed in His name, He gave the right to become children of God.* Ephesians 1:13 assures us all who believe are sealed with the promise of the Holy Spirit. God has opened their hearts through the work of His Son, as He did for Lydia in Acts 16:14, “*The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to what was said by Paul.*” God made her spiritually dead heart come alive so that she could hear and respond to the gospel message. So, why doesn’t our all-powerful Triune God simply open the hearts of all unbelievers? Well, as we study the Scriptures we hear that He desires all to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Timothy 2:4). It’s just that unbelievers choose not to come to Him. They love darkness (John 3:19). Even believers are warned in Matthew 22:14, *...many are called, but few are chosen.*” The “chosen” are those who accept God’s invitation to come. They try to obey Him and are forgiven each time they fail. They also desire to abide in Christ and bear fruit because that is what happens when we abide in Christ, we bear fruit just as Jesus Himself says in John 15:5, *I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in Me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit,...* There is no end to what the Scriptures contain and, therefore, what we need to study and understand and believe for our faith and salvation. The truth is, our lives can be so much better than they are when we study God’s Word because it has the power of God to change and bless and strengthen and the most amazing fact we discover as we study it is that

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IV. So far we have heard that the Scriptures point us to Christ. 1 Chronicles 6:11 encourages us to seek Him for strength. Philippians 4:13 teaches us we can do all things through His strength. Yet, we can only seek Him and do all things through His strength as the Spirit works in us through the Word of God. It is the Spirit who brings us to faith in Christ. So, we really need the Word of God to have a personal relationship with Jesus, and as we study the Scriptures we discover we also need a relationship with “one another.” Fellow believers can help us keep our relationship with Christ strong and also offer a community of faith and concern for us. “Bear one another’s burdens,” writes the apostle Paul, “and so fulfill the law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2). Many people today think they do not need a community of believers or at least think they are getting along without one. As we study God’s Word, we come to understand the important part God’s church plays in God’s plan to save His people; the family of God He has called to be His own. They are the covenant we make with one another and with the Lord, who declares, “I will be their God, and they will be My people” (Jeremiah 31:33). A powerful force combines and arises as God’s people join together in worship and to pray, but as we study and come to understand God’s Word His power and wisdom come into each one of us - His power comes to us personally. So when we miss studying God’s Word, we miss or lack the wisdom and strength only He gives that helps us through life. The truth is that as we study God’s Word wonderful things, strong and good things happen in us through the Spirit and even more amazing things happen as we discover for ourselves that

Leader: It is through the knowledge of the Scriptures that

Generations: The secret of the ages is revealed.

V. As the Scriptures become more understood *by us*, our salvation becomes more clear and certain and personal *for us* and the meaning of the cross takes on a whole new dimension. In Colossians 2:13-15, Paul writes, “*And you, who were dead in your trespasses God made us alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, nailing Christ to the cross.*” Those are the words. Now let the Spirit help you understand and realize you were dead. We often brush over the “death” of sin because it is morbid. So is picturing Christ nailed to the cross. But the Scriptures make it all real and the more we study them, the more real and saving and wonderful and powerful personal they become for *us*. We escape and forget the true picture of what our salvation cost Christ every time we fail to study the Scriptures. On the other hand, seeing Jesus’ pain and death on the cross is gruesome but the Scriptures help us to understand His love that suffered and died willingly and won victory over all the powers of evil, cancelling every accusation of sin against *us*. In bearing the curse, Paul says, Christ sets *us* free (Galatians 3:13) and the more we study the Scriptures the Spirit imbeds the forgiveness of Christ in us so that we become free indeed (John 8:36) Freedom in and through Christ means having His joy and peace in the best and worst of times. It means being absolutely safe and protected in every danger. These are the amazing realities we miss in our faith and lives when we do not study God’s Word. While hearing and reading give us some benefit and strength, it is the study of God’s Word that gives us all that we need to experience Christ living in us through the power of the Spirit. Only then do we come to know a Savior like no other because

Leader: It is through the knowledge of the Scriptures that

Generations: The secret of the ages is revealed

Leader: As the secret of the ages is revealed to us, and we come to know Him personally as our Savior, and He lives in us our lives not only become changed but we become thoroughly equipped to be welcoming to lead all of the people around us to Him. God grant it to be so for each one of us. Amen.

Offering: Taken according to custom. To add a stewardship or any hymn, type the number in your bulletin.

Prayers: You may use the following prayer petitions provided or your own prayers. The words to the prayer do not need to be printed in your bulletin. Do print the response if you choose to use it. Responses generate the participation of all generations. However, using responses some weeks and not other weeks can add variety and also

meet both the needs of those who like responses and those who prefer not to say responses. If possible, pass out a printed copy of your prayers for those who cannot hear well or at all. This will help to include them and help them feel this worship is reaching out to them. Remind those sitting near them to help especially children respond and to point to responses for the hearing impaired. Conclude your prayers with the Lord's Prayer unless it is part of your communion liturgy.

Prayer of the Church

Leader: Knowing that the combined force of Father, Son, and Spirit empowers us through God's Word, we pray for His word to live in us and through us reach others and the world. Each time you hear "**Father, together with You Son and Spirit,**" please respond with "**Empower us through Your Word.**"

Leader: Father, Your Word is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path. Fill us with a desire to read, hear, and most especially study Your Word so that we may receive Your strength and forgiveness and joy and peace. Through the study of Your Word, empower us to pass on Your strength and forgiveness and joy and peace to others around us and to the world.

Leader: **Father, together with Your Son and Spirit,**
Generations: **Empower us through Your Word.**

Leader: Forgive us, O Christ, Savior like no other, when we forget or neglect to study Your Word. Change us from the sinful, rebellious, and forgetful people that we are through Your forgiveness and love. Fill us, we pray, with the wisdom of God that comes to us in His Word through the power of the Holy Spirit so that we will become strong in faith and desire and determination to be welcoming to lead more and more people to You.

Leader: **Father, together with Your Son and Spirit,**
Generations: **Empower us through Your Word.**

Leader: Heavenly Father, our times our in Your hands. Look with favor on all who are celebrating birthdays in April but especially this week name(s) **Doreen Krause 18th**, _____ as he/she/they celebrate(s) another birthday. Grant that he/she/they may continue to grow in wisdom and grace. Strengthen his/her/their trust in Your goodness and bless him/her/them with Your abiding love all the days of his/her/their life;

Leader: **Father, together with Your Son and Spirit,**
Generations: **Empower us through Your Word.**

Leader: Gracious Heavenly Father, we thank You for the blessings of married life. On this day we rejoice with **Ron & Jean Hinkfuss 17th** as they celebrate their 52nd Wedding anniversary. Bless them in the years to come so that they may remain faithful to You and devoted to each other. By Your presence gladden each day that You graciously grant them;

Leader: **Father, together with Your Son and Spirit,**
Generations: **Empower us through Your Word.**

Leader: Father, we pray for Your wisdom and power to welcome and befriend all people in their times of need. Be with us and help us attend to the sick, (especially _____). Give us words to guide those facing a crisis of any kind. Strengthen us to comfort those who are facing death and those who mourn the passing of people they love, (especially _____). Bless all people according to their needs and Your will.

Leader: **Father, together with Your Son and Spirit,**
Generations: **Empower us through Your Word.**

Leader: Spirit of the Triune God, come and live in us. Empower us to welcome You so that we may be welcoming to lead others to You. Open our hearts to understand Your Word, and reveal to us the

blessings of knowing and loving Christ through Your Word on earth as we await receiving what no eye has seen, no ear has heard, or no mind has conceived but what our God has prepared for those who love Him.

Leader: **Father, together with Your Son and Spirit,**
Generations: **Empower us through Your Word.**

Leader: All these things we lay at Your throne trusting that You hear and answer as we
[boldly say **AMEN!**]
or
[join together in praying the prayer Jesus taught His disciples to pray: “Our Father who art in.....”]

[Holy Communion may be celebrated according to custom.]

Note: You may choose a Communion Hymn or use the hymn below.

Hymn of God’s Word : This well-known and loved hymn can usually be sung by all generations even without words or music. Help any who do not know the words repeat the “Yes, Jesus loves me” refrain. Encourage those with any challenges that keep them from singing this hymn to listen to the words and those with hearing challenges to read the words of this hymn as it is sung so all can be blessed by the message.

“Jesus Loves Me” LSB 588 (Print this public domain hymn for TLH and LW)

Alternate: **God’s Word is Our Great Heritage** LSB 582/TLH 283/ LW 333

Benediction:

May we leave this place strengthened in faith through the Spirit to study God’s Word.

May all that we learn bless us with knowledge of Christ that we can share to welcome others to Him,
as we await receiving what no eye has seen, no ear has heard, or no mind has conceived
but what our God has prepared for those who love Him.

Leader: And All God’s people say: **All Generations: Amen**

Closing Hymn: To include children, alert the congregation to sing and have the organist replay the last phrase of each verse specifically so that children can sing it. Encourage those sitting near children to point to the last phrase so they can listen for it and repeat it. Adding this repetition can also allow others with sight or learning challenges to participate. Encourage those with any challenges that keep them from singing this hymn to listen to the words and those with hearing challenges to read the words of this hymn as it is sung so all can be blessed by the message.

“Almighty God, Your Word is Cast” LSB 577 /TLH 49 / LW 342

BEFORE WORSHIPERS LEAVE: Invite them to say the God’s Word For Us Today passage from the UIM SS Lesson that complements this UIM Worship Service:

Beloved, we are God's children now, and what we will be has not yet appeared; but we know that when He appears we shall be like Him, because we shall see Him as He is.

1 John 3:2

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