

Worship fact sheet

What is Christian worship?

'The word worship is related to 'worth-ship'. Worship deals with the question: What is of worth? In worship God's worth is proclaimed or revealed and God's worth is acknowledged...' (LIFE curriculum God gathers Christians to worship him, Background notes for teachers)

'Worship begins in God's actions towards his people. In worship God comes to his people and serves them by what he says to them (the word) and by what he does (in the sacraments). The focus of Christian worship is the Lord Jesus Christ, because through Jesus God most clearly shows himself as the God who loves us, accepts us, forgives us and cares for us.'

The second aspect of Christian worship is our response to God's words and actions. We recognise and acknowledge that God serves us, and we show by our words and actions that we believe that God is worthy of praise, honour, loving obedience and willing service.' (p 29 CSCF)

Worship in Lutheran schools

In Lutheran schools they set aside special times to worship through:

- ✓ Daily staff devotions, staff prayer, Bible study, staff retreats, staff worship
- ✓ Classroom worship - class devotions, grace prior to lunch, blessing at the end of the school day
- ✓ School worship
- ✓ School and congregational worship – some schools have special worship services where school families are invited to attend the congregation(s) connected to the school. Often staff and students can be involved in these worship services.

Important elements for School Worship

- ✓ Bible reading
- ✓ Telling Bible stories
- ✓ Relevant Gospel message based on the biblical narrative
- ✓ Prayers of request and thanks - for students, school and the world
- ✓ Blessing
- ✓ Singing - in a context of optional involvement
- ✓ Group silence for meditation and contemplation
- ✓ Appropriate ritual acts (eg candles, signing of the cross for blessing etc)

Students can be invited to be involved in the following elements but students cannot be compelled to participate as a conflict of conscience may arise.

- ✓ Confession of sins
- ✓ Confession of faith
- ✓ Responsive prayers
- ✓ Calls for commitment
- ✓ Celebration of Holy Communion

Worship in the school context needs to:

- ✓ be accessible to students
- ✓ be conducted in a language and style which communicates both the relevance of the gospel to the lives of students, as well as the sublime mystery of the Christian faith.
- ✓ provide for a variety of expressions of worship as God works differently in different people at different times.