

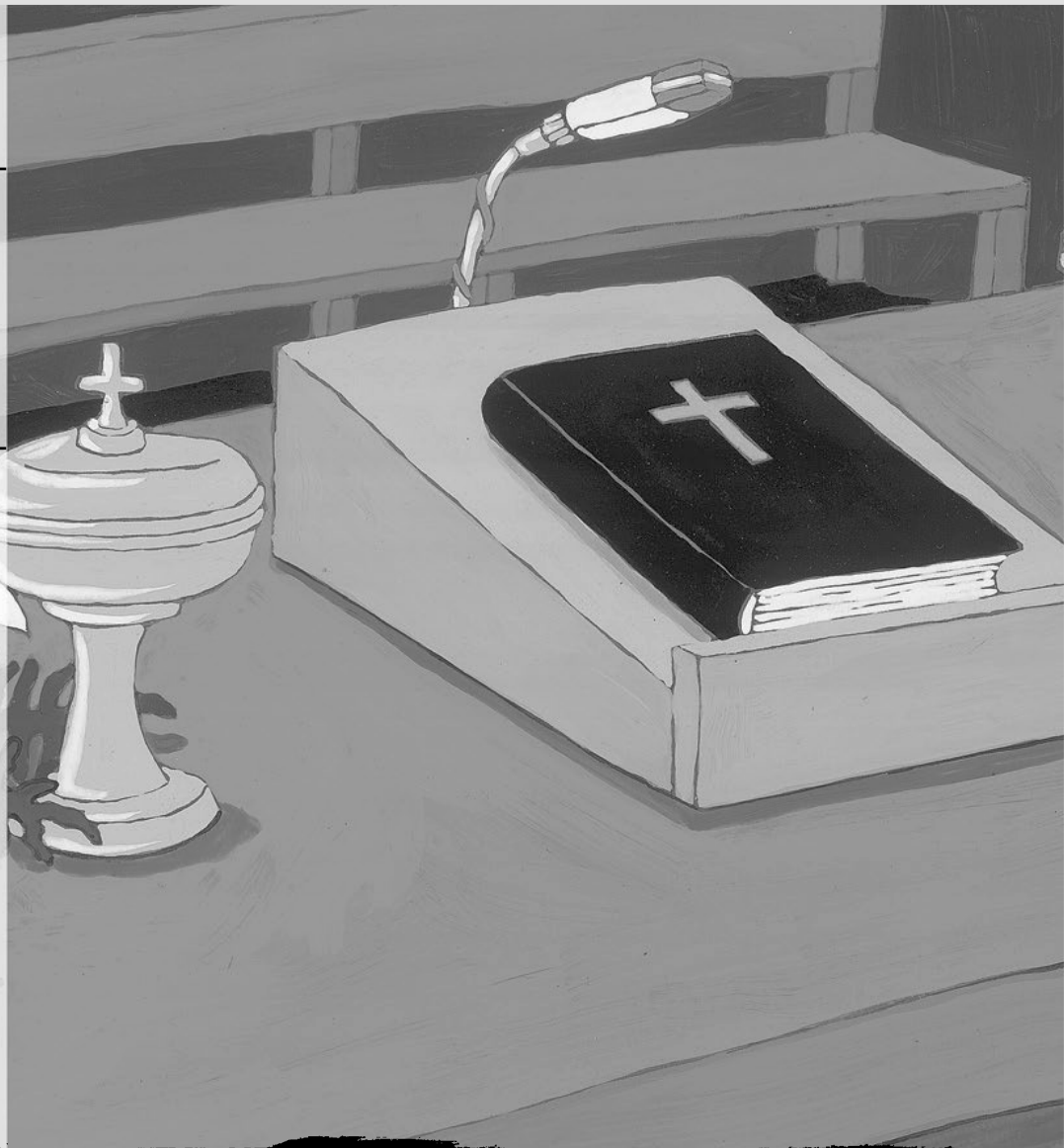
OUR DIVINE SERVICE

Objective

The children recognize that the divine services serve for the completion of their soul.

Contents

- Preparing for the divine service.
- The liturgical order of the divine service.
- Regular attendance of the divine services.



Lesson Plan
Lead-In

Theme Picture, Discussion

- The altar is prepared for the divine service.
- The Bible is on the altar.
 - The communion chalices have been set up.
 - The altar is decorated with flowers.
- Not only the altar is prepared for the divine service. Other work is also done.
- The property is cared for.
 - The church is cleaned regularly.

Question Prompt

- Do you know who does this work?
- The children provide names.
- When we enter the church we are greeted at the door.
- All of this contributes to the preparation for the divine service.

Question Prompt

- How do we prepare ourselves for a divine service?
- We dress in a manner that is appropriate for God’s house.
 - We realize that we need God’s word, forgiveness of sins, and Holy Communion.
 - We pray before the divine service and try to distance ourselves from the routine of everyday life.
 - Quietly we await the beginning of the divine service and occupy ourselves with the opening hymn.

Implementation

Distribute index or correspondence cards among the children and thick markers.

Action Prompt

Our divine services have a fixed pattern. On each of the cards write one event which occurs in each divine service.

The children write their answers on the cards. Afterwards spread the cards out on a table.

Together with the children sort them so as to result in a complete sequence of events for the divine service. Points that were missed are brought out in a discussion with the children and written down. Cards showing the same event are placed on top of each other.

Discussion

Go into the individual events and supplement, if necessary. Explain to the children that each event is significant and has an effect.

- The opening hymn sets the mood for the divine service. It provides an inner link to what is to be conveyed to us through the sermon.
- The first words of the one conducting the service are: "In the name of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit ...". Hereby all that takes place in a divine service is placed under God's authority.
- Through the opening prayer we seek the connection to God.
- A text is taken from the Bible and serves as the basis for the proclamation of the word.
- In many congregations a choir supports the ministers' sermon with appropriate hymns.
- The sermon constitutes the proclamation of God's word.

A child reads to the class.

Bible

John 16: 13:

"However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come."

Inspired by the Holy Spirit, the ministers proclaim the gospel.

- The celebration of Holy Communion is introduced by a hymn of repentance which is followed by the praying of the Lord's Prayer together, in which we confess our sins, among other things.
- The absolution is granted, and the peace of the Risen One is conveyed.

- The Eucharistic prayer is a prayer of thanks. We give thanks that Jesus brought the sacrifice for our redemption, that He instituted the church and sent—and still sends—Apostles.
- Through the consecration of the elements of bread and wine in form of a wafer, the body and blood of Jesus Christ becomes present (real presence, consubstantiation; Catechism-QA 503).
- By receiving Holy Communion we assume the nature of Jesus in us and receive strength to overcome. Partaking in the body and blood of Jesus guarantees continued fellowship with Christ.
- The divine service ends with a prayer, in which the officiant first of all expresses thanks for the presence of God, and for Word and sacrament. This is followed by petitions for ourselves and for our neighbour. And he asks for God's blessing on our offerings.
- The benediction: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen" (2 Corinthians 13: 14).

This blessing has the following effects:

- Through this blessing God inclines Himself to man. If He is accepted in faith, this will bring about a strengthening of the faith, love for God and the neighbour, a strong hope for the fulfilment of the promise, greater understanding, loyalty, and joy.
- The surety that the Lord also accompanies us with His grace in our everyday lives is imparted to us.
- Love is an attribute of God's children. Those who have God's love within them, can also give love to others.
- Through the Holy Sealing we received the gift of the Holy Spirit, making us members of the community of God's children. This provides comfort and security. The Holy Spirit teaches us to lead a God-pleasing life.

Workbook, Exercise 1

The children work on the exercise with a partner.

In a divine service there can also be ministrations.

- Holy Baptism, Holy Sealing, and confirmation take place before the congregation receives Holy Communion.

- All other acts of blessing take place following Holy Communion (such as wedding blessings, wedding anniversary blessings, ordinations, etc.).

Why is it important that you to attend the divine services regularly?

The divine service is important for me because

- it leads me into the fellowship with the triune God.
- I find out about God's will and my faith is strengthened.
- I am made aware of my sins and they are forgiven.
- Holy Communion, which preserves the continued close fellowship with Jesus Christ, is vital for my soul.
- the sacraments are dispensed there.
- it provides fellowship with God's children here and in the beyond.

Conclusion

A child reads to the class.

Bible

Acts 2: 42:

"And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers."

Discussion

This statement was made about the congregation of the first Christians. God also expects steadfastness from us in these important areas.

Workbook, Exercise 2

The children think about what they especially plan to do with respect to the upcoming divine service. They write their thoughts into the workbook.

Notes

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