

# Rally Day Service: Father Welcomes All His Children

It's time to welcome the students, the teachers, and the church for another year of Sunday School! A typical Rally Day includes the promotion of children to the next grade or class, and the commissioning of teachers for another year of service. While there are some basic elements which comprise a typical Rally Day, there are no rules about what has to happen. The resources provided on this CD are to aid you in planning your church's Rally Day. Use what fits, discard what doesn't, adapt these materials, or do your own thing!

Rally Day is not part of the liturgical or Church Year calendar, and thus it is important to take care in planning the day's activities so they support rather than detract from the worship life of your parish. Your pastor will appreciate your consulting with him about what sorts of things (if any) might be included within your church's worship service on Rally Day Sunday.

Some ideas and options:

- Install and commission teaching staff during or after the service
- Have children process in and sit together in front of church with their teachers
- Have the congregation pray for the Sunday School
- Sing hymns that the children know or can easily sing along
- Create a banner reflecting the theme; use it in a processional, or display it through the year
- Promote children and award attendance certificates from previous year
- During the Sunday School hour, host an open house for parents, students, and staff
- Offer refreshments that are easy to eat and kid-friendly
- Make announcements regarding Sunday School, pass out any printed information (use the Rally Day Flyer included on the Director CD)
- Invite the senior citizens of the parish to come and share their memories of Sunday School

## Rally Day Worship Service

This year's service is formed around the Gospel Reading for Sunday September 7, 2014, from the three-year lectionary, series A. If you are celebrating Rally Day on a different Sunday, discuss with your pastor adapting the materials to fit with the appointed readings.

This year's theme text is Matthew 18:1–20; which includes several references to the love and care our Lord has for the "little ones." This is a fitting theme for a Sunday School Rally Day as the Church rededicates the Sunday School, commissions teachers, and promotes students to the next grade or class. Such activities highlight the Sunday School in the congregation, encouraging involvement and support by all members. The hymn "Father Welcomes" (*LSB* 605) ties in nicely with the text and explains how it is that children are welcomed into the family of God. This hymn has a delightful melody and is easy to sing.

The suggested order of service is "Service of Prayer and Preaching" as found in *Lutheran Service Book* (p. 260). The following items are provided to fit in with or substitute various parts of this liturgy in keeping with the Rally Day theme.

**Opening Processional Hymn**

“Father Welcomes”

*LSB 605***Opening Versicles**

(as printed, using the common versicles)

**The Old Testament Canticle***LSB p. 261*

(Select a soloist or choir to sing the main part of the canticle and have the congregation and children sing the refrain. You may wish to substitute an appropriate hymn, such as “Sing Praise to the God of Israel” [*LSB 936*]. The first two verses could be sung as the Old Testament canticle and the final two verses could be substituted for the New Testament canticle.)

**Readings from Holy Scripture**

Old Testament: Ezekiel 33:7–9

Epistle: Romans 13:1–10

*LSB 933*: “My Soul Rejoices”

Gospel: Matthew 18:1–20

**Common Responsory***LSB p. 263***Catechism Reading***LSB p. 264*

(Select one or more of the catechism readings provided in the liturgy.)

**Sermon****Hymn**

“I Am Jesus’ Little Lamb”

*LSB 740***Offering****Installation of Sunday School Teachers  
and Other Instructors in the Faith***LSB Agenda p. 249***Prayer***LSB p. 265***Collect of the Day:**

O God, from whom all good proceeds, grant to us, Your humble servants, Your holy inspiration, that we may set our minds on the things that are right and, by Your merciful guiding accomplish them; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**Prayer for Sunday Schools:**

Lord Jesus, our Savior and Redeemer, You have given the Church the command to bring the children to You that they may find hope in the promise of everlasting life with You. Therefore, help and support our pastors and leaders as they assist our parents in nurturing the baptismal faith of Your little lambs. You alone can preserve them in faith against all the evil influence of this world, yet You have given to us the task, the privilege, and the means to nurture the faith of all our children. You alone can create faith and hope and love in these children, yet You call men and women to teach Your holy Word. Bless the instruction offered in our Sunday School. May Your Word nourish and sustain all who hear it. Bring all teachers to realize not only the importance of their vocations but also that You promise to be with them and that they, too, are children of God redeemed with Your holy, precious blood. Give them the wisdom,

understanding, and ability to proclaim to the children entrusted to their care the truth of Your Word that provides the certainty of the salvation You have won for them. May the lives of our teachers so agree with Your instruction that they may always be shining examples of Christian virtue among us. Amen.

**Morning Prayer**

*LSB* p. 266

**New Testament Cantic**

*LSB* p. 266

(Or you may wish to substitute an appropriate hymn. As suggested above, use *LSB* 936. Verses 3 and 4 could be substituted for the New Testament cantic.)

**Blessing**

*LSB* p. 267

**Recessional Hymn**

“Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us”

*LSB* 711