

# WONDERS ON DISPLAY

## CHECKLIST: WHAT YOU NEED

- Copies of the downloadable “622 service” and “Prayers & Thanksgivings” booklets
- Copies of the lesson handout
- Copy of the leader’s notes
- OPTIONAL: A white board, easel pad, or chalk board with markers/chalk
- OPTIONAL: Bibles (ESV or similar recommended)
- OPTIONAL: Have notebooks on hand for teens to take home and use as prayer journals if they wish

## ICE BREAKER: TRAVEL DISASTER SLIDESHOW

Divide your group into small teams with up to four teens in each team. You (or a volunteer) will be a presenter showing a “slideshow”. One at a time, the teams will come forward and receive an “assignment” from you on the topic of the slide which they must portray. Each team will have only a few seconds to create a tableau that matches the topic you’ve given. *Further suggestions on how to manage this ice breaker depending on your group size are below.* Here are a few ideas for slide assignments:

- Picked up the wrong luggage
- Seedy hotel has bed bugs
- Seated next to screaming child on airplane
- The road is blocked by hot lava from a volcanic eruption
- Everyone gets food poisoning
- Unexpected encounter with a deadly spider
- Kidnapped by pirates
- Luggage has ended up on the other side of the world
- Lost in the airport
- Cruise boat has sprung a leak

IF YOU ARE WORKING WITH A SINGLE GROUP, THEN YOU MAY WANT TO ROTATE PEOPLE OUT TO ACT AS THE PRESENTER. IF YOU HAVE TWO OR THREE TEAMS, PLACE THEM IN SEPARATE “ZONES” OF YOUR ROOM WHERE THEY CAN SEE ONE ANOTHER’S TABLEAUS. ALTERNATE BETWEEN TEAMS. IF YOU HAVE A LARGER GROUP AND/OR A SMALLER SPACE, TRY CLEARING A “STAGE” AREA AND AN AUDIENCE AREA. NUMBER THE TEAMS SO THEY KNOW WHO IS UP NEXT, AND HAVE THEM TAKE TURNS TAKING THE STAGE.

## 622: BEGINNING WITH PRAYER

Begin the formal part of the lesson by saying together the first part of the order of service for young people in the booklet, up to the middle of page 4.

AT THIS POINT IN THE LESSON, ASK IF THE TEENS SUCCEEDED IN DOING LAST WEEK’S CHALLENGE, HOW IT WENT, AND WHETHER THEY HAVE ANYTHING TO SHARE.

## DISCUSSION: TRAVELLING MERCIES

As an introduction to the lesson ask the teens to discuss the following questions.

DEPENDING ON THE COMFORT LEVEL FOR SHARING IN YOUR GROUP, IT MAY BE EASIER TO HAVE THEM VOLUNTEER ANSWERS WITH ALL RESPONSES WRITTEN TOGETHER ON A BOARD.

- Have you ever experienced a “travel disaster”? What happened?

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- Have you ever been in an accident? How did it feel? What happened?
- Do you worry about your family and friends when they travel? Do you pray for them?

*A few things worth pointing out (if they don't otherwise arise during the discussion):*

- *Even if your only holiday experiences are simple, local ones, you may have had an unexpected, frightening or unpleasant experience – anything from forgetting to pack something, to finding that you'd expected something nicer than the actual arrangements you ended up with. Although often stressful at the time, some of these situations can be funny to think about in hindsight if everything turned out well in the end.*
- *Your teens are probably most familiar with traffic accidents, which are very common and differ widely in severity. Some accidents are mere “fender benders” which might leave us feeling a bit shaken, but without injury. Others can cause serious damage to cars and people, even resulting in death. If something of a serious nature arises, take a moment to pray for those impacted.*
- *If we've experienced an accident recently or if we're prone to worry, then we may find ourselves feeling anxious about those we love when they travel. Scripture invites us to take all our anxieties to God, because he cares for us (1 Peter 5:7). The Prayer Book includes a prayer for those who travel in the “Prayers and Thanksgivings” section, and another one in the “At Sea” section (see today's At-Home Challenge).*

## THE LESSON: PSALM 107

The first part of the lesson (below) can be read aloud. Then the teens are asked to read the Bible text (either silently to themselves or aloud together), followed by some additional questions for discussion.

(IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR ADDITIONAL RESOURCES TO HELP RESPOND TO QUESTIONS THAT MAY BE RAISED DURING THIS UNIT, WE RECOMMEND “DISCOVERING THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER: A HANDS-ON APPROACH, VOLUME 3: SPECIAL OCCASIONS” BY SUE CARELESS.)

The Nicene Creed begins with this declaration:

*“I believe in one God the Father Almighty,  
Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible” BCP P. 71.*

The worldview of believers is shaped by this foundational truth: that God is the Creator, and that we are his creatures. God is all-powerful, all-knowing, present everywhere, eternal, unchanging; *and we are not*. Ever since the first sin, human beings have confused creature and Creator. They've tried to place themselves in the role of God, making up their own definitions of good and evil, and rejecting his divine authority.

Scripture is filled with the stories of men and women who caught a glimpse of the power and majesty of God. Perhaps you remember the story of how the Lord spoke to Job out of the whirlwind. Or maybe you remember Isaiah's vision of the divine throne-room. Or you may have heard about Paul's conversion on the road to Damascus. These experiences of encountering the majesty of God resulted in life-changing humility and awe. If we had begun to think that *we* were in control, encountering God reminds us that *He* is the one in control. And that is actually very, very good news.

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The Psalms are filled with inexhaustible worship, calling our attention both to who God is and to who we are. We are like grass that fades, but God is eternal. We are weak, but he is mighty. He is righteous and just and holy. He is gracious and merciful. He is King over all! With that in mind, let's take a look at today's passage, an excerpt from Psalm 107.

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Refer to Psalm 107:23-32.

(THE TEXT IS PROVIDED ON THE BACK OF THE HANDOUTS AND IN THESE LEADERS' NOTES SO THAT EVERYONE CAN MARK IT UP AND MAKE NOTES ON IT IF DESIRED. ALTERNATIVELY, YOU CAN READ OUT OF A BIBLE).

Read through the text. Then ask the teens to respond to what they've just read. Here are some questions to help guide the discussion.

- How are the sailors in this psalm described?
- How is the sea described?
- What actions are ascribed to God?
- What does the psalm tell us about God's character?
- What response should human beings have to God?
- What does this mean for us today?

*A few notes and reflections for reference:*

- *The sailors in this psalm were merchants or perhaps fishermen, whose livelihood was bound up with work on ships. They were "doing business on the great waters" (v23).*
- *The sea is described as a source of wonder and danger. It is powerful, unpredictable and utterly beyond the control of human beings. The psalmist uses evocative language to describe the wind and waves in a storm (v25-27), as well as the calm "hush" of quiet waters (v29-30).*
- *God's "deeds" and "wondrous works" were evident to those who made a living on the water (v24). There are many things to this day that we do not know about the oceans and the creatures that live in them. But all of these things are no mystery to the one who created – and still has control over – them. The psalmist describes God as having command of the storm (v25) in all its power, which is such a source of danger to human beings. But God is also the one who delivers those who call to him, causing the storm to "be still" and bringing them safely to their destination (v28-30).*
- *The psalm tells us of God's power, but also of his mercy. He hears those who call to him. He is able to deliver them, and is faithful in doing so. The psalmist calls sailors to "thank the Lord for his steadfast love" and "his wondrous works" (v31).*
- *No matter what danger we face, human beings should recognize that God is ultimately the one in control and that we should pray to him in times of distress (as well as times of comfort). Recognizing God's power, mercy, and the love he has shown us, our response should be thanksgiving and praise (v31-32).*
- *What the psalmist has to tell us is as relevant today as it has been for millennia. We can call to God in any circumstance, knowing that he loves us and knowing that he is able to intervene. God does not always intervene in the way that we would wish, and we do not always know why, but believers trust that his purposes are loving even when we struggle to understand. With Job we strive to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord has taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord", and "Though he slay me, I will hope in him" (Job 1:21, 13:15).*

DURING EACH LESSON, IF THE TEENS RAISE THEOLOGICAL OR BIBLICAL QUESTIONS THAT YOU DON'T FEEL CONFIDENT ABOUT ANSWERING, SAY SO, BUT LET THEM KNOW THAT YOU'LL FIND THE ANSWER AND RESPOND AT THE NEXT MEETING.

## PREVIEW: AT-HOME CHALLENGE

Take a brief moment to look at the at-home challenge together.

THE WEEKLY "AT-HOME CHALLENGE" IS TYPICALLY A SIMPLE ASSIGNMENT TO SPEND SOME QUIET TIME IN PRIVATE PRAYER. ENCOURAGE THE TEENS TO GET NOTEBOOKS THAT CAN BE USED AS PRAYER JOURNALS. ASSURE THEM THAT THEY WILL NOT BE REQUIRED TO SHOW THEIR JOURNAL OR THEIR PRIVATE PRAYERS TO ANYONE.

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Each morning and evening, follow your own rule of prayer.

(IF YOU DON'T HAVE ONE, TRY SAYING THE MORNING AND EVENING PRAYERS FROM THE "FORMS OF PRAYER TO BE USED IN FAMILIES", WHICH BEGINS ON PAGE 728 OF THE BCP. IF YOU DON'T HAVE A COPY, YOU CAN LOOK IT UP HERE: [HTTP://PRAYERBOOK.CA/RESOURCES/BCPONLINE/FAMILY-PRAYER.](http://prayerbook.ca/resources/bcponline/family-prayer))

Take some time this week to reflect on God's power and his mercy. Do you know anyone who is away travelling or about to be away travelling? Take a moment to say this prayer for them:

*O God our heavenly Father, who art present in thy power in every place: Preserve, we beseech thee, all who travel by land, water, or air [especially those for whom our prayers are desired]; surround them with thy loving care; protect them from every danger; and bring them in safety to their journey's end; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.* (PRAYER FOR THOSE WHO TRAVEL, FROM PRAYERS & THANKSGIVINGS, BCP P. 54, AND AT SEA, BCP P. 633)

## CLOSING PRAYERS (622 AGAIN)

Close with any prayers that might be appropriate in the context of the discussion of the day.

AT THE END OF EACH LESSON, IF YOU FIND THAT YOU STILL HAVE LOTS OF TIME REMAINING, YOU MIGHT CHOOSE TO TAKE SOME TIME TO EXPLORE THE "PRAYERS AND THANKSGIVINGS" SECTION IN THE BCP (PAGES 39-62, OR YOU CAN USE THE DOWNLOADABLE BOOKLET). AS YOUR GROUP MEMBERS COME ACROSS PRAYERS THAT THEY FIND RELEVANT, PAUSE AND PRAY THEM TOGETHER. IF YOU'RE PRESSED FOR TIME, YOU MIGHT CLOSE WITH THE THEMED PRAYER FROM THE AT-HOME CHALLENGE.

Then finish with the "Grace", the final prayer in the booklet.

### PSALM 107: **COMMANDER + DELIVERER**

<sup>23</sup>Some went down to the sea in ships, doing business on the great waters;

<sup>24</sup>they saw the deeds of the Lord, his wondrous works in the deep.

<sup>25</sup>For he commanded and raised the stormy wind, which lifted up the waves of the sea.

<sup>26</sup>They mounted up to heaven; they went down to the depths; their courage melted away in their evil plight;

<sup>27</sup>they reeled and staggered like drunken men and were at their wits' end.

<sup>28</sup>Then they cried to the Lord in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress.

<sup>29</sup>He made the storm be still, and the waves of the sea were hushed.

<sup>30</sup>Then they were glad that the waters were quiet, and he brought them to their desired haven.

<sup>31</sup>Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wondrous works to the children of man!

<sup>32</sup>Let them extol him in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders.