

Rally / Kick-off Sunday
Like Trees Planted by Streams of Water
A Celebrate! Worship for Every Festival⁺
Service of Holy Communion





Rally Day/Fall Kick Off Worship

Notes: This service is designed with Psalm 1 as the focus. This service is an intentional move towards a more cross+generational, or intergenerational focus, so that all ages know this day was for everyone not just kids attending Sunday school.

This service is designed so that anyone can lead various parts. The leaders are designated by “L” in the liturgy. I challenge you to be creative in who you ask to help lead. Have a parent and a child read the Invocation. Have those people who led songs for VBS, add actions to the songs. Ask a grandparent and teenager to read prayers together. Let someone of a different generation serve communion. If available that day, the Pastor will lead the communion liturgy. Feel free to break the liturgy into more speaking parts if you have others who are willing to lead.

Additionally, liturgies and prayers have been added for **Bible presentations and Commissioning of Faith Formation Leaders**. If it is not your tradition to do these things on Kick Off Sunday, feel free to omit and use them at an earlier or later date.

Song Suggestions are included. Choose music that is appropriate for your particular context.

Ask congregation members to bring a leaf with them for the service. Additionally, you can gather leaves from local trees to have extras available for those who don’t bring one. You could also have fabric leaves or paper copies of leaves with veins available. You could choose to have a

time before the service for interactive stations. People could be invited to make a leaf rubbing with crayons and paper. If you prefer, you could also set up a station for people to make leaf rubbings when they arrive at worship or during communion. The easiest option would be to print copies of leaves with veins and hand them out as people arrive.

GATHER

Prelude

Welcome/Greeting

Invocation

Leader: Happy are those who do not walk in the ways of the wicked.

Congregation: Teach us your ways, O God.

Leader: Or stand in the path that sinners take.

Congregation: Teach us your ways, O God.

Leader: Give us delight in your law.

Congregation: Teach us your ways, O God.

Leader: Help us focus on you day and night.

Congregation: Teach us your ways, O God.

Leader: Plant us by streams of water.

Congregation: Teach us your ways, O God.

All: That we might produce fruit at the right time.

Pastor: Welcome to worship on this day when we kick off, or resume, our faith formation ministries for the school year. Today we celebrate God's call to follow. We celebrate ministries like Sunday school, confirmation, high school youth group, and adult education. We also think of how we are called to learn together through cross+generational opportunities. All of these things help us to grow in relationships with God. Each of these help us to live out baptismal promises to live among God's faithful people, to hear the Word of the Lord, proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, to serve all people, and strive for peace and justice in all the world. May we hear God's call to be planted in the lifegiving stream of God's love.

Prayer: *(Pastor or lay leader can lead this.)*

L: Please repeat after me. Dear God, you want us to follow you. Thank you for all the people who help us. Help us to want more of you in our lives. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Distribution of Communion *(Note: The person offering the blessing will dip their finger in the water, make a cross, and say, "May you be planted in the stream of living water.")*

Communion Blessing

Supplies: None

People: Pastor or Lay leader

L: Now, may the body and blood of our crucified and risen Lord, strengthen you and keep you in God's grace, now and always. Amen.

SENDING

Group Art Project

Supplies: Large canvas with a tree outline on it, Bingo daubers. If you have an artistic person, in the congregation, ask them to add words from Psalm 1 to the canvas.

People: People gathered for worship

Do: Ask everyone to gather around the tree outline. Depending on the congregations' size, you may need to create a few art pieces. Have enough Bing daubers available so people can share and won't need to wait long.

Read: Psalm 1:1-3

L: Today we remember that we are connected to God like a tree is connected to water. We need God's Word to grow just like we need water to grow. We also need each other. Each of you are invited to use a dauber and add a leaf to our tree. We will display this in the sanctuary for the next few months reminding us to be connected to God and to each other.

Blessing

L: May you find happiness in following God's path. May you delight in God's Word day and night. May you be well-nourished like a tree planted by a stream allowing you to produce fruit in God's timing. Amen.

Song:

Song Suggestion: *I've Got Peace Like a River* (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d6085sLXCMs> YouTube for example)

Supplies: Musicians or recording, lyrics on a screen or printed

People: Song leaders

Dismissal

Postlude

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Sample

