

Unit Four The Church Family* Being Together

Jesus is With Us at Church



We Speak to God

Dear Father in heaven, help us be loving members of our families. Bless them and our church family, too. Help us see you in our homes and here at church where you are present in all the loving things we do. †Hanoon Hor yev Vortvo yev Hokvooyn Srpo. Amen.

Let's Talk



What are some things I do with my family?



What are some things I do with my church family?



Listen to This

When we are in church...

We remember the birth and the life of Jesus Christ.

We celebrate special holidays, called feast days.

We pray and sing.

We listen to stories.



God Speaks to Us

Jesus said, “Whenever two or three of you come together in my name, I am there with you.”

Matthew 18:20

We Learn About God

Kohar’s grandmother, Margaret, lived with Kohar and her family. Kohar loved her grandmother very much. She watched her each evening as she went quietly to her room to pray. When she finished her prayers, she would come into the living room.

One evening, Kohar asked, “Medz Mama, you pray at home. Isn’t that like saying your prayers in church? Why do you want to go to church every Sunday?”

“My sweet child, when we go to church we enter God’s house with many other people. We become the church family. God is there with us. We sing together, and we pray. When the Kiss of Peace is passed from person to person, we become one family. We are God’s family. Do you understand now, hokees, why I want to be in church every Sunday?”

“I understand, Medz Mama,” she answered. Kohar smiled at her grandmother and kissed her.



Our Armenian Way

These are on or near the Holy Altar:



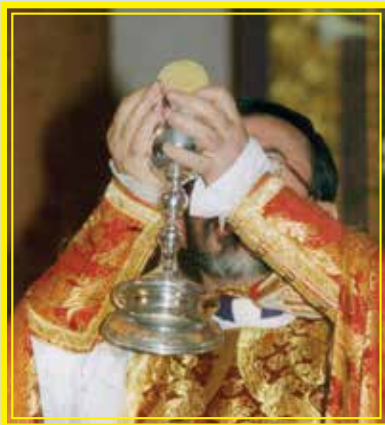
The chalice (sugih) from which the priest gives Holy Communion to the people. At certain times, it is covered with a special cloth.



An object that looks like the sun. It is called Jajanch. In English, we call it the "Radiance." It is an ornament on the altar, representing the blessings that come from holy things.



A candlestick (ashdanak). The light from these candles remind us of how Jesus brings light to the whole world.



The wafer (nushkhar) is prepared by the priest and is used during Holy Communion. On it is pictured the crucifix, wheat, and a cluster of grapes.



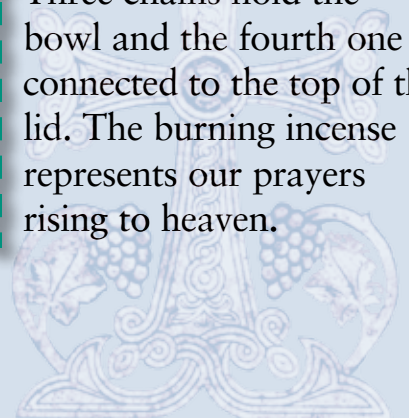
A fan (kushotz), a disc of silver with a six-winged cherub (angel) on both sides and little bells around it. It is fixed on a wooden rod. Fans were originally used to drive flies and other insects away. The cherubs symbolically drive away evil spirits.



A decorated book with a cross on it. It is the Gospel book (Avedaran). You will see the deacon hold it high in a procession around the altar and then read from it during the Badarak.



A censer (pourvar) is a silver incense burner. It is in the shape of a bowl. Three chains hold the bowl and the fourth one is connected to the top of the lid. The burning incense represents our prayers rising to heaven.



Hearts and Hands

What do we see on the altar?



For My Family



Learning Our Faith

Today's lesson introduced the children to their place in the church as members of the church family. A child asks her grandmother, "Why do you have to attend church services when you can pray at home?" In a loving response, the grandmother talks about the many ways the Liturgy bonds the church family together. "God wants us to be there with him," she explains.

The children also learned about important church vessels.

Living Our Faith

1. As a family attend Badarak together.
2. Light candles and pray together.
3. At home, practice the Kiss of Peace.
4. Make a collage of photos of family events.



The kingdom of heaven belongs to these little ones.

Heaven Belongs To Them

Jesus was resting under a tree in the quiet of the countryside. The parents and grandparents and aunts and uncles from the nearby village brought their little children to Jesus. They wanted him to pray for them. They hoped Jesus would touch their heads with his healing hand so they would be strong and safe in the world.

But the disciples said, “Jesus is tired! He has no time for these children right now!”

Jesus said, “Oh no, dear friends, let these little ones come to me. Don’t stop them.”

He lovingly placed his hand on their heads and said: “The kingdom of heaven belongs to them and to all people like them!”

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- Who brought their children to Jesus?
 - Why do you think they brought their children?
 - What did the disciples say?
 - And what did Jesus do then?
 - Jesus loves you. How does this make you feel?

Unit Four* The Church Family* Being Together

Jesus is With Us at Church

Lesson

1

Key Concepts

1. We celebrate the life of Jesus during the Divine Liturgy.
2. Jesus is with us in a special way when we gather as a church family.

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Discuss activities they do with their families.
2. Compare family activities with the activities of the church family.
3. Discuss the meaning of the Bible passage Matthew 18:20.
4. Memorize Matthew 18:20.
5. Read a story about a girl and her great-grandmother.
6. Name the objects found on the altar.
7. Read “Heaven Belongs to Them” from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
8. Make a church diorama.

Materials Needed

1. Diorama hand-outs copied in sufficient number for students
2. Shoe boxes
3. Thin markers
4. Glue sticks
5. Plastic bags for children to take home their boxes

Procedure

1. Greet the children as they enter and then stand in place or a circle to pray.
2. Ask children what kinds of things they do with their families. (Write them on the board; accept all answers).
3. Distribute today’s lesson and continue the discussion by examining the text and photos in **Let’s Talk** and **Listen to This**, emphasizing the similarities between their families and church families (in both families: we have fun, we share meals, we thank and praise God, we comfort each other’s sorrows). 15 min.
4. Read Matthew 18:20 in **God Speaks to Us**; briefly discuss the passage. Ask: “How do you think Jesus might be with us *especially* when we are together?” (In the respect and love we show towards each other, in our thankfulness, in the good work we accomplish together, in the peace we feel when we pray and sing together.) “Did Jesus mean just ‘two or three’ only – if there were four, he wouldn’t be close to us?” (Of course not, 2 or 3 means when any number come together, but always in his name, which has special reference to being at church together.) Repeat the passage several times to help the children memorize it. 5 min.
5. Go to the rug area to read the story about Kohar and her great-grandmother.

Discuss with children the reasons Kohar's great-grandmother gave for attending church and being a part of the church family. Return to table or desks. 10 min.

6. Read "Heaven Belongs to Them" in *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*. Distribute snack and discuss questions. 10 min.
7. Review the text and vessels in **Our Armenian Way**. Then distribute diorama sheets, markers, scissors, and glue sticks and help children construct their church dioramas. Have them first color the altar and church, then cut and affix to the sides of the shoebox with glue.
8. Bag the dioramas for each child and end with a prayer: "Lord, help us always remember the power we have in you when we gather, even two or three of us, to be together in your name. Amen." 20 min.

Unit Four* The Church Family* Being Together We Listen to God's Word

Lesson

2

Key Concepts

1. The Avedaran (Gospel Book) contains the writings of the four evangelists, Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.
2. The Gospels were written to tell the good news about Jesus.
3. The Word of God is read to the people of God.
4. The name of the Bible in Armenian is Asdvadz-a-shoonch (Breath of God).

Objectives

During this session, students will

1. Discuss some basic facts about the Bible.
2. Listen to a story about a boy named Danny.
3. Listen to the Bible reading from the Old Testament.
4. Take part in a discussion about the Old and New Testaments.
5. Read "A Farmer Planting Seeds" from *Jesus: Bible Stories for Children*.
6. Learn and recite the deacon's and choir's responses before a Scripture reading.
7. Make and illustrate a book about the holy evangelists.
8. Attend church for the Final Blessing to kiss the Gospel Book.

Materials Needed

1. A Bible
2. Red construction paper for book cover (8 ½" x 11"), one for each child
3. White paper, one for each child
4. Rectangular strips – 5" and 7" (one set for each student) cut from silver paper for cross on book cover
5. Templates of biographical material (from back of this manual)
6. Glue sticks, stapler, colored pencils, crayons, markers, scissors