

**Isa. 6:1–8**

**Ps. 29**

**Rom. 8:12–17**

**John 3:1–17**

# Holy Encounter

**Goal for  
the Session**

*Children will join Isaiah in the temple and find their own way of responding to the awesome presence of God.*

## ■ PREPARING FOR THE SESSION

### Focus on Isaiah 6:1–8

#### WHAT is important to know?

— From “Exegetical Perspective,” Michael H. Floyd

Jerusalem’s royal temple is imagined as the earthly representation of YHWH’s heavenly throne. Because the temple is the axial point at which heaven and earth come together, Isaiah can see from this location into the throne room above. Isaiah is surrounded by the smoke from burning sacrifices and incense, and by the noise from the festive throng of worshipers. This mirrors the praise of the heavenly attendants—represented by the seraphim—that surround YHWH’s throne (cf. Ps. 29:1–2, 9b–10). The mythic imagery of the heavenly council is the antecedent of Trinitarian thinking: Christians are reminded that such a notion of God points to a mysterious divine-human encounter with sociopolitical consequences.

#### WHERE is God in these words?

— From “Theological Perspective,” Donald K. McKim

From early times, Isaiah 6:1–8 has been viewed as pointing to what became the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. The passage itself, of course, does not lay out a full-fledged view of God as eternally existing as three coequal persons. But taken with other biblical passages (especially from the New Testament) it anticipates what the early church gradually came to understand as the Trinity. The vision and call of Isaiah is one illustration of the way the triune God has been at work in history, as attested by the Scriptures. The Isaiah passage is a witness, pointing to the triune God’s revelatory actions in calling Isaiah, and in the biblical story of salvation.

#### SO WHAT does this mean for our lives?

— From “Pastoral Perspective,” Kristin Emery Saldine

Isaiah’s vision accentuates at least three characteristics of God’s relationship with us: God encounters us in our historical context, God’s word is revealed in our worship, and God calls us to serve. The elements of our worship—gathering, praising, confessing, praying, hearing, and responding—all are appropriate responses to the holy God who claims us. We should not be afraid to name the sins of our time, just as Isaiah did. Think of the image of the seraph cleansing Isaiah’s lips with a live coal. That is how vibrant and powerful God’s forgiveness is, drawing us into service and drawing our attention to the needs of the world beyond our own.

#### NOW WHAT is God’s word calling us to do?

— From “Homiletical Perspective,” G. Lee Ramsey Jr.

The faithful frequently wonder about vocation. How does God call the believer? How does one listen for the call of God, and how do we know if what we hear is the voice of God? The Isaiah account invites the congregation to hear and see how God calls the believer: from an awareness of the mysterious and frightening presence of God, to conviction and confession of sin, to reception of forgiveness, and finally to surrender to God’s direction. The verses that follow (vv. 9–13) get Isaiah into a mess of trouble. Rather than a call to a settled ministry, God summons Isaiah to prophetic engagement with faithless Israel.

## FOCUS SCRIPTURE

*Isaiah 6:1–8*

### YOU WILL NEED

- Resource Sheet 1
- Singing the Feast*, [bit.ly/SingingTheFeast](http://bit.ly/SingingTheFeast)
- white cloth
- battery-powered tall white candle
- Color Pack 1, 2, 3, 30, 31
- Bibles
- flat bedsheet
- Internet-connected device (optional)

### For Responding

- option 1: copies of Resource Sheet 2, crayons or markers
- option 2: Color Pack 36; *Singing the Feast*, [bit.ly/SingingTheFeast](http://bit.ly/SingingTheFeast); scarves or streamers
- option 3: Color Pack 3, light construction paper, markers in bright colors, scissors, glue sticks
- option 4: paper, pens, Color Pack 3

If you are unable to light a candle, invite children to share experiences of watching smoke twist, swirl, and disappear. Note that candles are often used in worship. Then finish the conversation as suggested.

## Focus on Your Teaching

Most children have vivid imaginations and use them. Not constrained by the real world, they can enter into realms where anything is possible. As a consequence, it is sometimes easier for them to enter into biblical stories and encounter God than it is for adults. Although children do have a strong sense of God's presence, they do not always have the language skills to articulate the experience, especially the younger children in this age range. We can help by sharing our own experiences and by providing the children with a variety of ways to respond.

*Holy God, grant that I may be gifted with a strong sense of your presence as I prepare and lead this session, responding to you with joy and love. Amen.*

## LEADING THE SESSION

### GATHERING

Welcome the children by name as they arrive. When ready to begin, gather the group at the worship table. Display Color Pack 1, 2, 3, and 31 nearby. Sing together the gathering song for the season after Pentecost, "God, We Sing" (*Singing the Feast*). Lead the following ritual:

**Leader:** Today is Trinity Sunday, the day we celebrate the different ways we know God (*place white cloth on table*).

We will hear the stories of God the creator (*place Bible on table*) and follow the light of Jesus (*light candle*) as the Spirit helps us to live in God's love.

**All:** We will learn and grow together.

Wonder together about the word *holy*. Ask:

✠ What does *holy* mean to you?

Explain that the word *holy* is often used to describe something that has been set apart for God. Draw attention to the candle on the worship table and comment that it is holy, as it has been set aside for worship. Marvel at the flame and the way it provides light and heat. As you extinguish the candle, invite the children to imagine blowing it out and watching the smoke twist, swirl, and disappear. Comment that holy things can be full of wonder and mystery as in the Bible story for this session.

### EXPLORING

Ask a child to get the Bible from the worship table. Comment that today's story comes from the Hebrew Scriptures or Old Testament. Show children how to use the table of contents to

Option: To increase the sense of mystery, darken the room slightly and play the sounds of Tibetan singing bowls before and after the story. Search on iTunes or YouTube for a recording.

**God, We Sing**

God, we sing with praise  
to you,  
Light the flame of *hope*  
anew;  
Light this candle, light the  
way,  
Bring *hope* into our hearts  
today.  
Jesus, near us as we pray,  
Let *hope* be in our hearts  
today.

God, we sing with praise  
to you,  
Light the flame of *peace*  
anew; . . .

God, we sing with praise  
to you,  
Light the flame of *love*  
anew; . . .

God, we sing with praise  
to you,  
Light the flame of *joy* anew;  
. . .

God, we sing with praise  
to you,  
Light the flame of Christ  
anew;  
Light this candle, light the  
way,  
We celebrate new life today.  
Christ, be near  
us as we  
pray  
And celebrate  
new life  
today.



find the book of Isaiah. Mention that Isaiah was a prophet who lived about 700 years before Jesus was born. Explain that the story today takes place in a special place in Jerusalem called the temple. Look together at the picture of the temple (Color Pack 2). Ask what they know about the temple, explaining as necessary that it was a holy place for the Hebrew people and it was a special place of worship. The people believed they could meet God in the temple. Note how small the people are compared to the building, and observe that the temple was large and beautifully decorated with gold and amazing carvings. Ask the children to point to some of the special decorations in the picture. Ask:

✧ How might you feel as you walked through the door of the temple?

Spread the sheet on the floor. Have the children all kneel around it and hold the edges. If possible, alternate shorter and taller learners. Show them how to make the sheet billow up and settle down by raising and lowering it. Teach this response: “Holy, holy, holy, the whole earth is filled with God’s glory.” Arrange for a cue, so the children know when to say the response during the story. Tell the story of Isaiah in the temple with the movements suggested on Resource Sheet 1 (Isaiah Has a Vision).

After the story, sit quietly for a moment. Ask:

- ✧ How did Isaiah know it was God?
- ✧ How do you think Isaiah felt?
- ✧ What made this event holy?
- ✧ Where do you think God sent Isaiah?
- ✧ What do you think God wanted Isaiah to do?

Show Color Pack 3. Observe that uplifted hands are often associated with worship and joy as we reach up to say how wonderful we think God is. Invite children to pretend they are Isaiah and think about how amazing God is. At your signal, have them whisper the response from the story: “Holy, holy, holy, the whole earth is filled with God’s glory.” Repeat these words, getting louder and louder as you raise your arms. Finally, shout the response loudly, jump into the air, with arms raised, to praise God.

Explain to learners that every time they hear a Bible story they can grow closer to God. One way is to grow in understanding God. Ask:

- ✧ What did today’s story teach you about God?
- ✧ How do you respond to the awesome presence of God?

**RESPONDING**

Offer at least two options so children have a choice. One might be more challenging to interest older children who can work on their own.

1. **Drawings** Isaiah encountered God in an amazing way. Invite children to imagine what it might be like to be in God’s presence. Distribute copies of Resource Sheet 2 (Imagine). Provide markers or crayons for them to draw pictures of how they might feel or react inside the head on the resource sheet. Display the pictures with a title, such as “The Wonder of God” or “Awesome God.”

**The Whole World Is in God's Hands**

The whole world is in God's hands,  
 The whole wide world is in God's hands,  
 The whole world is in God's hands,  
 The world is in God's hands.

The wind and the wave are in God's hands . . .

The fish and the bird are in God's hands . . .

All of the animals are in God's hands . . .

All the world's people are in God's hands . . .

You and me are in God's hands . . .

**Every Time I Feel the Spirit**

Refrain:  
 Every time I feel the Spirit moving in my heart I will pray.  
 Yes, every time I feel the Spirit moving in my heart I will pray.

Upon the mountain, when my Lord spoke,  
 out of God's mouth came fire and smoke.  
 Looked all around me, it looked so fine,  
 till I asked my Lord if all was mine. (*Refrain*)

Jordan River, chilly and cold,  
 it chills the body but not the soul.  
 There is but one train upon this track.  
 It runs to heaven and then right back. (*Refrain*)

- 2. Worship Dance** We can respond to God's glory with movement, as did the flaming creatures in Isaiah's vision. Play "The Whole World Is in God's Hands" (Color Pack 36, [Singing the Feast](#)). Invite the children to explore the ways their bodies can move to music. Distribute scarves or streamers for the children to wave while they dance. Then suggest that they imagine they are moving with the angels around God's throne.
- 3. Bulletin Board** Encourage the congregation to join the flaming creatures and respond to God's holiness with worship. Cover a bulletin board in a common area with light paper. Invite learners to place their forearms and hands (fingers outstretched) on paper, similar to the image on Color Pack 3. Have them help each other trace the outline of their hands and arms. Decorate the arms and hands with markers in bright colors and cut them out. Glue the arms on the bulletin board so that the arms look like those on Color Pack 3. Print the words *Holy, holy, holy, the whole earth is filled with God's glory* across the top. Invite the children to print words that describe God between the arms. Encourage older children to act as scribes for younger ones.
- 4. Shape Writing** Through the ages, writers have voiced their awe of God through poetry. Invite children to imagine that they were with Isaiah in the temple. How would they describe what they saw and heard? Have them write descriptions and then copy their words in the shape of smoke curling upward, such as a spiral. Make a display of the poems and Color Pack 3.

**CLOSING**

Gather the children around the Christ candle and light it, if necessary. Invite them to say the words of praise from the Bible story:

*Holy, holy, holy, the whole earth is filled with God's glory.*

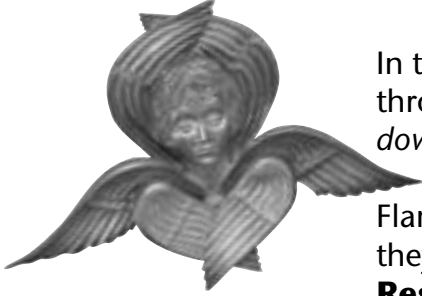
Sing "Every Time I Feel the Spirit" (Color Pack 30, [Singing the Feast](#)). As the children sing, lead them in a line dance around the room. Say the following prayer:

*Loving God, thank you for this time together. Thank you for stories that help us to grow and learn more about following in your ways. Amen.*

Extinguish the candle.

Try to have a quick word with each learner as the children leave. Thank them for coming and encourage them to return.

## Isaiah Has a Vision (Based on Isaiah 6:1–8)



In the year that King Uzziah died, Isaiah saw God sitting on a big throne and the glory of God filled the temple. (*Lift the sheet up and down slowly to make the cloth billow.*)

Flaming creatures with six wings were flying overhead. As they flew, they sang.

**Response:** Holy, holy, holy, the whole earth is filled with God’s glory. (*Lift the sheet up and down slowly to make the cloth billow.*)

The creatures sang so loudly that the doorposts of the temple shook, and the temple was filled with smoke.

**Response:** Holy, holy, holy, the whole earth is filled with God’s glory. (*Move the sheet up and down energetically.*)

When Isaiah heard how holy God was and felt God’s glory, he became afraid. (*Increase the movements of the sheet.*)

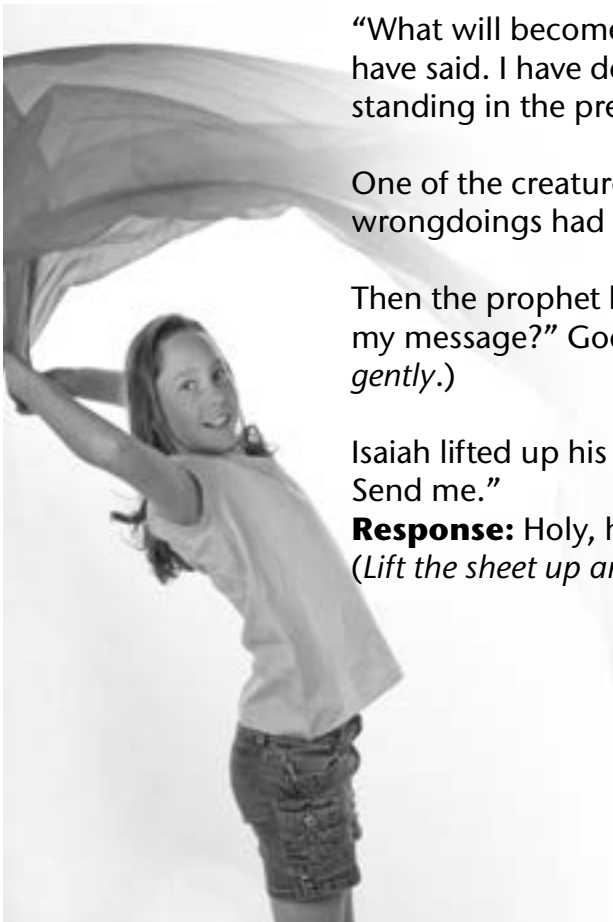
“What will become of me?” he cried. “I have said things I shouldn’t have said. I have done things I shouldn’t have done. Now I am standing in the presence of God who is holy.”

One of the creatures came over to Isaiah and told him that his wrongdoings had been forgiven. Isaiah knew that God loved him.

Then the prophet heard God’s voice. “Is there anyone I can send with my message?” God asked. “Who will go for me?” (*Move the sheet gently.*)

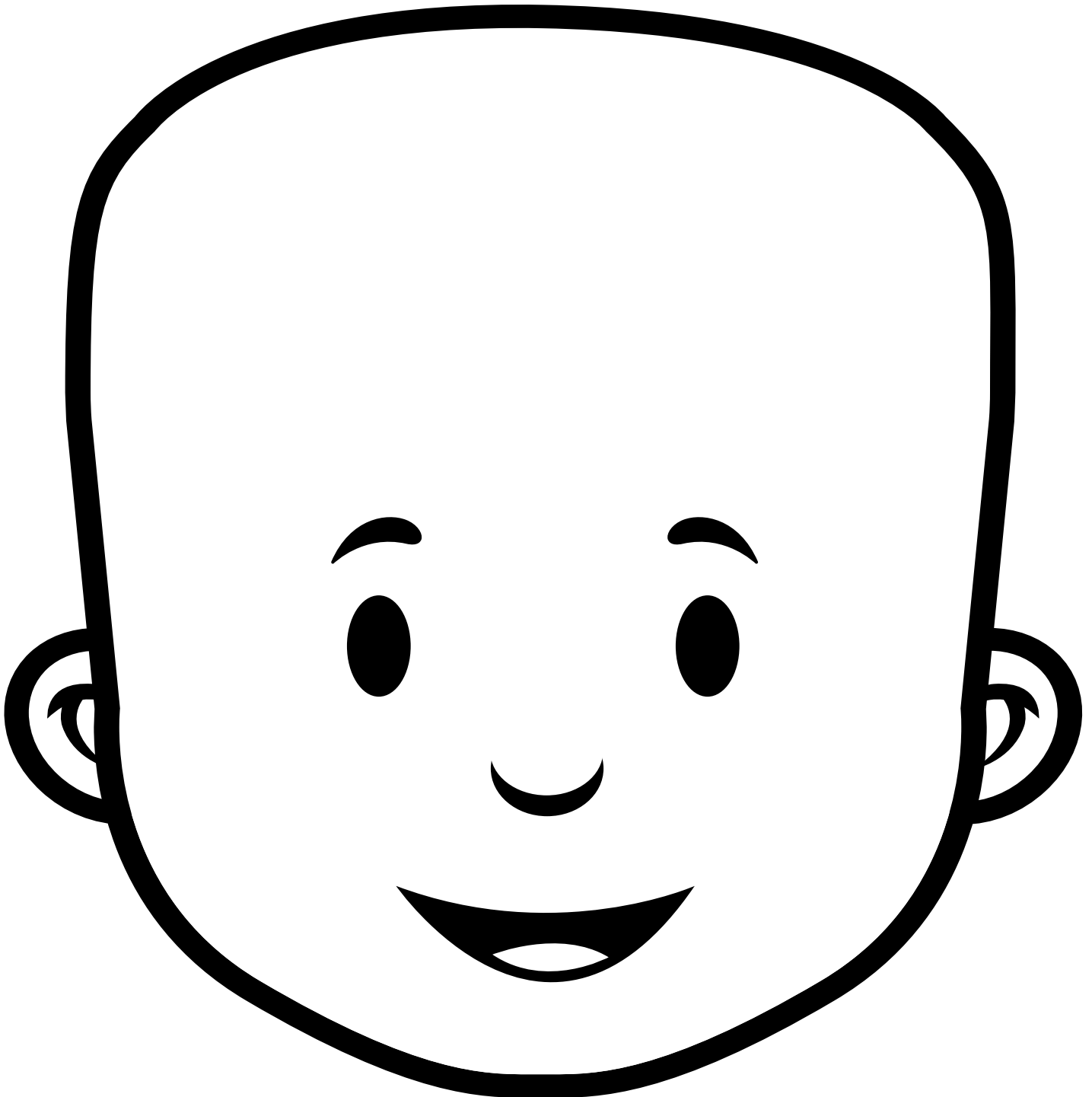
Isaiah lifted up his arms and declared, “Here I am, God. I will go. Send me.”

**Response:** Holy, holy, holy, the whole earth is filled with God’s glory. (*Lift the sheet up and down slowly to make the cloth billow.*)



**Imagine . . .**

You are in the presence of God. Draw inside this head what you might see and feel.



**Isa. 6:1–8**

**Ps. 29**

**Rom. 8:12–17**

**John 3:1–17**

# A Vision for Worship

**Goal for the Session**

*Participants will identify elements of worship in Isaiah’s call and use them to vitalize their worship experiences.*

## ■ PREPARING FOR THE SESSION

### Focus on Isaiah 6:1–8

#### WHAT is important to know?

— From “Exegetical Perspective,” Michael H. Floyd

Jerusalem’s royal temple is imagined as the earthly representation of YHWH’s heavenly throne. Because the temple is the axial point at which heaven and earth come together, Isaiah can see from this location into the throne room above. Isaiah is surrounded by the smoke from burning sacrifices and incense, and by the noise from the festive throng of worshipers. This mirrors the praise of the heavenly attendants—represented by the seraphim—that surround YHWH’s throne (cf. Ps. 29:1–2, 9b–10). The mythic imagery of the heavenly council is the antecedent of Trinitarian thinking: Christians are reminded that such a notion of God points to a mysterious divine-human encounter with sociopolitical consequences.

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From early times, Isaiah 6:1–8 has been viewed as pointing to what became the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. The passage itself, of course, does not lay out a full-fledged view of God as eternally existing as three coequal persons. But taken with other biblical passages (especially from the New Testament) it anticipates what the early church gradually came to understand as the Trinity. The vision and call of Isaiah is one illustration of the way the triune God has been at work in history, as attested by the Scriptures. The Isaiah passage is a witness, pointing to the triune God’s revelatory actions in calling Isaiah, and in the biblical story of salvation.

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Isaiah’s vision accentuates at least three characteristics of God’s relationship with us: God encounters us in our historical context, God’s word is revealed in our worship, and God calls us to serve. The elements of our worship—gathering, praising, confessing, praying, hearing, and responding—all are appropriate responses to the holy God who claims us. We should not be afraid to name the sins of our time, just as Isaiah did. Think of the image of the seraph cleansing Isaiah’s lips with a live coal. That is how vibrant and powerful God’s forgiveness is, drawing us into service and drawing our attention to the needs of the world beyond our own.

#### NOW WHAT is God’s word calling us to do?

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The faithful frequently wonder about vocation. How does God call the believer? How does one listen for the call of God, and how do we know if what we hear is the voice of God? The Isaiah account invites the congregation to hear and see how God calls the believer: from an awareness of the mysterious and frightening presence of God, to conviction and confession of sin, to reception of forgiveness, and finally to surrender to God’s direction. The verses that follow (vv. 9–13) get Isaiah into a mess of trouble. Rather than a call to a settled ministry, God summons Isaiah to prophetic engagement with faithless Israel.

**FOCUS SCRIPTURE**

*Isaiah 6:1–8*

## Focus on Your Teaching

Many adult Christians who attend church weekly may find themselves going through the worship elements without thinking about what they are doing or what the elements mean. Meanwhile, new Christians may find what happens in worship confusing. Today's lesson invites all adults to consider the elements of worship and what they mean.

Isaiah 6:1–8 is seen as the pattern for Christian worship. In addition, this passage has been viewed as pointing to the doctrine of the Trinity as referenced in Resource Sheet 1 (Focus on Isaiah 6:1–8.) However, the focus of today's lesson is on worship and our relationship to God.

*Holy Spirit, open my mind to the wonder of Isaiah's vision as I prepare for leading this session. Amen.*

### YOU WILL NEED

- Bibles
- paper and pencils
- board or newsprint; markers
- masking tape
- copies of Resource Sheets 1 and 2
- copies of Resource Sheet 1 for the next session

### For Responding

- option 1: copies of a recent worship bulletin
- option 2: Resource Sheet 2
- option 3: copies of a recent church newsletter, the announcement section of a recent bulletin, or a calendar of church activities

## LEADING THE SESSION

### GATHERING

*Before the session*, write on the board or newsprint the following definition of worship from *Westminster Dictionary of Theological Terms* by Donald K. McKim (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996):

*Worship is the service of praise, adoration, thanksgiving, and petition directed toward God through actions and attitudes. Christian worship is Trinitarian in form as praise is offered to God through Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit.*

Also, write one letter of the word “WORSHIP” on each of seven sheets of newsprint. Display them in that order in your meeting space.

Greet each of the adults by name. As the group gathers, explain that they will be writing an acrostic on the word “worship.” Invite participants to write a word describing worship that begins with the letter at the top of each sheet.

After most have completed the activity, briefly review and clarify words people wrote for the acrostic activity. Then read the definition of worship that you wrote on the board earlier. Invite initial reactions and comments regarding the definition. Tell the group that today's lesson invites us to discuss worship as an encounter with God.

Remind participants that today is Trinity Sunday and pray aloud:

Today's text offers several topics for study, including the topic of worship and issues of the Trinity. This lesson focuses on the topic of worship but encourages participants who wish to reflect on issues of the Trinity to read all the excerpts in Resource Sheet 1.

The Hebrew word *abodah* has a twofold meaning. It means both "to worship" and "to serve." It has been suggested that Christians are gathered to worship and scattered to serve.

**EASY  
PREP**

*O blessed Trinity, in whom we know the maker of all things seen and unseen, the Savior of all both near and far: By your Spirit enable us to worship your divine majesty, so that with all the company of heaven we may magnify your glorious name, saying: Holy, holy, holy. Glory to you, O Lord most high. Amen.*<sup>1</sup>

## EXPLORING

Introduce Isaiah 6:1–8 by informing participants that Isaiah's vision occurred the same year that Judah's King Uzziah died. King Uzziah's death initiated a time of instability in Judah and increasing threats from Assyria. It was also an important moment in Isaiah's receiving his call and summons to service. The Christian church has seen Isaiah's encounter with God and his call as a pattern for its own worship and experience of God. Have a volunteer read aloud Isaiah 6:1–8. Explain that while there are several worthy topics to study from this passage, today's lesson will focus on worship.

Ask the group to imagine themselves as Isaiah and to write on the board elements of worship and service found in Isaiah 6:1–8. Ask:

- ✧ What did Isaiah see and experience in this holy encounter that we might consider to be elements of worship?

Distribute Resource Sheet 1 (Focus on Isaiah 6:1–8) and read aloud the "So What?" excerpt. Ask participants to identify the elements of worship in the excerpt and to write them next to the elements of worship the group identified in the Isaiah text. There should be information in Isaiah 6:1–8 that relates to each element of worship in the "So What?" excerpt.

Form pairs and distribute Resource Sheet 2 (Isaiah's Vision). Allow time for all to read the resource sheet and invite the pairs each to take a few minutes to answer this question:

- ✧ How have you or your church community been changed through encounters with the living God?

Gather again as a large group and ask:

- ✧ How does Isaiah 6:1–8 and our discussion inform how we worship together?

## RESPONDING

Choose one or more of these activities, depending on the length of your session:

- 1. Worship and My Life** Distribute copies of a recent worship bulletin and paper and pens to each participant. Invite participants to identify:
  - ✧ the elements of worship they see in the worship bulletin that correspond to Isaiah 6:1–7
  - ✧ which, if any, elements of worship discussed today are absent in your worship bulletin
  - ✧ the element of worship where you most encounter God
  - ✧ the element of worship where you least encounter God

1. *Book of Common Worship* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2018), 354.

After eight minutes briefly discuss responses. Discuss any suggestions for ways certain elements of your church's worship might help people better encounter the holy.

- 2. What Is God Calling Me to Do?** Form groups of three or four and refer again to Resource Sheet 2. Ask groups to discuss the following questions and have a spokesperson ready to present the group's answers to the larger group after a few minutes.
  - ✠ Why is it important for humans to confess their sins before God?
  - ✠ Based on Isaiah's experience of cleansing, what is the value of the forgiveness of sins or pardon in the worship service?

After five minutes invite groups to briefly share their findings.

Now invite participants to work alone and write a short prayer of confession they will not show the group but will use in the closing prayer.

- 3. What Is God Calling the Church to Do?** Distribute copies of a recent church newsletter, the announcement section of a recent bulletin, or a list of your church's monthly activities. Together as a whole group make a list on the board or newsprint of all the service ministries. Facilitate a discussion concerning opportunities for service in the church. Ask:
  - ✠ Following up on the earlier understanding of worship as praise and service, how is our worship extended beyond the time we gather to praise God together?

Invite participants to tell of any new types of service either in the congregation or in the community where they are active that they think others may wish to support.

## CLOSING

Gather in a circle. If the group did option 2 in Responding, have a time for silent reading of the participants' prayers of confession followed by reading Isaiah 6:7.

Then lead the group in the following prayer of thanksgiving:

*We thank you, God, for . . .  
beckoning us to come into the house of worship.  
confronting our sins and those of all humanity.  
forgiving our sins.  
the opportunity to serve you and your church.  
"Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, "Whom shall I send, and who  
will go for us?" And I said, "Here am I; send me!" Amen. (Isaiah 6:8)*

Distribute copies of Resource Sheet 1 for the next session, unless it will be e-mailed to participants during the week.

## Focus on Isaiah 6:1–8

### WHAT is important to know?

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Jerusalem’s royal temple is imagined as the earthly representation of YHWH’s heavenly throne. Because the temple is the axial point at which heaven and earth come together, Isaiah can see from this location into the throne room above. Isaiah is surrounded by the smoke from burning sacrifices and incense, and by the noise from the festive throng of worshipers. This mirrors the praise of the heavenly attendants—represented by the seraphim—that surround YHWH’s throne (cf. Ps. 29:1–2, 9b–10). The mythic imagery of the heavenly council is the antecedent of Trinitarian thinking: Christians are reminded that such a notion of God points to a mysterious divine-human encounter with sociopolitical consequences.

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## Isaiah's Vision

These first eight verses of chapter six describe one of the best known of Isaiah's prophetic visions. Summoned to the throne of God and surrounded by the awe and terror of the Lord, Isaiah is struck with the realization of his own unworthiness and that of his people. He is not worthy to stand before the Lord, yet here he is in the presence of the Lord. He knows he is unworthy to serve, yet what other option does he have here at the throne of God? This is not the time to say no; it is the time, in Isaiah's words, to say woe. "Woe is me! I am lost." There is a deep mystery at work here, and it profoundly upsets Isaiah's equilibrium. But in the upsetting, Isaiah is able to confess his sin, be cleansed of his guilt, and receive a clean heart. Only then can he hear God's call with clarity. . . .

The sudden shift from the historical reference to Uzziah to the heavenly throne of God is meant to set us on edge: God is holy; we are not. This is the sad realization that hits Isaiah with such overwhelming force. . . . Yet it is this realization that opens Isaiah to the possibility of forgiveness. He is touched by divine intervention and made clean. Isaiah is now free to answer when God calls.

Isaiah's journey through confession, forgiveness, and commission occurs in the context of the worship of the Holy. Isaiah describes the Lord of Hosts as completely and divinely Other, the God who alone is worthy of eternal adoration, glory, and praise. . . .

Isaiah's encounter with the living God teaches us that there is no way to know God without being changed. That kind of transformation almost always leads to service, to work and witness in God's name. This requires that Christians practice a discipline of prayerful discernment, of listening for God's call in their lives. This is not just an individual endeavor but also the corporate practice of a worshipping community.

[We can see] the connection of Isaiah's vision with the pattern of our own worship: praise, confession/forgiveness, listening to the Word, and responding to the Word. Hymns, prayers and litanies would be chosen to follow that movement. The prayer of confession could be written with special attention to Isaiah's lament in verse 5. We are invited, before God, to confess our sin and the sin of the world. We should not be afraid to name the sins of our time, just as Isaiah did when he condemned Judah for her acts of political arrogance, spiritual pride, and economic injustice. But the assurance of pardon should be as strong as, if not stronger than, the confession. Think of the image of the seraph cleansing Isaiah's lips with a live coal. That is how vibrant and powerful God's forgiveness is. God's forgiveness draws us into service rather than away from it.

—From *Kristin Emery Saldine, Feasting on the Word, Year B, Volume 3*  
(Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 2009), 26, 28, 30.

*Hallelujah*

# *Joining the Feast*

Year B, Summer  
Trinity Sunday—Proper 16



# What you will find in *Joining the Feast!*

## The Church Year Calendar

Describes the important church festivals and special days for the coming season. It provides theological reflections on their importance for the church's life and our own lives.

## The Shape of the Season

Presents an overview of the focus scriptures for the weeks in the coming season. It discusses the biblical and theological significance of each passage.

## Joining Worship and Learning: Making the Connections and Time with Children

A helpful feature in this section of *Joining the Feast* is the inclusion of the stories on the focus scriptures from the multi-age course. These stories can be used in the children's time during worship. Notice that some songs are used by several age levels but not in the same session. If you are interested in including a prayer, poetry, or artwork from an age level, speak with the leader in advance. May your congregational worship be enlivened by these suggestions to join worship and learning.

## Joining Mission and Learning

Help the participants in the *Feasting on the Word Curriculum* connect with existing service opportunities in your congregation. Review this list, and offer suggestions to the leaders. Give this chart to the chair of the mission or outreach committee so that the work of the committee can be strengthened through the church school.

## Litanies and Prayers

A selection of poetic prayers and responsive readings that helps worship leaders connect the church's educational and worship experiences to find fullness and blessing in the praise and service of God.

## Children's Bulletins

A fun activity page is provided weekly to give children a sense of belonging and help them feel welcome in the worship experience. These special children's bulletins connect their worship experience to the education themes.

## Joining the Feast

We invite you to “Join the Feast”!

Our exciting *Feasting on the Word Curriculum* offers great opportunities for the local church. Pastors, educators, and participants can experience the wonder of God’s nourishing word to us. For church schools, for study groups, and in preparation for teaching and preaching, the resources here will deepen and strengthen our faith. We have an amazing “feast” set before us! We desire and can find further understanding in our faith—of who God is and what God has done!

*Joining the Feast* helps pastors, educators, and worship leaders plan for education and worship. We want to assist in reflecting on how to incorporate scriptural and seasonal emphases across different parts of the church’s life.

*Joining the Feast* can be shared in education and worship committees. It enables important biblical themes to be integrated into the church’s study and worship experiences. A chart of suggestions for ways educational emphases can be used in worship is a feature of what follows here. Church school teachers can discuss these materials with each other to enhance education for all age levels in the church. Pastors who plan their lectionary preaching will find taking an overall look at this church season to be useful for their preparations. In all this, we want to join teaching and preaching. We want the church’s educational and worship experiences to find fullness and blessing in the praise and service of God!

An important goal for pastors and educators in the church is to connect or join the church’s educational experience with the church’s worship experience. People of all ages who participate in church school study can find their Christian faith enhanced when the Scriptures read and proclaimed in worship reinforce and expand what they have been considering in their educational time. Education and worship can be mutually supportive in helping God’s word in Scripture come alive in the Sunday morning experience. Consideration of the same lectionary reading in preaching can deepen the insights gained in church school.

Pastors who want to build on what has been done in education welcome this *Feasting on the Word Curriculum* as a way to prepare congregational members for directions into which the sermon can lead. Those who participate in the education time will find the insights gained there enhanced by preaching which considers the same passage and brings God’s word to bear in fresh and nourishing ways. So as we “Join the Feast,” joining the church’s educational and worship dimensions can bring to life the richness of God’s word in Scripture.

Donald K. McKim



### Isaiah's Vision

based on Isaiah 6:1-8

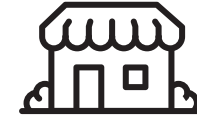
Isaiah was praying in the temple one day. In a vision, Isaiah saw God sitting on an enormous throne. Flaming creatures with six wings were flying overhead and singing: "Holy, holy, holy! The whole earth is filled with God's glory!"

Isaiah felt God's glory surround him, and he was afraid. He cried out, "I have said things I shouldn't have said. I have done things I shouldn't have done. Now I am standing in the presence of God, the Holy One. Woe is me!"

One of the flying creatures came to Isaiah and told him that God had forgiven his wrongdoings. At that moment, Isaiah knew God loved him. Then he heard God's voice asking, "Is there anyone I can send with my message? Who will go for me?"

Isaiah lifted up his arms and declared, "Here I am, God. I will go. Send me!" And so, Isaiah became God's prophet.

Isaiah went to the temple to pray. Two good things about praying are that you can pray many ways and in many places. Color in some of the places where you like to pray.



### A Puzzle That Counts

Solve the math problems and use the key to find the solution.

**Key**  
 1 A 2 B 3 C 4 D 5 E 6 F 7 G 8 H 9 I 10 J 11 K 12 L 13 M 14 N 15 O 16 P 17 Q 18 R 19 S 20 T 21 U 22 V 23 W 24 X 25 Y 26 Z

$3+5$   $9-4$   $11+7$   $3+2$   $2+7$   $2-1$   $9+4$   $6+1$   $25-10$   $1+3$   $10-1$   $12+11$   $3+6$   $7+5$   $6+6$

$6+1$   $6+9$   $21-2$   $8-3$   $7+7$   $2+2$   $20-7$   $1+4$  !