



## Let Us Worship

(based on Psalm 22)

My name is David. I am now a king, but when I was a boy, I took care of the sheep on the hillsides around my village, Bethlehem. As I wandered to the north, I could see the city that sat on the hill between two valleys. That city never left my mind.

Years later, when I became king, and the tribes of Israel united as a kingdom, I knew the perfect place for my palace, the city on the hill, Jerusalem.

The people rejoiced as I brought the Ark of the Covenant into Jerusalem. The Ark held God's words to us and was God's presence with us. I led the procession, dancing, as the Ark was carried down through the valley and up the hill to Jerusalem. This is where the house of the Lord would be.

Throughout each year, people came to Jerusalem to celebrate the mighty acts of our God with festivals and holy days. I remember the feelings of happiness and anticipation as we prepared to worship our God.

One day, I wrote a song, a prayer to God, to express my joy:

I was glad when they said to me,  
"Let us go the house of the LORD!"  
And now we're here, O Jerusalem,  
inside your gates.

Jerusalem is a well-built city,  
built for all to come together in unity  
to worship!

This city is where all God's people  
come to worship,  
to give thanks to God!

This is the place where justice rules  
for David's throne is there.

Pray that Jerusalem has peace:

"Let those who love you have rest.  
Let there be peace on your walls  
and within your gates."

For the good of my family and friends,  
I say, "Live in peace!"

For you, O God, I will do my very best.

As each festival or a holy day approached and preparations for worship began, I would hear folks say, with expectation and eagerness, "Let us go to the house of the LORD!" I knew they felt what I always felt—delight! We were going to praise our God, give thanks, and offer our prayers. We were being called to worship our God!



## Let Us Worship

(based on Psalm 122)

Use one or more activities from each section to explore grace and gratitude with your children this week.

### Recognizing God's Grace

- Read and enjoy the story with your children—imagine and wonder.
- People on a pilgrimage to the temple may have sung this psalm. Think about a physical or spiritual journey of faith that you have taken. Why were you making the journey? Think about how it felt when you reached your destination.
- The psalm talks about “God’s house.” What image comes into your mind when you hear that phrase? Where do you experience God’s presence?



### Responding to God's Grace

- What are some of the things you celebrate about your church? In what ways does your faith community give you a sense of home?
- Ask family members to imagine they are a member of a Bible-times group who sang this song while going to Jerusalem for one of the high holy days. Say: *This is the first time you have been allowed to go, the first time you have been treated as an adult member of the community. Tell how you are feeling as you walk and sing.*
- One of the ways people long ago helped build a sense of community was to dance together. People still do this today. Make up a family dance together.

### Celebrating in Gratitude

- Stand in a circle. Go around the circle, with each family member reading a line from Psalm 122 aloud until all the lines have been read.
- Pray that your community will be a safe home for those who seek God’s presence. Give thanks for the faith community that has nurtured you thus far.