

Sample Intergenerational Worship Service

Creation - God's Seven Gifts!

Introduction

Here is a collection of ideas to create an intergenerational worship service on the topic of creation. You can pick and choose from the ideas to suit your church context, the ages of your children, and how interactive you are able to be in your church.

Involve the children as much as possible. If you have older, able and confident children in your group, you could divide some of the presentations of the Creation Gifts amongst them.

You could also make the Sabbath really special by planning a special afternoon programme for the children and their families so that the whole day is a **delight** for them. Some ideas for afternoon activities have also been included in this package.

The order of this service has been adjusted to make logical sense of the story of creation and our response to it. But if you feel uncomfortable about the sequence then you can just use your normal order of service.

Programme Outline

- Welcome and introduction
- Brief opening prayer
- Hymn/Song (your choice – see list below for a few suggestions)
- Scripture reading with PowerPoint pictures (ask a teen or young person to make a PowerPoint and find suitable pictures to illustrate the verses)
- Pastoral Prayer (Older prepared child or adult – keep the prayer simple, in child-friendly language, and short)
- Children's Story – A recipe for making a world (Adult to present – children to add 'ingredients')
- Hymn/Song/Special musical item
- Sermon – 'God's Seven Gifts' (1 adult to present, 1 adult to manage PowerPoint, children to participate)
- Offering (everyone to participate)
- Thank You Prayer (prepared children)
- Closing Song 'The Seven Days of Creation' (provided) or other Hymn/Song about God's Creation or the Sabbath

Suggested Hymns and Songs

- This is My Father's World
- Morning has broken
- All things Bright and Beautiful
- For the Beauty of the Earth
- All Creatures of our God and King
- My God is so Big
- Who made the birds that sing?

Interactive Story – A Recipe for Making a World

(You can do this, or ask a young person or a good cook or actor in your church to present the story)

You will need:

- A suitable apron for cooking up a world
- A wooden spoon
- A large clear tank or large, transparent, plastic storage box
- A floating waterproof light source or a floating candle
- Several small buckets of water (enough to give several inches of water in the bottom of your large container)
- A series of cups – numbered and filled as described
 - 1 – A cup of stones,
 - 2 – A cup of sand
 - 3 – A cup of soil
 - At least one large rock that will stick up out of the water and create some dry land
 - 4 – A cup of glass gems or beads and bits of gold and silver paper (precious stones and metals)
 - 5 – A bottle of green food colouring – only add a few drops – the children need to see through the water to see all the other things being put into it
 - 6 – A cup of fresh grass clippings
 - 7 – A cup filled with pieces of chopped vegetables
 - 8 – A cup filled with pieces of chopped fruit
 - 9 – A cup with some real or fake flower petals or flowers
 - 10 – A cup of silver metal ‘confetti’ stars (from craft or card shops)
 - 11 – A cup of plastic fish (these can be found cheaply in toy stores)
 - 12 – A cup of plastic birds
 - 13 – A cup of small plastic animals
 - 14 – A couple of plastic bendy smiley people in a cup or two small plastic toy people

- Place everything on a table so that everyone will be able to see what you are doing, and lay out the plastic cups in order, as if you are going to do a cookery demonstration.
- Tell the children that the Bible tells us how the world was created and that today you will follow the instructions in the Bible to make one, right here in the room.
- Then make a world using the materials in the buckets and cups in the style of a cookery demonstration.
- Invite different children to come and add the ingredients. Use the spoon to stir everything together after each addition. Add some humorous touches of your own.
- After adding each ingredient, look at what you have done and nod in a satisfied way, as if you are making something wonderful, even though it looks terrible!

- At the end you will have a horrible mess. Ask the children what they think of your world! Invite their honest feedback. Would they like to live there? Whatever went wrong? I added all the right things in the right order! Why does it look so bad? Would it help if we baked it a bit, or put it under the grill?
- Eventually a child will probably say it is a mess because you are not God!
- We made a mess because only God can create a world. We cannot make anything like a world, we can't even make a blade of grass! Without God helping us, we will continue to make a mess of our world. But God made our world truly beautiful, and full of amazing gifts for us to discover.

Special item or song by one of the children's classes

Interactive Creation Story

- The following presentation has been designed with a PowerPoint on the screen, depicting different pictures as described in the text, and a table where a new gift-bag is added for each day of creation.
- **If the script provided is too interactive for your group – adapt it to suit your needs, or just unpack each gift bag and explore each day of creation with the children. The idea is that each day of creation was packed with special gifts from God to make our world a lovely place for us to live.**
- The gift-bags can be chosen and purchased to depict different days of creation, but if you cannot find suitable gift bags, buy some plain ones and print pictures from your computer or Internet to stick on them to illustrate the contents of the bags.
- The gift-bags contain different items to illustrate the gifts God gave us on the different days of creation.
- At the beginning of each 'day' described in the script, the relevant bag, clearly numbered with a large tag, is placed on the table. The contents are taken out of the bag and displayed as follows:

Day 1 – a black gift-bag with a series of flashing white lights, activated by pressing a button – one was purchased like this, but a similar one could be made from a black gift-bag and a string of battery-operated lights, or just use a plain black bag and some small battery-operated fairy lights.

Contents: a sturdy candle and matches or a battery-operated candle

Day 2 – a gift-bag with a watery design

Contents: a glass and a bottle of water, to be poured into the glass when placed on display, pot of bubbles to blow

Day 3 – a gift-bag with a design of grass and flowers

Contents: fresh flowers in a pot and some items of fresh fruit

Day 4 – a gift-bag with a starry design

Contents: a packet of silver confetti stars which can be sprinkled over the children if you wish

Day 5 – a gift-bag with fish or birds in the design

Contents: toy fish and birds

Day 6 – a gift-bag with a photo of children

Contents: toy animals and dolls of different ethnicities

Day 7 – a gift-bag with a picture of an animal or human resting

Contents: table and chairs for resting and visiting together with other people (rather than in bed!), a Bible

PowerPoint – title ‘God’s Seven Gifts!’

Begin by helping the children practice a response that they will say with you when you prompt them, at different times in the story. Practice this 3-4 times so that it is familiar and smooth.

Response

*Say, very loudly ‘Wow, that’s **real-ly good!**’ – clapping three times in rhythm when we say and emphasise ‘Wow’, ‘Real’ and ‘Good’. Explain that sometimes you will say ‘really’ more than once and you will show them how many times with your fingers, but they will always clap on the ‘**Real**’ part of the word.*

You can also ask the children to say, ‘That looks really good!’ if you don’t want to use the word ‘Wow!’

Script (feel free to adapt this to your own style and taste)

Once upon a time, a very long time ago, at the very beginning of Earth’s history, God created our earth and all the skies around it.

On the first day, when God went down to look at earth, and when He first began to create our world, everything was very, very, very, very dark. Shut your eyes as tightly as you possibly can. It was even darker than that. Put your hands over your eyes too. It was even darker than that! On the very first day it was as dark as dark can be. So dark you couldn’t see anything at all.

Let’s see how dark we can make it! Gather up all the darkness over your closed eyes. Gather it up in your hands, as much as you can, like a snowball, but black, a dark ball. I’m going to count to three, and when I get to three, I want you to throw all your dark balls, gently, at the screen, so we can see just how dark it all was. 1...2...3...Throw! Wow! That’s it! So much darkness! Just blackness and nothing else!

PowerPoint – black

On the first day it was very dark, but it’s hard to see what you’re doing when it’s dark. So, God had a very good idea. He knew just what He needed. What do you need when it’s so dark you can’t even see your fingers when they’re right in front of your face? Light! That’s right! God needed some light on His brand-new world. So that was the first thing He made.

PowerPoint - light

He made light. Beautiful light, and He poured it all over the world so He could see what He was doing. Light is amazing. Do you know what colour light is? White, yes, but not just white. What light colours can you think of? (Invite their ideas and affirm them.) Red traffic lights, orange and green traffic lights, yellow street-lights, blue lights on ambulances, purple lights and ultra violet lights. Light looks white but it's really made up of many different colours.

What colour light do you like the best? Red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, violet? Choose your favourite colour light and gather it up in your hands. When I count to three, throw it at the screen! Get your colourful light-balls ready! Ok let's count to three! 1...2...3... throw! That's right! Throw them hard so they stick! But be careful to keep each other safe!

PowerPoint - colours

Wow! Just look at that! Bright colourful light! Beautiful! Amazing! God thought it was wonderful and amazing too, and, at the end of the first day, God looked at all the colourful light He had made, and He said:

Wow! That's really good!

On the second day God went back to work on earth. Now the light was on He could see that everything was very wet – water all over the face of the earth. There was water everywhere. Too much water. Every step He took soaked the bottom of His robe, His sandals were all soggy and His feet went squelch, squelch, squelch.

PowerPoint – sea and sky

On the second day He took some of the water and made a big bubble around the earth to make the sky, to stop the earth getting too hot, or too dry. (Blow a few bubbles if it is appropriate). Then there was blue water on the earth and blue water in the sky. It looked very sparkly. Especially with the brand-new light shining all over it. And on the second day God looked at all the water sparkling on the earth and in the sky and He said:

Wow! That's really good!

On the third day God went to look at the world. It was still all covered in water, but He wanted somewhere to grow a garden. So, He separated the water from the dry, land and He covered the land with dark brown earth and rocks and glittering precious stones.

PowerPoint - soil

Then He spoke to the earth and hills, and cliffs, and mountains and islands pushed their way up to make new shapes on the land. They pushed and they heaved, and they slowly rose together to make a breath-taking landscape. I

wonder if you can help shape the world. Use your finger to draw the outlines of mountains and cliffs, islands and hills in the air. Like this (demonstrate drawing a mountain in the air with your index finger). That's right! Great! Now pick up your mountains, and, when I count to three, throw them at the screen! Ready, steady, careful cause they're heavy! Try not to hit anyone with your hill! 1...2...3...Throw!

PowerPoint - mountains

(Pretend a mountain hit you on the head!) Ouch! I should have ducked a bit sooner! But look, they're amazing! I love the shapes you've drawn! And God went to work, covering the dull brown earth with soft green grass, colourful scented flowers, healthy vegetables, delicious cereals, and tasty herbs.

PowerPoint – flowers etc

Then He planted tall trees with juicy fruits, and bushes covered in berries, Mmmm. He thought of all the delicious things He liked to eat in heaven and planted them everywhere he could find a space. Mangoes, bananas, apples, peaches, oranges, strawberries...

What's your favourite fruit? Pick it off the tree, very carefully, and then pretend to eat it. Careful, the juice will go everywhere, especially if you picked a mango! Mmm, imagine the flavour of the best fruit you've ever tasted and then imagine it ten times tastier, and maybe ten times bigger, and ten times juicier!

And maybe God sat down on the soft green grass, and the fragrant flowers, and picked a juicy nectarine and let the juice run down His long white beard. And on the third day He looked around at everything He'd made, and He said;

Wow, that's really good!

On the fourth day God decided to play with the sky. He wanted to make a special light to shine in the day and keep things warm...

PowerPoint - sun

...and some friendly lights to shine at night, when everything was dark. This was a really fun thing to do. Can you imagine making a universe full of stars and planets and the sun and everything?

PowerPoint - planets

Let's help God make some stars. He needs thousands of them to fill the whole sky! Draw a star in the air and hold onto it tightly. When I count to three, be ready to throw it onto the screen. 1...2...3...Throw! Wow! Look at them go! Shooting stars! Beautiful!

PowerPoint – stars

Wow, look at all the stars you've made!

And on the fourth day God had a look around at the never-ending universe full of stars and planets and black holes and He said

Wow, that's really good!

On the fifth day God looked at the sky and all the water. It looked empty and everything was very quiet. So He filled the water with all kinds of fish.

PowerPoint - fish

There were salmon, and octopi, and eels, and starfish, seahorses and jelly fish and catfish and dogfish and they were all swimming around in the brand-new water having lots of fun.

PowerPoint - birds

And then he filled the air with all kinds of birds. Eagles and robins and sparrows and peacocks and sea gulls and owls and they all flew around in the brand-new air, singing and squawking, clucking and quacking. All of them were singing and praising God as loudly as they could! If you were a bird, which one would you like to be? What sound would you like to make? I'm not a very good singer, so I think I'd probably be a duck, going 'Quack, Quack!'

Get ready, and, when we count to three, start singing your special song, as if you're a brand-new bird, praising God as loudly as can be. 1...2...3...Sing! (Allow space for the children to sing like birds for a few moments!) Pretty noisy world, hey! And on the fifth day God looked in the water and listened to the birds, and He said:

Wow, that's really good!

And maybe He thought 'Oh, that's a bit noisier than I expected! I hope they'll all go to sleep when I put the light out!' And, because it was a perfect world, they did.

On the sixth day God decided to fill the world with animals of all kinds: Big ones and little ones, fat ones and skinny ones, stripy ones and spotty ones, fast ones and slow ones and lots of very funny ones. I wonder, what kind of animal you would like to be?

PowerPoint – bunnies

Think of your favourite animal and then pretend you are that animal, in a nice peaceful way, just as it would have been when God first created the world. Like these lovely kittens.

PowerPoint – tigers

(Let the children act out being different animals for a few moments.) Amazing! I think we have enough animals here to open a zoo! But just let the animals rest for a while because God is about to make the best thing ever!

After making the animals, God did the most amazing thing of all. He made people, like you! First of all, he shaped a man out of clay. (Use some play dough or modelling material as you do this – try to make a man, but show the children that your man isn't very good, and comment that it's a good job you didn't shape the first man or we'd all look very funny today!) And God breathed into him. Then he came alive and the clay turned into blood and bones and muscles and hair and eyes and nose and lungs and everything he needed to live and move and be alive.

PowerPoint - children

Of all the things God had made, man was the best. And then God put the man to sleep, took a bone from his ribs, and made a beautiful lady so they would each have someone to love, and someone to love them.

In fact, all week, every day, God had been making the earth just for the man and the lady, with everything they would need to keep them happy, safe, and well-fed. He wanted them to explore the world together and learn about how things worked and how to take care of the air, the water, the things that grow, the birds and fish, and all the animals. And He also wanted them to learn how to take care of each other and their children. And on the sixth day God looked at the people He had made, and he was extra specially pleased, and He said

Wow, that's really, really good!

On the seventh day God came back to visit earth and have a good rest. He wanted to spend time with the people He'd made. He wanted to get to know them and He especially wanted them to get to know him. So, He rested on that day and called it the Sabbath and made it very, very special.

PowerPoint – child resting in parent's arms

And He gave it to the man and the woman as a present for them and all the people who would ever live on the earth. He gave it to them so they could rest from all their work, be together, worship him together, and take care of each other. He gave it to them so they could get to know each other better and especially get to know him better.

PowerPoint – sleeping baby

And God said: *Wow, that's really, really, really, really good!*

This is the best part of the whole week. This is time to enjoy everything I've made. This is time to celebrate life and creation and everything beautiful!

PowerPoint - family

At the end of the Sabbath, He said good-bye to the man and the lady. It had been fun making the whole world, but it was even more wonderful to share it with His new friends, the man and the lady. He had shown them the light He'd made and the water and the sky, and the flowers and the vegetables and the trees. They ate picnics of the most delicious fruit. And they saw the sun and the moon and the stars, the fish and the birds and the animals. God blessed them and kissed them, and He said good night to them, and then He left them to go to sleep. As He tiptoed away, He whispered to Himself:

Wow, that's really good!

(This is your conclusion – read it carefully and learn it so that you can say it with real significance.

And as He made His way slowly home to heaven He looked back at the earth, where everything was perfectly still, and perfectly new and perfectly beautiful and He thought to Himself: That's more than really good, it's really perfect! I do hope they don't go and mess it all up!

Talking together

Ask the children the following questions and let them wonder creatively about the story of creation. This discussion can be done as one big group, or in separate family groups.

- Which day of creation do you like best?
- Which day of creation do you think is the most important?
- Are there any days of creation that God could have left out and still had a lovely world?
- What can we do to show God how much we love the things He has made?

Reflection time

- Give each family/person a sheet of paper with a picture of the world in the middle.
- Ask them to think of four things they can do as a family to protect God's creation.
- Let them write their ideas on the sheet of paper to take home as a reminder.

Offering

- Invite the congregation to come forward and place their offerings in the gift-bag of the day when God made one of their favourite creations, as a thankful response to Him.
- Invite a child to ask God to bless the offering.

Closing Song/Hymn

- Sing a song of praise for God's creation.

Closing blessing

If possible – place the creation symbol gift bags in the centre of the group, and have each family hold their sheet of ideas as they stand in a circle around the symbol bags.

- Pray, thanking God for creating the families present, as a very special part of his creation and ask God to help the families take care of His creation in their everyday lives.

THE SEVEN DAYS OF CREATION (tune: 'The Twelve Days of Christmas')

This song works like the popular song about the 12 days of Christmas.

It needs someone to become familiar with it to guide the congregation.

Practice it with the children ahead of time too and involve them in creating some actions to go with it.

On the first day of creation God said 'Let there be
Light that all may see'.

On the second day of creation God said 'Let there be
Sky above, sea below
And light that all may see'.

On the third day of creation God said 'Let there be
Flowers and trees,
Sky above, sea below
And light that all may see'.

On the fourth day of creation God said 'Let there be
Sun, moon and stars, (sung like 'Five gold rings)
Flowers and trees,
Sky above, sea below
And light that all may see'.

On the fifth day of creation God said 'Let there be
Many birds a-flying
Many fish a-swimming
Sun, moon and stars,
Flowers and trees,
Sky above, sea below
And light that all may see'.

On the sixth day of creation God said 'Let there be
Man whom I delight in,
Many birds a-flying
Many fish a-swimming
Sun, moon and stars,
Flowers and trees,
Sky above, sea below
And light that all may see'.

On the seventh day of creation God said 'Let there be
A joyful day to rest in,
Man whom I delight in,
Many birds a-flying
Many fish a-swimming
Sun, moon and stars,
Flowers and trees,
Sky above, sea below
And light that all may see'.

Afternoon programme ideas

Follow up the service with a shared meal and a nature walk, or creative activities based on recycling and caring for God's world.

Creation picture walk

- If you go on a walk, give each family a different day of creation and a plastic bag to carry things in. Plastic disposable gloves and antiseptic hand gel may also be useful.
- Ask them to find things to make a scene or object to illustrate their day of creation, in any way they like. Tell them not to destroy any plants or flowers, and to pick things from the ground where possible. Twigs and stones and leaves can make the shape of a bird or animal, stones can be arranged in the shape of a star constellation, etc.
- At the end of the walk give everyone 10-15 minutes to make their natural collage on the grass or on a picnic table. Then let everyone try to guess what each family or group has made.

Creation activities

Day 1 – Light

- Make a collection of 'feely bags' – simple cloth bags each containing a different interesting nature item. The children need to feel inside them, without looking. Can they recognise God's creation in the dark?
- Or decorate a glass jar to make a tea-light holder for a Sabbath Candle. Paper shapes can be wrapped around the outside, or tissue paper shapes can be stuck onto the jar and coated with a layer of thinned white glue – which acts like a protective varnish.
- Invite the families do a timed Bible Search to see how many verses about light and lamps they can find in 5 minutes.

Day 2 – Water above and below

- Take the children outside to blow bubbles.
- Give each child a glass of water to drink.
- Write the alphabet down the side of a sheet of paper and ask families to think of all the different ways we find water beginning with the different letters, Eg. L – lakes, S – snow, R – Rivers, Rain, etc.

Day 3 – Green and growing things

- Help the children to plant something simple like cress or a sunflower seed. Make a plant label or stick and let the children decorate a card for the stick thanking God for things that grow.
- If you're outside see how many different kinds of tree leaves the children can find. Take some books about trees with you so that you can help the children identify the trees from which the leaves came.
- Cut up a paint chart of green colours. Give each child a different shade of green. Send them on a 'green hunt' to find something in nature that is

exactly the colour on their paint card. This helps them to discover that God has created all kinds of green things in many different shades of green.

Day 4 – Stars, moon and sun

- Give each child a sheet of black card. Show them some books of constellations. Let each child choose a constellation and make it by either sticking gold stars onto their black card or punching holes in their card so that when they hold it up to the light the 'stars' shine through.
- Make pretty stars using a star pattern from the Internet. There are lots of ways to make stars, so be creative and find some simple, but attractive star patterns.

Day 5 – Fish and Birds

- Let the children help you make an underwater collage. Use a blue paper background and invite them to make all kinds of fish. Or cut out different fish shapes and provide lots of small circles of paper or tissue. Show the children how to overlap the circles and stick them to the fish to make scales – start at the tail end.
- Make birds, using a pattern from the Internet. You can try looking at: www.activityvillage.co.uk/origami_dove.htm or www.activityvillage.co.uk/dove_of_peace_craft.htm
- Or you could watch a video clip about birds or fish.

Day 6 – People and animals

- Play Animal Pictionary – make a list of animals in the Bible (you can easily find this on Wikipedia). Divide the large group into groups of 4-5 people. Give each group a stack of paper and some pencils. Ask one person from each group to come to you and whisper the name of an animal in their ear. Without telling their group the animal they've been given, the person then draws it as fast as they can, until someone guesses correctly. The person who guesses then runs to the leader and asks for the name of the next animal to draw.
- Or download a Bible quiz about animals from: www.biblequizzes.com/quest26.htm
- Play Musical Friends – Play some lively praise music. When the music stops ask each person to find a partner. Ask them to tell each other three unusual things about themselves. Then start the music again. No one goes out, but they must try to find a different partner each time. This helps everyone to get to know each other better.

Day 7 – God rested

- Rest together, sing a worship song and praise God for His amazing creation.
- Serve an agape type meal, if it is tea-time, with lots of inviting fresh and dried fruits, nuts (checking for allergies), simple breads, popcorn, spreads, honey and juice.

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