



Discussion Guide

Date: 8/16/2026

Sermon Title: Is worship important to my daily life?

Scripture: Psalm 100

This discussion guide is a layout to be used with a group or class. We have included opening and closing prayers to start and end your group. The guide may be used for personal or family reflection as well.

OPENING PRAYER

Gracious and loving God, we gather today because we belong to you. Before we accomplish anything, before we succeed or fail, before we know what the week will bring, remind us that we are your people. Open our hearts to your presence as we explore what it means to worship you; not simply with our voices on Sunday, but with our whole lives throughout the week. May your Spirit guide our conversation. Give us courage to ask honest questions and grace to listen to one another. In the name of Jesus Christ, Amen.

BIG IDEA:

Worship is more than an hour we spend at church on Sunday. Worship is a rhythm that continually re-centers our lives on God. We gather because we belong to God and to one another, and we are sent back into the world to live differently because we have worshiped.

OPENING QUESTIONS: Choose one of the following questions to start your group or class with.

1. When you think about something in your life that has lasted like a relationship, a habit, a tradition; what do you think has made it endure through change and difficulty?
2. Do you feel like change keeps speeding up and is hard to keep up with. Where do you feel this most in your own life right now?

Why Do We Worship?

A natural question is: Does God need our worship? Of course, that is a no. God is not diminished when we fail to worship, nor does God become greater because we sing louder. Instead, we need worship because worship reorients us toward God. We live in a world that constantly tells us what deserves our attention. Worship interrupts those competing voices and says: Remember who God is. Remember who you are. Remember where you belong. Psalm 100 begins with God and ends with God's character. That is one reason worship matters to daily life.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS: Read Psalm 100 aloud together. Then use the following questions to work your way through the text. If you're in a group, you could have different people read each verse.

Verse 1 — "Make a joyful noise"

1. What does “joyful noise” mean to you?
2. Does worship require us to feel joyful before we worship?
3. What might it mean to worship God when we are joyful?
4. What might it mean to worship God when we are grieving, frustrated, tired, or uncertain?
5. What does this verse suggest about worship being something we practice, rather than simply something we feel?

Verse 2 — “Worship the Lord with gladness”

1. Why do you think the psalm connects worship and gladness?
2. What are some things that can make worship feel like an obligation?
3. What helps worship become something you genuinely anticipate?
4. How might our understanding of God's grace change the way we think about attending worship?

Verse 3 — “Know that the Lord is God”

1. What does worship teach us about God?
2. What does worship teach us about ourselves?
3. What do you hear in the words, “we are his people”?
4. How is belonging to God different from simply being a religious person?
5. How might remembering that you belong to God change the way you approach your work, family, relationships, or struggles during the week?

Verse 4 — “Enter his gates with thanksgiving”

1. What does gratitude have to do with worship?
2. Why do you think thanksgiving is such a consistent part of Christian worship?
3. What happens to us when we regularly practice gratitude?
4. How might Sunday worship help us become more grateful people during the rest of the week?

Verse 5 — “His steadfast love endures forever”

1. What does it mean for God's love to be steadfast?
2. How is God's faithfulness different from our own faithfulness?
3. Why is it important that the psalm says God's faithfulness extends to “all generations”?
4. What does that teach us about worship as something we inherit and something we pass on?

WORSHIP IS A RHYTHM:

There is something powerful about weekly worship. We don't gather only when we happen to feel spiritual. We establish a rhythm. We return week after week, season after season, and generation after generation. Sometimes we arrive joyfully, other times we are exhausted, grieving, or even distracted. In other times we worship full of faith and other times with many questions. But we do return. The rhythm itself becomes formative.

1. What are the spiritual benefits of having a regular rhythm of worship?
2. Have there been seasons when worship became especially important to you?
3. Have there been seasons when worship felt difficult or disconnected?
4. What is the difference between attending worship and participating in worship?
5. Can you worship when you don't “feel” like worshipping? Why or why not?
6. What might happen to our faith if worship becomes something we only do when it is convenient?
7. What might weekly worship give us that personal devotion alone cannot?

SERMON QUESTIONS:

1. Even though our church and the world have changed so much in the last 140 years; there is something that hasn't changed. Psalm 100 reminds us that God made us and we are His people and the sheep of His pasture; in what practical ways does grounding your identity in that truth affect how you navigate a world of constant change?
2. Pastor Allison suggests that worship is primarily a gift we offer to God rather than something we receive; how does shifting that perspective change the way you personally approach your time in worship?
3. Worship is the celebration of life and what God has done and is doing. Worship invites us to give; not to receive. How does this help you understand why we worship?
4. The sermon argues that our most significant sacrifice in modern worship is our time. What competing demands most often pull you away from worship, and what would it look like to intentionally protect that time as a sacred offering to God?
5. The sermon connects giving our financial resources in worship to holding more loosely the things the world tells us will solve our problems -- how does the act of giving generously in worship shape your relationship with money, security, and trust in God throughout the rest of the week?
6. Pastor Allison identified three things we give in worship: our time, our resources, and ourselves. Which of those three feels most like a genuine sacrifice for you personally, and why?
7. In the sermon Pastor Allison quotes Tish Harrison Warren when she writes that "the often unseen and mundane ways, we spend our time are what ultimately form us". How does that idea reframe the way you think about the weeks when worship feels routine or uninspiring rather than deeply moving?
8. Towards the end of the sermon Pastor Allison reflects that on difficult days she instinctively reaches for prayers and creeds she memorized through years of repeated worship. What spiritual practices or words of faith have become so embedded in you through repetition that they sustain you in hard moments?
9. Pastor Allison challenged the congregation to aim for roughly 90 percent worship attendance between now and Christmas — an "A" in showing up, even when life gets busy. What is one specific obstacle that tends to keep you from worship, and what would it look like to address it?
10. If worship teaches us to live with God in the world, what is one area of your daily life where you sense God might want to work that kind of transformation in you right now?

OUR UNITED METHODIST CONNECTION:

United Methodists even make regular participation in the church part of our understanding of Christian discipleship. In the Baptismal Covenant and membership vows, United Methodists commit themselves to participating faithfully in the life of the congregation through prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness. Notice that presence is one of them. Presence matters. Showing up matters. Not because God is keeping attendance. Not because the church needs to fill seats. But because Christianity is communal. We are formed together. Your presence may encourage someone else.

1. What does your presence at worship communicate to other people?
2. Who might be encouraged simply because you are present?

3. What does it mean to say that worship is something we do together, rather than something we consume?
4. How does worship help create a sense of belonging?
5. How might our worship communicate the message: "You matter. You belong."

CLOSING PRAYER:

Faithful God, thank you for calling us back to you again and again. When we are distracted, remind us. When we are discouraged, strengthen us. When we are grateful, teach us to give thanks. When we are hurting, meet us with your presence. When we feel alone, remind us that we belong to you and to the community of Christ. Help us not to see worship as simply another appointment on our calendars. Shape us through the rhythms of prayer, Scripture, song, communion, fellowship, confession, thanksgiving, and praise. As we leave this gathering, send us this week as people who worship not only with our lips but with our lives. In the name of Jesus Christ, who calls us together, forms us in grace, and sends us into the world, Amen.

WAYS TO RESPOND:

Choose ONE of the following practices to focus on this week:

1. **Keep an appointment with God.** As one of Pastor Allison's ministry friends puts it, showing up to worship is keeping an appointment with God. Block time on your calendar for worship this week and for the next five months as you would any other important commitment.
2. **Participate fully, not passively.** Whether you worship in person or online, join in the spoken affirmations of faith, the prayers, and the music. These are not performances to observe. They are offerings to give.
3. **Give generously.** Reflect on whether your financial giving in worship reflects a genuine act of sacrifice and trust, or whether it has become routine. Consider what it might look like to give with fresh intentionality.
4. **Memorize something.** Pastor Allison described reaching for the Apostles' Creed and the Lord's Prayer in difficult moments because repetition had made them part of her. Choose one prayer, creed, or scripture to commit to memory this season through regular use in worship.
5. **Talk about it with someone.** Share with a trusted friend or family member what worship has meant to you, or invite someone who does not currently worship regularly to join you in person or online.