

THE   
PRESENT  
WORD   
ADULT BIBLE LESSONS

LEADER'S GUIDE

WINTER 2019-2020

HONORING GOD

© 2019 Geneva Press

Published in partnership with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, The Moravian Church in America (North and South), the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and the United Church of Christ.

*The Present Word* is published quarterly by Geneva Press, 100 Witherspoon St., Louisville, KY 40202-1396.

*All rights reserved.* No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, without permission in writing from the publisher. For information, address Geneva Press, 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, Kentucky 40202-1396.

The Leader's Guide is based on *International Sunday School Lessons: International Bible Lessons for Christian Teaching*, copyright © 2007 by the Committee on the Uniform Series, and uses the New Revised Standard Version of the Bible, copyright © 1989 by the Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America; both used by permission.

Printed in the United States of America



# LEADER'S GUIDE

## HONORING GOD

Introduction . . . . .	iv
The Uniform Series . . . . .	v
Quarter in Brief . . . . .	vi
Resources for the Leader . . . . .	vii

### Unit I: David Honors God

1. December 1	David Worships God in Jerusalem . . . . .	1
	<i>1 Chronicles 15</i>	
2. December 8	A Heart Filled with Gratitude . . . . .	7
	<i>1 Chronicles 16:7–36</i>	
3. December 15	Building God's House . . . . .	13
	<i>1 Chronicles 17:1–15; 21:18–30</i>	
4. December 22	The Lord Is with You . . . . .	19
	<i>Luke 1:39–56</i>	
5. December 29	David's Prayer . . . . .	25
	<i>1 Chronicles 17:16–27</i>	

### Unit II: Dedicating the Temple of God

6. January 5	A Place for the Ark . . . . .	31
	<i>1 Kings 8:1–13; 2 Chronicles 5:1–14</i>	
7. January 12	Solomon's Speech . . . . .	37
	<i>1 Kings 8:14–21; 2 Chronicles 6</i>	
8. January 19	Solomon's Dedication Prayer . . . . .	43
	<i>1 Kings 8:22–53; 2 Chronicles 6:12–42</i>	
9. January 26	Solomon's Blessing . . . . .	49
	<i>1 Kings 8:54–66</i>	

### Unit III: Jesus Teaches about True Worship

10. February 2	Single-minded Obedience . . . . .	55
	<i>Matthew 4:1–11</i>	
11. February 9	Piety That Honors God . . . . .	61
	<i>Ecclesiastes 5:1–6; Matthew 6:1–8</i>	
12. February 16	The Prayer of Jesus . . . . .	67
	<i>Matthew 6:9–15</i>	
13. February 23	Perseverance in Prayer . . . . .	73
	<i>Luke 11:1–13</i>	
	About the Writer/Coming Next Quarter . . . . .	79

# Introduction

Welcome to the winter quarter of *The Present Word*, a study of personal and corporate expressions of worship. We begin our study with King David, known as “a man after God’s own heart.” David is a strong example of a spiritual leader who worships God in his own life but who also takes bold measures to ensure Israel’s right worship as prescribed in God’s holy covenant.

On December 22, the fourth Sunday of Advent, we look at worship through the eyes of Mary’s Song in Luke 1. Her worshipful song of thanksgiving and praise is reminiscent of many of the Hebrew psalms attributed to David.

In January 2020, we explore worship through the building of the Temple in Jerusalem. While David put all the plans in place for constructing a house for God, it was his son Solomon whom God ordained to complete the work.

In February, we join the disciples to sit at the feet of Jesus and learn from his teaching on honoring God through our worship.

I pray that your exploration of worship through the stories of Israel’s celebrations of gratitude to God under King David and King Solomon and the discipleship lessons of King Jesus will lead you to incline your heart to our God, who is compassionate, faithful, and gracious.

In Christ,

Mark D. Hinds,  
Editor

## The Uniform Series

The Present Word quarterly Bible study is based on the Uniform Series, a plan for reading and studying the Bible. The objectives of the series are to help persons increasingly:

1. to know the content of the Bible,
2. to understand the message of the Bible in light of their experiences and relationships, and
3. to be aware of God's self-disclosure, especially God's redeeming love as revealed in Jesus Christ, that they may respond in faith and love—to the end that they may know who they are and what their human situation means, grow as the children of God rooted in the Christian community, live in the Spirit of God in every relationship, fulfill their common discipleship in the world, and abide in the Christian hope.

The emphasis in these objectives is on the Bible as the record of the revelation of God in Christ as the primary source of understanding the meaning of the Christian faith and as the most effective means of confronting persons with the significant concerns of the gospel. These concerns include personal faith, values, human relationships, social responsibility, Christian hope, and the implications of Christian discipleship under the lordship of Christ and in the fellowship of his Spirit.

One of the distinctive features of the Uniform Series is the collaborative process through which denominational partners engage in the common task of developing the Lesson Guides. The development process begins with a Scope and Sequence subcommittee whose work sets a framework for the biblical themes of each six-year cycle. The Scope and Sequence team for Cycle 23 (2016–2022) chose themes that are creatively expressed in this statement of Christian faith:

*The God of the Bible, the source of creation, loves us and calls us in covenant through our faith to worship and to do justice.*

The underlined words in the statement compose the eight recurring themes throughout each quarterly segment of The Present Word.

## Quarter in Brief

The winter quarter explores ways of honoring God through worship. The Old Testament lessons recall how David and Solomon honored God by establishing the center of worship in Jerusalem and building the Temple. The New Testament lessons focus on Jesus' teachings about right attitudes that honor God through worship.

Unit I, "David Honors God," has five lessons: four from 1 Chronicles and one from Luke. The first three lessons are from 1 Chronicles and tell about David's bringing the ark to Jerusalem, leading the people in offering a psalm of thanksgiving, and planning to build a house for God. Lesson 4, the Christmas lesson, considers Mary's visit to Elizabeth as found in Luke. Lesson 5 returns to 1 Chronicles and David's prayer of gratitude for God's promise of a dynasty.

Unit II, "Dedicating the Temple of God," has four lessons that explore Solomon's dedication of the Temple in 1 Kings. Solomon honors God by providing a place for the ark, by offering blessings to God for fulfilling the promise to David, by praying that God would hear prayers offered in the Temple, by calling the people to keep God's commandments, and by offering sacrifices to God.

Unit III, "Jesus Teaches about True Worship," has four lessons that explore what Jesus says about honoring God through one's spiritual practices. Matthew points to right attitudes in obeying God only and in honoring God in almsgiving and in prayer. The prayer of Jesus provides a comprehensive life approach in honoring God. Luke teaches about perseverance in prayer to honor God.

## Resources for the Leader

The following resources are suggested for those who are interested in doing additional research and study.

### Bible Study Guides

- A Guide to Bible Basics*, by Tyler D. Mayfield. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2018.
- A Guide through the Old Testament*, by Celia Brewer Sinclair. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1989.
- A Guide through the New Testament*, by Celia Brewer Sinclair. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994.

### Bible Commentary Series

- Interpretation Bible Studies* series. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998–2008.
- New Daily Study Bible*, by William Barclay. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2017.
- The New Testament for Everyone* series, by N. T. Wright. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004–2015.
- The Old Testament for Everyone* series, by John Goldingay. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2016.

### Bible Dictionaries

- Eerdmans Dictionary of the Bible*. Edited by David Noel Freedman. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2000.
- HarperCollins Bible Dictionary—Revised and Updated*. Edited by Mark Allan Powell. San Francisco: HarperOne, 2011.

### Single Book Commentaries

- The Bible from Scratch: The New Testament for Beginners*, by Donald L. Griggs. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2002.
- The Bible from Scratch: The Old Testament for Beginners*, by Donald L. Griggs. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003.

### Video Viewing

When you show videos to a group of learners, you need to obtain a license from Christian Video Licensing International (CVLI) to do so. Obtain a public performance license at <https://us.cvli.com>. Check with your church, though, to see if an umbrella license has already been obtained. Often, many denominations—through

conferences, jurisdictions, dioceses, and other structures—secure licenses for their churches.

### **Worship Leaflets**

Geneva Press offers *The Present Word* quarterly Worship Leaflets. Each leaflet includes a brief service of worship with prayers and hymn texts used in the lesson. The Worship Leaflets provide opportunities for reflection on the Scripture passage for the day. Order your quarterly *Present Word* Worship Leaflets at [pcusastore.com](http://pcusastore.com).



# DAVID WORSHIPS GOD IN JERUSALEM

## MAIN IDEA

David commanded the priests to invite all the musicians and all the people to join in shouting, singing, and dancing as they rejoiced in what God had done for them.

## BACKGROUND SCRIPTURE

1 Chronicles 15

## A VERSE TO REMEMBER

So all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting, to the sound of the horn, trumpets, and cymbals, and made loud music on harps and lyres. (1 Chron. 15:28)

## PREPARING TO LEAD

- Provide Bibles, Participant's Books, Worship Leaflets for lesson 1, name tags, and pens.
- Reminder: Today is the first Sunday of Advent. Prepare an Advent wreath by placing four purple (or whatever color combination your church uses) candles on a wreath with a white (Christmas) candle in the middle of the wreath.
- The lesson begins and ends with Morning Prayer found on the Worship Leaflet.
- If you plan to sing the hymn suggested in the Worship Leaflet, arrange to have an accompanist or choir member lead the singing.
- If desired, provide simple refreshments, or ask volunteers to bring refreshments.
- Read and reflect on lesson 1, "David Worships God in Jerusalem" (Participant's Book, p. 1).
- Use a Bible dictionary to get a fuller understanding of the offerings and some of the unfamiliar terms in today's text. A Bible dictionary will also give examples and pictures of the musical instruments used as David and the people danced before the ark, as well as pictures of assorted styles of ephods that David may have worn as he danced.

# LEADING THE LESSON

## Opening Worship

### 1. Gathering

- Welcome class members and guests with a warm greeting.
- Distribute Bibles, Participant's Books, Worship Leaflets for lesson 1, name tags, and pens. Encourage participants to bring their Participant's Books and Bibles each week.
- Agree on and review simple ground rules and organization (such as time to begin and end, welcoming of all points of view, confidentiality, and so on).
- Are there ways that you can make the learners more comfortable?

### 2. Morning Prayer 1

Worship Leaflet, lesson 1

- Invite the participants to turn to the Worship Leaflet.
- Enlist volunteers to lead portions of morning prayer.
- Begin with the Advent candle lighting, and end after the Advent hymn.
- Segue to the Scripture Reading and Bible Study.

### Teaching Tip

Today's story is very vivid and graphic. Think about the members of your group. Imagine what they would be doing if they had been present for the processional into Jerusalem. If they are like most groups, one or more of them would push to the front and dance right beside David; some would be eager to help; still others who are musically inclined would be among the musicians playing with abandon; and some would like to be lost in the crowd or simply watch as the procession passes. Just so, adults learn in many ways. Some prefer reading and reflection; others would prefer music and the arts or something more active. Choose a wide range of learning activities for the group, including some you wouldn't normally prefer. You won't always hit everyone's preferences, but with a range of activities, you will hit someone with every activity.

## SCRIPTURE READING

1 Chron. 15:1–3, 14–16, 25–29a

**15:1** David built houses for himself in the city of David, and he prepared a place for the ark of God and pitched a tent for it. <sup>2</sup>Then David commanded that no one but the Levites were to carry the ark of God, for the LORD had chosen them to carry the ark of the LORD and to minister to him forever. <sup>3</sup>David assembled all Israel in Jerusalem to bring up the ark of the LORD to its place, which he had prepared for it. . . .

<sup>14</sup>So the priests and the Levites sanctified themselves to bring up the ark of the LORD, the God of Israel. <sup>15</sup>And the Levites carried the ark of God on their shoulders with the poles, as Moses had commanded according to the word of the LORD.

<sup>16</sup>David also commanded the chiefs of the Levites to appoint their kindred as the singers to play on musical instruments, on harps and lyres and cymbals, to raise loud sounds of joy. . . .

<sup>25</sup>So David and the elders of Israel, and the commanders of the thousands, went to bring up the ark of the covenant of the LORD from the house of Obed-edom with rejoicing. <sup>26</sup>And because God helped the Levites who were carrying the ark of the covenant of the LORD, they sacrificed seven bulls and seven rams. <sup>27</sup>David was clothed with a robe of fine linen, as also were all the Levites who were carrying the ark, and the singers, and Chenaniah the leader of the music of the singers; and David wore a linen ephod. <sup>28</sup>So all Israel brought up the ark of the covenant of the LORD with shouting, to the sound of the horn, trumpets, and cymbals, and made loud music on harps and lyres.

<sup>29</sup>As the ark of the covenant of the LORD came to the city of David, Michal daughter of Saul looked out of the window, and saw King David leaping and dancing.

### Scripture Notes

In contrast to the first attempt to move the ark to Jerusalem, David took complete charge of the second, successful attempt, personally enforcing the Torah regulations that only Levites could carry the ark (1 Chron. 15:2).

David's active concern for and participation in the installation of the ark stands in direct opposition to Saul's neglect (1 Chron. 13:3).

While the ark would later reside in the Temple, this building would be built by David's son Solomon after he ascended the throne (2 Chron. 3).

## Bible Study

### 3. Scripture Reading

Participant's Book, p. 2

- Invite the group to read 1 Chronicles 15:1–3, 14–16, 25–29a in unison or responsively, a leader and the group reading every other verse.
- Option: Invite the group into a prayerful, reflective reading of the Scripture:
  1. Read 1 Chronicles 15:1–3, 14–16, 25–29a aloud.
  2. Invite all to reflect for a few minutes in silence.
  3. After reflection time, invite all to listen for a word or phrase as the passage is read again and to reflect on that word or phrase in silence.
  4. Read the passage a third time, asking all to offer a silent prayer following the reading.
  5. Invite volunteers to share the word or phrase that spoke most deeply to them.

### 4. The Ark of the Covenant

Participant's Book, p. 3

- Share observations, reflections, and insights about “The Ark of the Covenant.”
- Share these key points:
  1. The parallel version of this story is found in 2 Samuel 6.
  2. While David undertook several major building projects in Jerusalem, including constructing his own houses and the city's foundations (1 Chron. 11:8), the installation of the ark of the covenant was the high point.
  3. The ark of the covenant was the symbol of God's presence. The ark was a sacred, portable chest that held the tablets of the Law and once held Aaron's rod and a jar of manna (Heb. 9:4). The Israelites regarded the ark as the throne of God. It was made of acacia wood and overlaid with gold. It had four rings of gold through which carrying poles were inserted. The poles were never removed from the rings so that the carriers never touched the ark.
  4. By bringing the ark to Jerusalem, his capital, David established Yahweh in the center of his monarchy. In doing so, David officially set up the worship of Yahweh as the religion of the state.
- Discuss:
  1. Read Joshua 3:3–4; then invite volunteers to convert the distance one was supposed to remain behind the ark of the covenant into feet and miles. Compare this distance to some distance familiar to the participants. Tip: One

cubit = 1.5 feet. Is there any comparable act of piety today that calls on believers to “keep their distance”? How about sitting in the rear of the sanctuary during worship?

2. The ark was the symbol of God’s presence and considered to be God’s throne. What objects in your church sanctuary symbolize God’s presence in that place?
3. Where do you go to meet God? How close do you dare approach God?

## 5. Joyful Worship

Participant’s Book, p. 4

- Share observations, reflections, and insights about “Joyful Worship.”
- Share these key points:
  1. The precedent for worshiping with dance was set by Miriam and the women who danced over the rescue of the Hebrews from the Egyptians at the Red Sea. Dance was an integral part of Israel’s worship.
  2. While only the Levites could carry the ark, David involved the entire nation in the celebration of the event, which was typical of Jewish festivals (Lev. 23).
  3. David’s dancing before the ark signified a bond with the people that Saul never enjoyed. David’s dance was an act of joy and faith.
  4. The ephod David wore was an apron-like garment worn over the robe of the high priest. It had shoulder straps and an embroidered belt sash.
- Discuss:
  1. What major celebrations do you remember in your church. How much do you remember about the celebration?
  2. What about the celebration helped you remember it?
  3. Have there been times when you wanted to get up during a church service and dance? What caused the feeling?

## 6. What It Means for Us

Participant’s Book, p. 5

- Share observations, reflections, and insights about “What It Means for Us.”
- Here are some optional ideas to explore today’s Scripture:
  1. Search hymnals and songbooks for hymns or songs that would be right for dancing when your church celebrates religious holidays.
  2. Compare current Christian worship celebrations with those in 1 Chronicles 15.

3. Plan a worship service with music, movement, and other sensory experiences.
4. Recall worship experiences that evoked diverse emotional responses among worshippers. What happened that led to those varying responses?
5. Discuss: How do you suppose the religious and secular (social, nonreligious) aspects of celebrations have gotten so mixed up? What mixing of the two do you think is OK? What kinds of things have you observed on holidays that you think may be inappropriate?

## Closing Worship

### 7. Morning Prayer 2

Worship Leaflet, lesson 1

- Invite the participants to turn to the Worship Leaflet.
- Enlist volunteers to lead remaining portions of morning prayer.
- Begin with the Advent Prayer, say the Lord’s Prayer, and end with the Dismissal.
- Extinguish the candle.
- Bless participants as they leave. This can be as simple as saying, “God bless you, (*Name*)” as each person leaves at the end of the lesson.

## A LOOK AHEAD

DAILY BIBLE READINGS			
<b>M</b>	Dec. 2	All Nations Invited to Worship God	Isa. 45:20–25
<b>T</b>	Dec. 3	Response to God’s Generosity	Deut. 26:1–11
<b>W</b>	Dec. 4	God’s Saving Deeds	Ps. 105:1–15
<b>T</b>	Dec. 5	God’s Gracious Compassion	Ps. 106:40–48
<b>F</b>	Dec. 6	God’s Forever Covenant	1 Chron. 16:14–18
<b>S</b>	Dec. 7	God’s Forever Steadfast Love	1 Chron. 16:28–36

## ENGAGE YOUR LEARNERS DURING THE WEEK

Send an email:

1. That offers a brief reflection on the lesson, such as asking them to pay attention for opportunities to celebrate milestones with friends, family, and community.
2. That looks ahead to the next lesson, such as challenging them to express daily thanks for God’s greatness and provision.