



The Church & Church Services

WEEK 5



OPENING PRAYERS:

In the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen
Glory to thee, our God, glory to thee!

Prayer to Holy Spirit

O heavenly King, the Comforter, the Spirit of truth, who art everywhere present and fillest all things, Treasury of blessings, and Giver of life: come and abide in us, and cleanse us from every impurity, and save our souls, O Good One.

Trisagion Prayer

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us. Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen

O Most Holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our transgressions. Holy One, visit and heal our infirmities, for thy Name's sake.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Before Study

Lord Jesus Christ, open the eyes of my heart that I may hear thy word and understand it and so fulfill thy will. Amen.

LESSON / ACTIVITY: See pages below. For each topic, please note Parent roles, notes, and (child responses).

Prayers

Before and after each lesson, please say a short prayer in front of an icon according to your family's prayer rule or the following, taken from the red St Tikhon's Prayer Book:

CLOSING PRAYERS:

"Rejoice, O Virgin Theotokos, Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb: for thou hast borne the Savior of our souls.

Pray to God for me, O holy [name of your patron saint], pleasing to God, for with fervor I run to thee, swift helper and intercessor for my soul.

O Lord, save thy people and bless thine inheritance. Grant victories to the Orthodox Christians over their adversaries, and by virtue of thy Cross preserve thy habitation.

It is truly meet to bless thee, O Theotokos: ever-blessed and most pure and the Mother of our God. More honorable than the cherubim and more glorious beyond compare than the seraphim; without corruption thou gavest birth to God the Word: true Theotokos, we magnify thee.

Glory to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy. Lord, have mercy.

Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, through the prayers of thy most pure Mother, of my holy guardian angel, of [name of your patron saint], of [saint(s) of the day], and of all the saints: save me, a sinner. Amen."



Day 1: The Church & Church Services

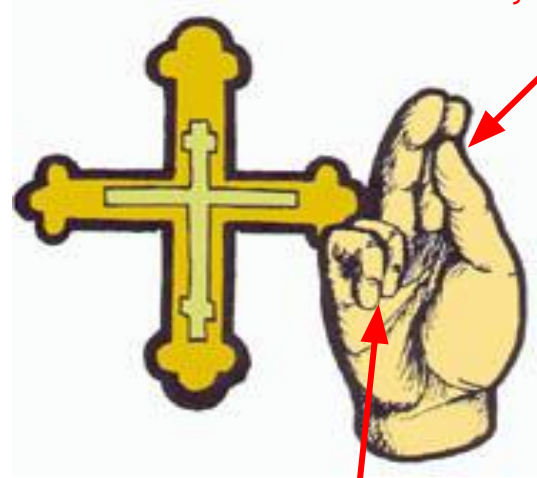
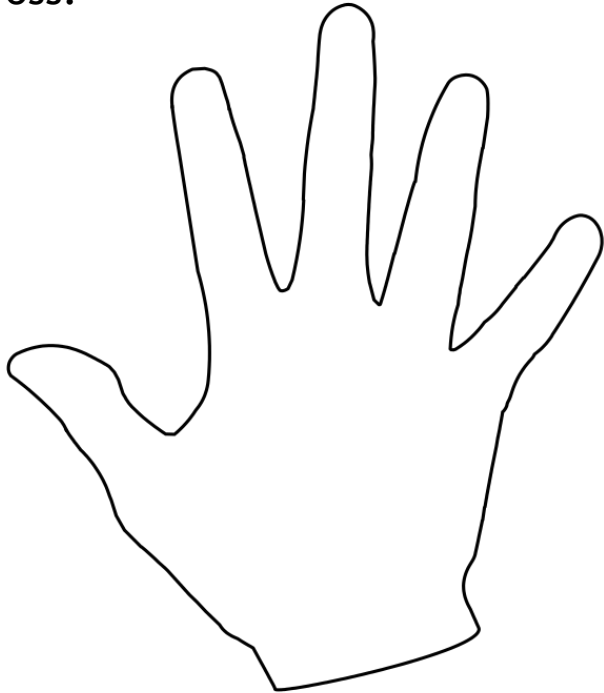
Parent Asks: “How do we enter the church?” (make the sign of the cross, kiss an icon, kiss a cross, bow, light a candle) “What do we hear in church?” (priest, choir, bells, Gospel reading, Epistle reading) “What do we see in church?” (icons, crosses, candles--*don't go into too much detail yet!*) “Who do we see in church?” (people “parishioners,” family, friends, priest, deacon, reader, altar boys, choir) “What is the church?” (two things: the special building and the people of God)

Parent Explains: “The place where we gather together as God’s family is the church building. The church building is where the people of the Church meet. As God’s family, the children of God, we meet in the church building to pray to God, listen to God, give thanks to God, sing to God, bring gifts to God, and receive God’s Holy Communion. The church is God’s house, and as the family of God, the church is our home. Our church building is named (St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church). Our church’s priest is (Father Andrew and Father Peter). The church building has 3 areas. We enter the building in the Vestibule/Narthex. We walk through the doors into the Nave. The priest offers our prayers and gifts to God in the Altar/Sanctuary. The Church, the people of God, includes all of the parishioners, the people of our Church Parish, and our priest. They all love us and pray to God to take care of us and teach us. When we go to the church building, it is often for church services. Can you name any church services?” (Divine Liturgy, Vespers, Matins, Hours, Compline, weddings, baptisms, funerals, etc.) “This week we will learn about the Church and church services.”

Activity: *See next 2 pages for activities.*

Day 1 - Younger Child Activity: Hand

Trace your hand and cut it out. Then fold it into the sign of the cross.



These 3 fingers represent the Holy Trinity: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

These two fingers represent the two natures of Christ: He is both God and Human.

Day 1 - Older Child Activity: Our Church Services

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Hours, Divine Liturgy First Day of Creation / New Creation / Resurrection / Never-ending 8th Day	Angelic Powers	St. John and all the Prophets	Daily Vespers Betrayal of Christ (Cross) - FAST DAY	Compline & Akathist St. Nicholas and all the Apostles	Hours Crucifixion (Cross / Theotokos) - FAST DAY	Great Vespers Departed / Sabbath rest / Christ in the Tomb

We learned from the Great Feasts that the Church has an annual calendar, cycle. It also has a **weekly cycle** and a daily cycle, *learn or review weekly themes in purple*. Name the church services that typically celebrated each week at St. Basil's.

Put the **daily cycle** of church services in order. *Remember, the first service of the day actually begins at night! It generally starts after we sing the hymn "Vouchsafe, O Lord, to keep us this night without sin..."*

Hours **Compline** **Vespers** **Matins** **Midnight Office**

(Vespers--evening, Compline--after dinner, Midnight Office, Matins--morning, Hours--counted from sunrise: 1st/3rd/6th/9th--3rd and 6th Hours are usually said before Divine Liturgy)

Day 2: Objects Used in Church Services

[Videos for
Older Children](#)

Parent Asks: “Yesterday we talked about the three parts of a church. Where do we enter the church building?” (Narthex/Vestibule) “Where do we stay during the church service?” (In the Nave) “Where does the priest go during the church services?” (In the Altar/Sanctuary and in the Nave)

Parent Explains: “The church is more than a beautiful building. Church services are a way to connect with God on Earth. We connect through our whole body and all of our **senses**. We also have special objects we use to help make those connections. When we’re in church, what do we **smell?**” (incense)

Parent Explains: “The priest uses the censor to fill the church with the scent of incense. The incense is offered as an odor of spiritual fragrance to glorify God. The priest censens the holy things, beginning at the Altar Table and censening gifts offered to God, he censens the holy icons around the church, and he censens us, because we are called to be Holy, to be saints, to be closer to God and our neighbor and to love God and neighbor.”

Parent Asks: “What do we **taste** in church?” (the Eucharist, Holy Communion)

Parent Explains: “The Holy Communion unites us to Christ. We ‘Taste and see that the Lord is Good!’ After receiving the Eucharist, we sing, ‘We have seen the true light! We have received the heavenly Spirit! We have found the true faith, worshipping the undivided Trinity, Who has saved us.’”

Parent Asks: “What do we **kiss** in church?” (icons, crosses)

Parent Explains: “In memory of God’s saints, we venerate, show great respect or reverence to, icons of saints with a kiss.”

Parent Asks: “How do we **move** in church?” (we stand, we sit, we bow our heads, we bow our whole bodies, we kneel, we make the sign of the cross, we fold our arms to receive Holy Communion, we walk slowly, we kiss the cross and icons, we light candles)

Parent Explains: “The actions we do in church are an important part of our prayer and our connection with God in His House. Each action has a special meaning and should be done with care. We kiss to venerate. We stand to show respect--we’re paying attention. We kneel to show humility before God. We make the sign of the cross to remind ourselves of Jesus’s Crucifixion and Resurrection. He instructed His followers: ‘let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me’ (Mark 8:34).”

Church
Tour:

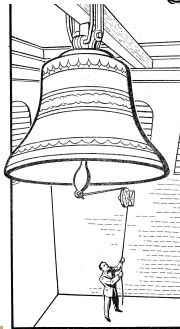
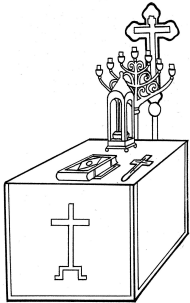
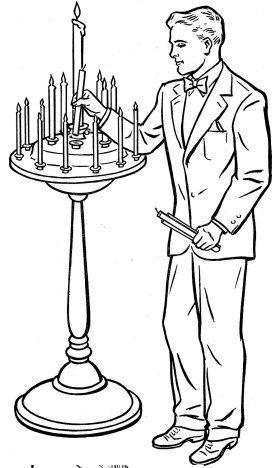
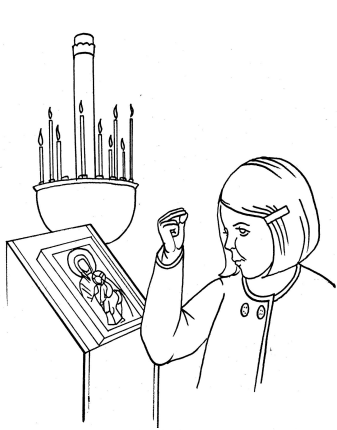


Incense:



Days 2 & 3 - Activity: Color and Describe

Color the pictures of each action or object we have in our church services. Tell your parent or sibling what you know about it.



Day 3: Objects Used in Church Services

Lighting
Candles:



Parent Asks: “What do we **smell** in church?” (incense) “What do we **taste** in Church?” (The Eucharist, Holy Communion) “What do we **touch** in church?” (candle, prayer book, bell, palm and pussy willow, icon, etc.)

Parent Explains: “We touch our fingers together and to our forehead, stomach, and shoulders when we make the sign of the cross. We hold a candle and remember that Jesus said, ‘I am the light of the world’ (John 8:12). We hold a prayer book to read what the priest, deacon, reader or choir is saying. During special occasions, we might hold palm branches and pussy willows for Palm Sunday, we might hold icons as we remember the iconoclasts and icons being allowed back into the Church, or we might be able to hold the rope as we ring the bells. At certain times, we also hug our friends and family.

Parent Asks: “What do we **hear** in church?” (priest, choir, bells, Gospel reading, Epistle reading)

Parent Explains: We hear God’s Word from the Gospel. It is kept on the Altar Table. During the Divine Liturgy, the priest carries the Gospel out during the “Little Entrance” so we can see it. He says, ‘Wisdom! Let us attend!’ and the priest reads to us the words of Jesus. These stories tell us how to love God and obey Him. When we listen to the Gospel reading, we stand up and should be very quiet so everyone can hear God’s Word. We hear the choir sing songs of praise to God and sometimes we sing along. We hear the little bells of the censor as the priest censes holy things with incense. We hear the big bells run before the service and after the service. We also hear the big bells run during the service. Do you remember when?” (During the Creed, *say the Creed together and think about its importance*) “The church bells are special and holy. They have important roles in our prayer. The bells can be a ‘call to prayer,’ telling the parishioners that the church service is about to begin. The bells express great joy or announce important moments, like the Creed, during the church services. The bells are like ‘singing icons,’ or trumpets, ‘anointed with Grace to strengthen Christen piety and faith and destroy demonic forces. The bells are blessed by the priest. Before ringing the bells, the parishioner gets a blessing from the priest, and once outside that person ringing the bells, ‘the Tzvonar,’ makes the sign of the cross to bless himself or herself before ringing the bells. The Tzvonar rings the bells according to a very specific pattern. Listen for it next time you’re in church. There are 12 ‘peals,’ bell rings, 15 seconds apart as a call to prayer. There are 12 peals during the Creed, on certain words. Twelve peals is called a ‘Blagovest.’ Before and after the Divine Liturgy, a special service, there is a ‘triple peal,’ called a ‘Trezvon,’ beginning with three peals on the largest bell, rhythm peals with alternating bells, and ending with three peals on all of the bells.

Day 4: The Divine Liturgy Service

(Entering Church - Gospel Reading)

1) Video for Children of most ages:



2) Parent Explains:

“The **Divine Liturgy** is special because we hear the Word of God and receive His Holy Communion. When we enter the church building, we bless ourselves with the sign of the cross, venerate icons, and light candles. Before the Liturgy begins, we hear the **Hours** read by the reader. Then we hear the church bells at 9:28am and at 9:30 the priest begins the service with the words, ‘**Blessed is the Kingdom** of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, now and ever and unto the ages of ages.’ The choir responds, ‘**Amen.**’ The word, Amen, means ‘let it be so.’ Like the word, ‘okay,’ it completes the prayer of the priest or deacon. If no one says ‘Amen,’ the Liturgy can’t continue!

The first prayer is the **Great Litany**. In this prayer, we pray for the whole world, we remember all the saints, especially the holy Theotokos, and we put our whole life and trust in God through His Son Jesus Christ. We ask God to bless us. The Church sings praises to God. We sing three songs, called ‘Antiphons’ which begin, ‘Bless the Lord O my soul,’ ‘Praise the Lord O my soul,’ and ‘In Thy Kingdom remember us O Lord.’ Next we hear the choir sing the **Troparia** and **Kontakia**, the songs celebrating **Sunday’s theme**: Christ’s Resurrection, in the weekly tone--*there are 8 tones*.

The **Little Entrance** shows us we’re about to hear the Gospel reading. To prepare, the priest exits the Sanctuary and enters the Nave through the Deacon Door, holding the Gospel Book for us to see. We stand and sing, ‘Come, let us worship and fall down before Christ,’ and the choir sings the **Trisagion**, ‘Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal, have mercy on us (3x),’ like the angels around God in the vision of Prophet Isaiah. The reader walks to the middle of the church, facing the Altar, and reads the **Epistle**, letter from the Apostles.

Finally, we pray before hearing the **Holy Gospel**, ‘Illumine our hearts...’ We listen to the priest read the **Holy Gospel, the Word of God**. After reading, he explains the meaning in a **sermon** and the **Liturgy of the Word** is complete.



3) Parent Asks: “What do you see happening in the pictures?”
(describe actions, locations, objects, and name the events: Small/Little Entrance, people standing, Epistle Reading, Gospel Reading, people sitting for the priest’s sermon)

Day 4 - Young Child Activity: O and X

God wants us to pray and to sing in church. Circle what we should do in church. Put an X over what we should not do in church.

PRAY

SING

PLAY

READ

LEARN

SHOUT

RUN

CLIMB

LAUGH

LISTEN

WALK

STAND

LOOK

JUMP

SIT

CLAP

Day 4 - Older Child Activity: Look up the prayers we say in the first half of the Divine Liturgy.

Day 5: The Divine Liturgy Service (Great Entrance - Dismissal, Post-Communion Prayers, Leaving Church)

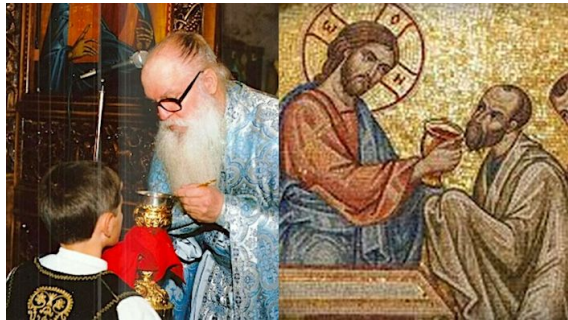
1) Parent Asks:

“What do you see in these pictures?”

- ❖ (Heads bowed)
- ❖ People standing,
- ❖ Gifts of bread and wine,
- ❖ Chalice,
- ❖ Priest outside the altar,
- ❖ Great Entrance,
- ❖ Holy Eucharist,
- ❖ People taking Communion)



“What do you think the second half of the Liturgy focuses on?” (Holy Communion, the Eucharist)



2) Parent Explains: “The first half of the Liturgy is called the **Liturgy of the Catechumens** because it was the time when the catechumens of the Early Church were allowed to come and learn about the **teachings of Jesus Christ**. We only truly know the teachings of Jesus Christ through the Gospel, so it is important to pay attention. That is why the priest stops to explain it. Now, the catechumens don’t have to leave during the Eucharist, but they cannot receive Holy Communion until they are baptized and chrismated in the Church.

As we prepare to offer our gifts of bread and wine to God, we sing the **Hymn of the Cherubim**, ‘Let us who mystically...’ and the priest comes out again, but this time with bread and wine. During the **Great Entrance**, the priest prays that God will remember all of us in His Kingdom. After a **Litany of Supplication**, that God will accept the gifts we brought, we pledge our faith, that we, 1, love one another and, 2, confess: ‘I believe in one God...’ As we say the **Creed** together, we also hear the bells 12 times.

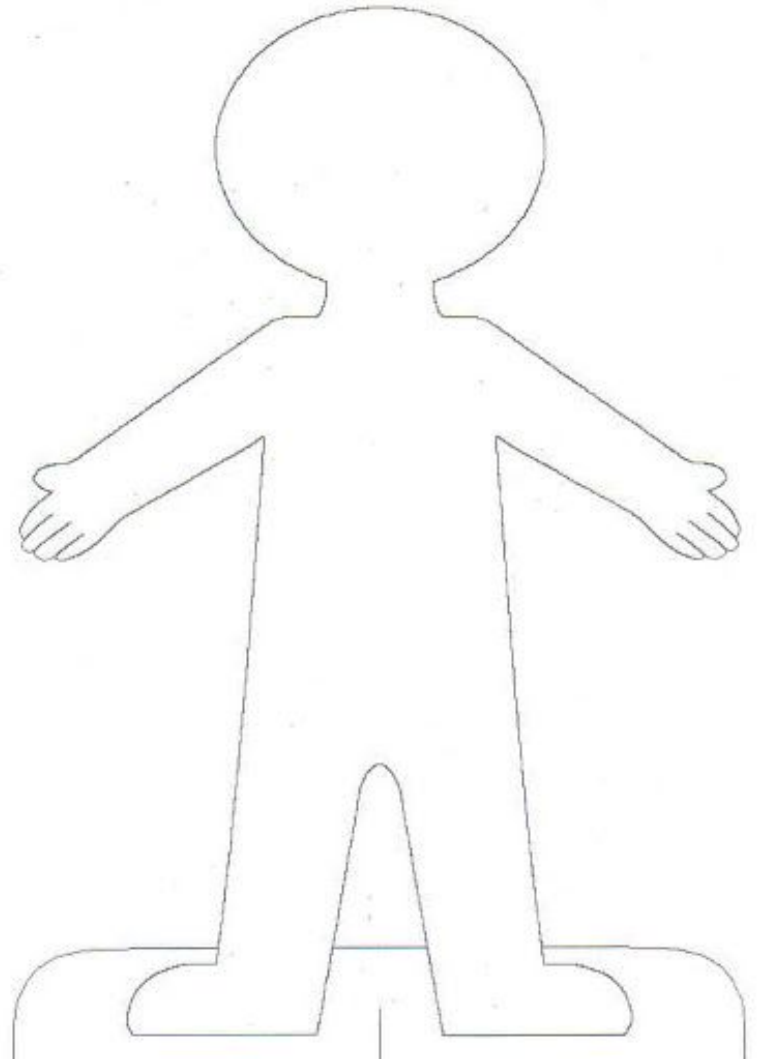
Next we give thanks to God. What does ‘Eucharist’ mean in Greek?” (to give thanks) “The **Prayer of Thanksgiving** has many parts. It begins with the priest saying, ‘Let us stand aright,’ and the parishioners respond, ‘A mercy of peace! A sacrifice of praise,’ and the priest and parishioners continue back and forth, like we’re accepting an invitation. Then the priest continues the long prayer of thanks, beginning, ‘It is meet and right.’ Next, the parishioners respond, ‘Amen,’ after the priest says, ‘Take! Eat!’ and after ‘Drink of it all of you...’ The priest then asks God to change them into the food of new life. We then prepare for God’s Banquet with litanies and prayer. We say the **Lord’s Prayer**, that begins, ‘Our Father,’ and repeat the pre-Communion prayer of St. John Chrysostom, ‘I believe O Lord and I confess...’

When we walk up to receive **the Eucharist**, we sing ‘Blessed is He who comes in the Name of the Lord...’ and then the choir continues ‘Receive the Body of Christ; taste the fountain of immortality.’ The priest says a prayer as we receive Holy Communion, then we cross ourselves and *sometimes* kiss the chalice. We then sing, ‘We have seen the true light’ and the priest begins **the Dismissal** with ‘Let us depart in peace...in the name of the Lord.’ Some people say **Post-Communion Prayers** together. Others say it at home. Before leaving the Church, we kiss the icons and the cross, face the Altar and bless ourselves.”

Day 5 - Young Child Activity: Cut-out Person

Directions: Cut-out a person *and individual fingers*. Fold fingers on right hand and practice making the sign of the cross. Fold arms to show how to stand for Communion (folded over chest, right arm on top). Fold hands to show how to ask a priest for a blessing (palms together and facing up, right hand on top).

Day 5 - Older Child Activity: Look up the prayers we say in the second half of the Divine Liturgy, especially the pre-Communion and post-Communion prayers.



Day 6: Daily Vespers, Great Vespers, Compline, Akathist, and other Church Services

Parent Asks: “Besides the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, what other times do we go to church?” (Christmas, Pascha/Easter, Great Feast Days, Holy Week, when visiting monasteries, weddings, funerals, baptisms, Vespers, Compline, etc.)

Parent Explains: The Church has many kinds of services, for many times of life. There are services for thanks, repentance, hope, help, and many more. **Matins** is usually served early in the morning to praise God, the Lord Who reveals Himself to us, just as the sun rises and reveals the light of morning. **Vespers** is usually in the evening, as the sun sets, we reflect on the true sun, the Son of God.

In **monasteries**, there are also the daily prayers of the Hours, Compline, and Nocturn. The **1st, 3rd, 6th, and 9th Hours**, beginning at sunrise, usually include the psalms related to Christ’s Passion--His arrest, Crucifixion, and Resurrection. The **Compline** service means ‘after-dinner,’ and we read psalms and prayers. The **Nocturn** service, or **Midnight Office**, begins the monks’ all-night vigil--time to keep watch and pray. In our Church, we only serve the Midnight Office after Good Friday, before Easter Matins.

An **Akathist** is a hymn dedicated to a saint, a holy event, or the Holy Trinity. In any church service, we are taking our time to be in the Presence of God, in the midst of His saints, and offer thanks for all He has done for us, so that we can truly become His Church. We don’t just go to church, we become the Church. In the services, we are shaped and transformed by participating. We become stronger with God.

Day 7 - Activity: Draw Yourself in Church

Day 7 - Our Church

The Church - All the People of God

Parent Asks: “Why is the word, Amen, important?” (Because the people have to say “let it be so,” the people have to complete the prayers of the priest) “Who do we see in church?” (choir, priest, deacon, readers, altar boys, kids and adults, friends and family, parishioners, the family of God, icons of saints and angels and of Jesus the Son of God, we are all the children of God the Father, *names of people from church*)

The Church Building - The Place Where we Worship God Together, God’s House

Parent Asks: “What are the three parts of the church building?” (Narthex/Vestibule, Nave, Sanctuary/Altar). “In our church building, the House of God, we use special objects to connect with God with all of our five senses.” (*young children can point to their eyes, ears, noses, mouths and fingers*) “What are some of the objects?” (the censor, incense, icons, crosses, candles, bells). “At St. Basil’s, we have 5 church bells. They’re like a choir. The three on the top row are smaller bells--they make high pitch, soprano sounds. Two bells on the bottom are low-pitch, bass sounds. The bells we have at our church stay still, and the bell ringer (Tzvoner) pulls a rope tied to the inside piece (clapper) that moves. This is the Russian tradition of bell-making. The other type of bells is popular in Western Europe, where they make the clapper stay still, and the bell moves onto the clapper. Imagine how pieces of a wind chime move to hit the heavy, center clapper. If you would like to learn more about church bells, or would like to assist, you can talk to Ms. Lynn.” *There might also be a bell-week of lessons at some point.*

Day 7 - Activity Directions:

Younger - Matching: Match the pictures with the name of each object we use in church services.

Older - Drawing: Draw St. Basil's as seen from above. Label areas of the church (Narthex/Vestibule, Nave, Altar/Sanctuary) and the grounds (cemetery, parking lot, pond) and specific features (iconostasis, icons, candle stands, bells, bookshelves, store, kitchen, bathrooms, etc.), and name some of the people you pray with in church.

Older - Fill in the Blank: Can you remember our iconostasis? Draw or label the missing parts from our church. (*from left to right and top to bottom:* St. Basil the Great, the Theotokos and Jesus, Cross, Jesus Crucified on the Cross, Beautiful Gate: Archangel Gabriel and the Theotokos--Annunciation icon, Jesus Christ, Cross, St. John the Forerunner)

Day 7 - Younger Child Activity: Matching

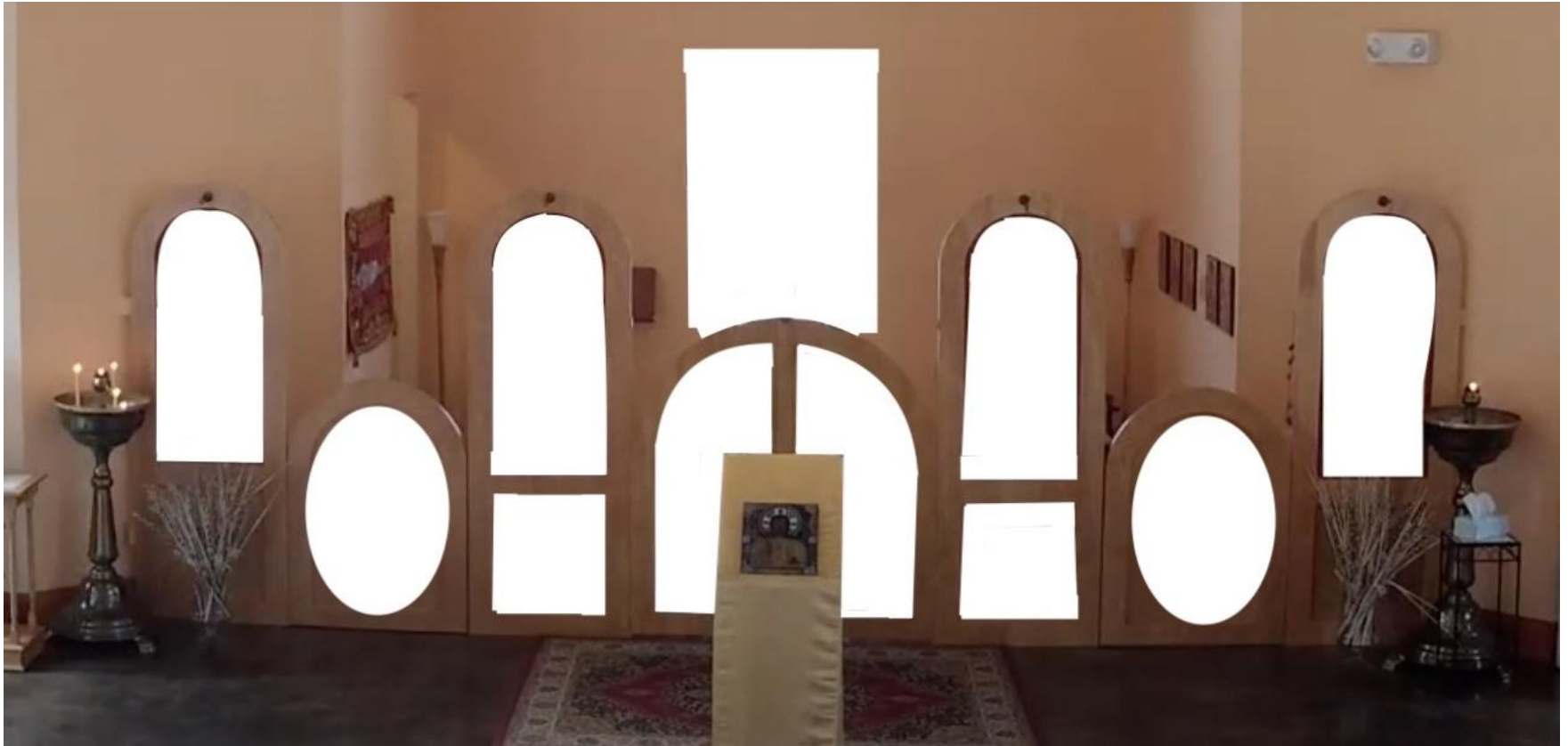


- Bells
- Chalice, Diskos, Gifts
- Censor, Incense
- Icon
- Iconostasis / Icon Screen
- Cross
- Candles
- Gospel Book
- Parishioners



Day 7 - Activity: Draw St. Basil the Great Orthodox Church

Day 7 - Older Child Activity: Fill in the Blanks from St. Basil's



Day 7 - Older Child Activity: Answers

