

ATTENTIVE TO YOUR WORD



A Faith Inkubators Musical Liturgy www.faithink.com Cover Art by Dr. He Qi, www.heqiarts.com

*A Liturgy for Bible Presentation Sunday
Faith Stepping Stone 4*





W ATTENTIVE TO YOUR O R D

A Liturgy for Bible Presentation Sunday

Youth receiving Bibles gather with parents, sponsors and/or Faith Mentors in the back of the sanctuary and lead singing prior to the processional song.

The Service of Confession

Call to Worship

Keep Silence

Habakkuk 2:20

But the Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him!
(Track 1)

Invocation

Presider (P): (From the front) We begin in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. (+) Amen.

Call to Confession

Assistant (A): Welcome to Faith Stepping Stone Bible Sunday, a day of celebration when parents of this church keep a decade-old promise to place in their childrens' hands God's Holy Word, and families commit together to placing a verse from God's Word at the center of their nightly communication. Before we begin, let us enter the presence of God in humble confession. Please turn with me to Psalm 51:6-7 and turn your hearts to God. Listen once, then sing along.

The Confession

Against You

Psalm 51:6-7

Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart. (Track 2)

The Absolution

Youth I: (From back of church) Join hands and listen to the promise of God: Because of Jesus, if you confess with a true heart, God will forgive. Your sins are washed away. Now go, and sin no more!

Youth II: (From back) Our call to remembrance for Bible Sunday is found in Ecclesiastes 12:1. Mark yourself with the sign of the cross, then mark six others near you. Sing along with the song as you are able.

Call to Remembrance

Youth and parents, sponsors, and Faith Mentors process at this time, marking people in pews with crosses as they enter.

Remember Your Creator

Ecclesiastes 12:1

Remember your creator in the days of your youth, before the days of trouble come, and the years draw near when you will say, "I have no pleasure in them." (Track 3)

Service of the Word

Youth III: The People of Israel were wandering in a foreign land. It was a dangerous place: a land of child sacrifice and temple prostitutes! How would God's people protect their children in this alien culture? How could they stay true to the one true God surrounded by such danger? In our Old Testament lesson today, God told them how to protect their children. Please turn to Deuteronomy 6:7. Listen the first time through, then sing along.

Keep These Words

Deuteronomy 6:7-9, 4-6

Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem (between your eyes) on your forehead, and write them on the door posts of your house and on your gates. Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. (Track 4)

Youth IV: The peace of the Lord be with you all!

Response: And also with you.

Youth IV: Rise and share that peace with one another.

Youth V: You may be seated. Our Psalm for Faith Stepping Stone Bible Sunday includes four verses from the songs of Israel. Here God tells us how to keep our way pure and our feet from stumbling on the road of life. Please turn to Psalm 119 starting with verses 11 and 9. Listen first, then sing along.

I Treasure Your Word

Psalm 119:11, 9, 105 and 122:1

I treasure your word in my heart, so that I may not sin against you. How can young people keep their way pure? By guarding it according to your word. Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path. I was glad when they said to me, "Let us go to the house of the Lord!" (Track 5)

Youth VI: Our New Testament lesson is found in II Timothy 3:16-17. Sing along with it as soon as you pick up the tune.

All Scripture

II Timothy 3:16-17

All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work. (Track 6)

Youth VII: Jesus is the living Word of God. We rise for the Gospel and turn to John, chapter 1, beginning with the verse 1. Listen to the verses as they are sung, then sing along with the chorus, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

In the Beginning

John 1:1-5, 9-12, 14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it. He was in the world and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (Track 7)

Pastor's Thoughts

Old Testament Lesson

The Peace

The peace may be shared during the instrumental interlude of the Old Testament song.

The Psalm

Consider teaching sign language for this Psalm as it is sung.

New Testament Lesson

The Gospel

The Sermon

Service of Promise

Bible Procession

**When baptismal sponsors are not available, youth choose a special friend from the congregation to take part in this promise celebration.*

Theme Song

Assistant Minister: Will all youth receiving Bibles today, their parents and sponsors, God Parents or Faith Mentors* come forward at this time for our Faith Stepping Stone Bible Presentation? The congregation will turn in their Bibles to sing our theme verse, II Peter 1:19. Listen once, then sing along.

Attentive to Your Word

II Peter 1:19

You would do well to be attentive to this (word) as to a lamp shining in a dark place, until the day dawns and the morning star rises in your hearts. (Track 8)

The Faith Stepping Stone Promises

P: Dear Friends in Christ, it wasn't so long ago that many of you stood with a baby in your arms and made a sacred promise to God on behalf of your child to ... (Assistant reads the Baptismal promises). On that day you promised to place in their hands the Holy Scriptures. Today you stand again before the altar of Almighty God to renew and fulfill this pledge. In a world where promises are often made to be broken, you are keeping a decade-old promise. God bless you for doing this! Before we present the Bibles, we will ask you to recommit to the promises you've already made to God on behalf of your child. I ask parents first, in the presence of God, this congregation, and your children, will you continue in the promises you made to God in baptism? If so, please answer, "Yes, with the help of God."

Parents: Yes, with the help of God.

Blessing One Another

A: As children grow, pressures on family life often grow, too. This church is committed to helping you keep your family together in a world that could tear it apart. One key to health in family life is a nightly communication practice we call a "Home Huddle." In our Faith Stepping Stones system, this nightly practice grows over time as your family grows.

P: In the first Stepping Stone, new parents learn to bless their babies and promise to do it every night. I ask you again, will you continue to bless your child before you turn out the lights on each day? If so, parents please repeat after me, "We promise to bless our children... every night."

Parents: We promise to bless our children... every night.

A: Young people, you are a blessing to your parents. Will you remind them of that every night? If so, please repeat after me, "We promise to bless our parents... every night."

Youth: We promise to bless our parents... every night.

Praying Together

A: In our second Faith Stepping Stone, parents learn to pray with their preschoolers and make a vow to add nightly prayer to their bed time ritual, bringing God in to the close of the day so little ones will know who they are and whose they are.

P: With that in mind, we return to the prayer promise: Parents, will you continue to bring your child's needs to God in prayer every night? Will you praise and thank God for the good of the day and invite the Holy Spirit to help them with their problems and challenges? If so, repeat after me, "We promise to pray with our children... every night."

Parents: We promise to pray with our children... every night.

A: Young people, God loves you and wants the best for your family. God also listens and promises to answer prayer. Your parents have promised to bring the cares of your day to God in prayer every night. Will you also make this promise on their behalf? If so, please repeat after me, "We promise to pray with our parents... every night."

Youth: We promise to pray with our parents... every night.

Sharing Highs & Lows

A: When children enter kindergarten, families learn to share *Highs & Lows*—the good and the bad of the day—every night. They promise to add this healthy communication practice to their nightly routine of prayer and blessing. Parents, in order to truly care for your children, you need to know what is going on in their lives. This involves time, listening skills and attention.

P: I ask parents again: In order to keep your relationships strong and your child safe, will you continue to share your highs and lows every night with your child? If so, please repeat after me, “We promise to make time... to share our highs and lows... with our children every night.”

Parents: We promise to make time... to share our highs and lows... with our children every night.

A: Young people, your parents need to know what is going on in your world so they can best care for you, protect you, and nurture you. They have promised to share the *Highs & Lows* of their day with you every night. Will you also make this promise? If so, please repeat after me, “We promise to make time... to share our highs and lows... with our parents every night.”

Youth: We promise to make time... to share our highs and lows... with our parents every night.

A: Today, we celebrate a fourth Faith Stepping Stone—the presentation of a Bible. As we do this, we ask parents and youth to add a fourth faith practice to their nightly routine: the promise to read a verse from God’s Word each night.

P: Parents, the time has come to fulfill your promise. Please present the Bible to your child, place your right hand on it, and your left hand on your child’s shoulder. Look them in the eyes and repeat after me: May this Word of God... be a lamp to your feet... and a light to your path... May the mind of God... bring you wisdom... beyond what I can provide... May this sword of the Spirit... be a weapon in your hand... against every evil... and may the Living Word of God... shine in our family... in all we do and say... Today I keep my vow... to present you with the Holy Scriptures... and I renew my vow... to lead our family... in the ways of God... Amen.

A: Caring parents often give their children daily vitamins for physical health. Parents, from this night on, will you give your children a spiritual vitamin for their spiritual health? Will you include a small bit of wisdom from God’s Word—a verse each night—in your evening ritual?

P: If so, please repeat after me, “We promise to make time... for God’s Word every night.”

Parents: We promise to make time... for God’s Word every night.

A: Young people, please hand the Bible to your parents. Now place your right hand on your heart and your left hand on the Bible. I have a question. You have just heard your parents promise to read a verse from the Bible every night with you. That’s a big promise. As you keep it, your family will be blessed with a wisdom and peace you can’t get on your own.

P: The Scriptures tell us that sometimes it’s the child who must be the leader in a family. There may come nights when your parents are tired or busy and forget this promise to God. There may be nights when they are watching television or reading the paper when you are ready to go to bed. I ask you now, children of God, on those nights, will you be the leader? Will you remind your parents of their promise? Will you take out this Bible and make sure you keep the promise to read a verse from God’s Word every night? If so, please repeat after me “We promise... to remind our parents... to make time for God’s Word... every night.”

Youth: We promise... to remind our parents... to make time for God’s Word... every night.

The New Promise: Reading a Verse from God’s Word

The Child’s Promise

The Sponsor's Prayer

A: We ask both children and parents to kneel together and hold hands. Sponsors and Faith Mentors, please lay a hand on both child and parent. Let us pray.

P: Dear God, source of all wisdom, wonder and truth: you have given these families as a gift to each other for this short time we call the growing years. You have given us your Holy Word for both this life and the next. Hear the promises these, your children, have made before you now. Grant them wisdom, power, and patience to keep them. And as they keep your Word in their homes every night, may your Word keep them safe and close and together in a world that can tear families apart. We know this is your will, and we claim it in Jesus' name. Amen.

A: Sponsors and congregation, please repeat after me: May the Lord bless you and keep you... in the promises you have made today... May the Word of God fill your home... with power, peace and promise... from this night on... and forevermore. In Jesus'... Amen.

The Offering

Other announcements and parish concerns may be made at this time.

A: We receive our offering. Today a special envelope is available for those of you who would like to give an extra gift to help with the expense of providing Bibles to young people in our Faith Stepping Stones ministry. Before they go, let's have a hand of applause for our young people and the parents who have kept their promises to God today.

Offering Praise

Better

Proverbs 15:16-17, 16:3, 23:4, 30:8b

Better is a little with the fear of the Lord than great treasure and trouble with it. Commit your work to the Lord, and your plans will be established. Better is a dinner of vegetables where love is than a fatted ox and hatred with it. Do not wear yourself out to get rich; be wise enough to desist. Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that I need. (Track 9)

Benediction & Dismissal

All are welcome to join youth and parents following the service to sign their Bibles with good wishes and favorite verses.

P: Please rise. Almighty God who has given you the Sword of the Spirit—the Holy Word—grant you the wisdom and will to use it well! Go in peace. Serve the Lord. Don't forget to take your spiritual vitamins every night.

All: Thanks be to God!

Be Strong and Courageous

Joshua 1:9, 5b

Be strong and courageous; do not be frightened or dismayed, for the Lord your God is with you wherever you go. I will not fail you or forsake you. (Track 10)



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**Against You, Keep These Words, Word in My Heart, In the Beginning,
Attentive to this Word, Better, Be Strong and Courageous
Keep Silence
Remember Your Creator
All Scripture**

by Rich Melheim

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