

# Unit Three Being the Church

## *A Gift for Everyone*



## We Pray Together

Dear Jesus, we come to you today and thank you for our church. We have been blessed by your great, over-flowing love. Our church is our home, just like the early Church, which began in the homes of the disciples. We praise you!

*Hanoon Hor, yev Vortvo, yev Hokvooyh Srpo. Amen.*  
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## Let's Discover

grace      community      fellowship      prayer      worship

Was it hard to work together and make words out of letters?

What was the easiest part of word-building as a group?

Do you like working on your own or doing things as a group?

Describe why.



## Faith Word

### *Body of Christ*

The term Jesus himself gave to describe the Church, the family of believers.

# Our Story

## Best Summer Ever

Anita was so excited to begin the third grade. She couldn't wait to tell her new teacher and class what she did over summer vacation. Anita wanted everyone to know about her first experience at Armenian Church Camp. On the first day of school, Mrs. Roberts, Anita's second grade teacher gave all of the students a writing journal and the first entry was "The Best Part of My Summer Vacation . . ." Anita started right in...



*My favorite part of my summer vacation was going to Armenian Church Camp in the beautiful mountains. We all met at church and rode the bus. It was so much fun because I already knew some of the girls in my cabin from my Sunday School class and then I met new friends from all over the Diocese.*

*We stayed in a cabin in bunk beds and had the coolest counselors, Anoush and Ani. We did everything together: eating, sports, crafts, classes, campfire and so much more. Each day we had to clean up our cabins because they would judge our cabins and give points. The cabins with the highest points won ice cream sundaes at the end of the week! My priest from St. Mary Church was there and taught a class and I met other priests from other parishes in other states. I really enjoyed the classes and learned so much!*

*Once when I realized that I forgot my flashlight, one of the girls in my cabin, Susan, offered to share her flashlight with me. We became best buddies! We had a great cooking class, where the grandmas taught us how to make choreg. Now, I can help my mom make choreg for Easter. Another girl, Lorig, taught me how to canoe.*

*Each night after dinner, we would practice for the talent show. Our cabin decided to perform an Armenian dance, the Tamzara, that we learned in*

one of our classes. On the last day, we had a special Badarak service, it was great! I love Armenian Church Camp because we were like a family of campers, priests, and counselors who were learning, eating, praying, sharing, and helping one another. I didn't want the week to end. I can't wait to go back next summer!

## God's Word

The Scripture reading for today's lesson is from St. Paul's letter to the Christians in Corinth. It tells us more about what it means to be a member of a church.

### One Body with Many Parts

All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it. Here are some of the parts God has appointed for the church:

first are apostles,  
second are prophets,  
third are teachers,  
then those who do miracles,  
those who have the gift of healing,  
those who can help others,  
those who have the gift of leadership,  
those who speak in unknown languages.

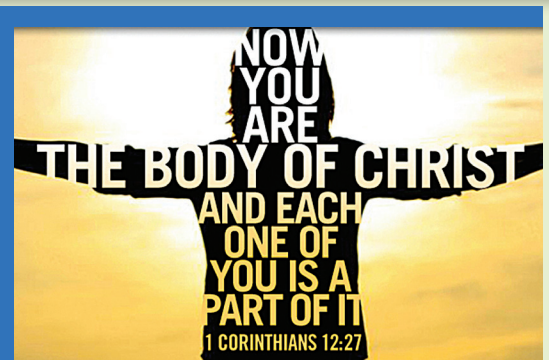


Are we all apostles? Are we all prophets? Are we all teachers? Do we all have the power to do miracles? Do we all have the gift of healing? Do we all have the ability to speak in unknown languages? Do we all have the ability to interpret unknown languages? Of course not!

*1 Corinthians 12:27-30*

## We Learn About God

Remember, *the church is not just a building, it's the people!* Jesus taught people to see how special it was to pray and worship together; in this way they became the true Church. St. Paul described it as something like a human body. There are so many different parts to our bodies. But all of them are important – the eye, the ear, the hands, the feet – everything makes it possible for us to function well. Like the parts of the body, we all bring something special to our community. God has given us gifts. Some of us are good teachers; some of us can heal people's feelings with warm words; some of us are great leaders. *Everyone* has some gift to offer to building up the church.



# Our Armenian Way

Early Christians met in each other's homes. Their homes were their church. The home was a special place to share ideas, traditions, community, eating together, learning and prayer.

For Armenians and the Armenian Church, the home was so important that the church has a special blessing for the home. The home can be blessed at Christmastime, Easter, or even when moving to a new home. In the "Home Blessing," the priest asks for God's blessing and protection for the family. An Armenian home blessing requires three main ingredients from the family: a cup of water, a dish of salt, and a piece of bread.

- Bread reminds us of Jesus Christ who is the bread of life. Bread is also a very basic food and we need food to live.
- Water reminds us of our baptism. Water is also the most important element for all living things.
- Salt is a seasoning. Jesus called us the salt of the earth. But he reminded us that salt needs to be flavorful to do its job.

During the blessing, all who are gathered sing "Amen, Alleluia!" Alleluia is a word of praise and rejoicing. Amen Ամէն



## Handmade With Love

Make a little dish to put salt in for a home blessing.

## For My Family

### Sharing Our Faith

Today's lesson was about God's gifts to all his faithful who share in the life of the Church. The children worked together to create words out of letters. We read a story about the teamwork involved in a day at a summer camp. After learning about the Armenian Home Blessing, the children made a little clay pot to put salt in for the blessing service. We would love to see all our families arrange for a home blessing – your child would be happy to see his or her pot in use for such a special occasion. See our pastor to arrange one.

### Living Our Faith

1. Place your child's salt pot in a prominent place. Discuss the symbolism of bread, water, and salt with him or her.
2. Read 1 Corinthians 12:27-30 together and discuss the gifts God gives to his faithful.
3. Schedule a home blessing with your parish priest.

a line as an option. Hold up the single pieces and then the preassembled house as students read the story. After reading the story, ask if anyone in the class has ever felt like Aren. Ask the class what they experience when they go into church – are they more of an audience member watching or do they feel that they are participating? In which ways are they participating? 20 min.

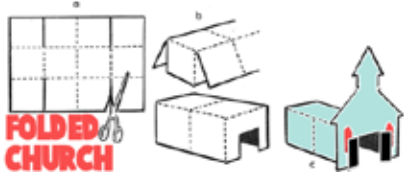
3. Read the Scripture verses in **God’s Word** together. Discuss the meaning. (5: there are many different ways we serve our one Lord, many different gifts we each have to put together and be one church family. 27: Jesus called the church his “Body” – how are all of us together like a body? – there are arms, legs, ears, eyes, etc. all of which make one important whole)

4. Read **We Learn About God**. Ask the class the following questions:

- What are some ways you can help the church? (pray, offering, friendship)
  - Who are some of the people who help in the church? (Der Hayr or Hayr Soorp, teachers, custodian, choir, deacon, parish council, etc.)
  - Is there a job in the church more important than another? (when all are done in the spirit of Christ, no)
  - What are some things we do at church? (sing, pray, play, study, read, fellowship, eat)
  - What are ways we can praise God? (sing sharagans, pray, tell others about God)
  - Is everyone important to the Church? (yes!)
- 20 min.

5. Review **Faith Word** and read **Our Armenian Way**. Ask the class if they ever thought of the nave, the place where the congregation sits, as a boat. What are some moments during Soorp Badarak that the class feels that they are one body in Christ? (during the recitation of the Creed, Confession, Holy Communion, saying the Hayr Mer together, Kiss of Peace) 20 min.

## 6. Handmade With Love: Being the Church craft



Distribute the copied templates of the church, front and back.

- Cut out the front of the church; cut on the solid lines and fold on the dotted lines (the doors).
- Write on the front three different ways you can be part of the church
- Cut out the back of the church (the box shape). Cut on solid lines and fold on dotted lines, as shown in picture a.
- On the outer boxes, draw and/or write ways in which you can be part of the church.
- Then glue corners as indicated in picture b.
- Then cut out the black rectangle. Glue the front of the church to the box on the small side that has the rectangle door cut from its side.

7. Clean-up. Close with the prayer: “Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for the blessing of our church, may we always work together for you! Amen.” 20 min.

## Unit Three: Being the Church

### Lesson Two: A Gift for Everyone

#### Key Concepts

- God gives every member of the believing community a gift to use in love and service (1 Corinthians 12:27-30).
- The Armenian Church has a tradition of Home Blessing asking God’s blessing and protection on the family and home.

## Objectives

During this lesson students will

1. Participate in a teamwork group activity of putting together words from individual letters.
2. Read and discuss a story about the teamwork involved in a summer camp.
3. Examine 1 Corinthians 12:27-30.
4. Complete a poster on the gifts of a church community.
5. Review the Armenian Church Home Blessing.
6. Create a clay pot to put salt in for a home blessing.

## Materials Needed

Display items: a cup of water, a chunk of bread (slice/pita/roll), a dish of salt

Individual letters to spell the words **grace, community, fellowship, prayer, and worship** (see Procedure #1). Easiest would be to purchase prepared letters

Large sheet of oak tag (see Procedure #4) with the hand-written title “The Church: One Body, Many Parts”

Glue

Thick markers, crayons, markers, colored pencils

Light colored construction paper or white drawing paper

Air-drying clay (many brands such as Activ Clay and Crayola are readily available in craft stores and Staples); sticks for design-making.

Optional (see Procedure #6): Tempera, acrylic or watercolor paints and brushes.

## Procedure

1. Greet students warmly and open class with the prayer in **We Pray Together**. Depending on the size of the class, select a few words in advance that you would like the class to put together as a group. The idea is to have each student have a letter that will make a word when joined with the others. Some examples of suggested words are: **grace, community, fellowship, prayer, worship**. Divide class into groups and distribute letters for a word within each group. Have them try to form a word with their letters; they may consult the word list in their texts as a guide. This is an activity demonstrating teamwork and that each person’s letter is important. After the exercise, discuss the questions in **Let’s Discover**.
2. Call on volunteers to take turns reading **Our Story**. Ask if any of the students have ever attended a camp like Anita’s, perhaps even a day camp. Did they share any of the same experiences? Why did Anita feel like camp was a family, a community? Ask for specific examples. If no one has been at a summer camp, ask about experiences at school. Do children learn together? Eat in the cafeteria together? What else do they share in? 15 min.
3. Introduce the **Faith Word**. Call on students to read **God’s Word** (I Corinthians 12:27-30).
4. Read **We Learn About God**. Take out the oak tag and thick markers and tell the class that they will create a poster depicting the Church as one body with its different parts and different gifts. Review the reading from 1 Corinthians:27-30 for ideas and then divide up responsibilities. Distribute blank paper for them to draw words and images separately and then paste them on the poster. Circulate constantly and provide assistance as children work. After 15 minutes, discuss finished poster. 20 min.
5. **Our Armenian Way**. Read the paragraph. Point to the water, salt and bread on display as you read. Ask the class if they ever have attended a home blessing or have had one in their own home. If possible, help families arrange one with your priest during an appropriate season ahead.
6. **Handmade With Love: Home Blessing Clay Pot**
  1. Distribute sufficient amounts of clay for each student to shape a small clay pot (that could fit in the palm of your hand), small sticks may be used to carve shapes or designs into clay.

2. Depending on drying time required for specific clay, pots can be painted in today's class or next week. You don't need to paint the pots at all.
7. Clean-up. Close with the prayer: "Dear Heavenly Father, thank you for our church community. We will use the gifts you gave us all to live as Christians together. Amen." 25 min.

## Unit Three: Being the Church

### Lesson Three: This Is My Body

#### Key Concepts

1. Jesus offers himself to us in the Eucharist.
2. The first Holy Communion took place at the Last Supper (Matthew 26:17-35, Mark 14:12-26, Luke 22:1-38).
3. In the Armenian Church, Holy Communion is a sacrament; we need to prepare to receive it.

#### Objectives

During this lesson students will

1. Illustrate and list what they would do in preparation for a special dinner guest.
2. Read and discuss a story about how we might remember a friend who has moved away.
3. Read the Scripture lesson (Matthew 26:17-35; Mark 14:12-26; Luke 22:1-38) about the Last Supper.
4. Examine the priest's words of invitation, "Arek, gerek," from the Divine Liturgy, which echo those of Jesus.
5. Complete an activity ordering the steps for receiving Holy Communion in the Armenian Church.
6. Decorate a tablecloth together to use in class or at fellowship.

#### Materials Needed

Pens, pencils, crayons and markers

For teacher reference only: Divine Liturgy book pg. 31 "Arek, Gerek"

Long piece of preferably white or light colored butcher paper – to be decorated and used as a tablecloth. Note: you might choose to use fabric and fabric markers, thereby having a tablecloth you can use throughout the year

Snacks: grape juice, napkins and bread/crackers/small cups and paper plates

#### Procedure

1. Greet students warmly and open class with the prayer in **We Pray Together**. Ask the class to think about what goes on when they are going to have company at their house, especially if it's for dinner. Brainstorm on the board the things that need to be done. Have them illustrate and list their responses in **Let's Discover**. Discuss. 10 min.
2. Introduce **Our Story** by asking, "Have any of you had a good friend move far away? How did you feel? Do you still keep in touch with them?" Have students take turns reading the story. Ask: "Why do you think the photos and the gifts that Saro had given were important to Andrew? (ways to remember). How do you think Andrew should keep in touch with Saro?" 7 min.
3. **God's Word**. (Suggestion: gather around a table, have napkins, juice and crackers ready.) Tell the students that they are going to hear the story of the Last Supper based on the accounts of it we read in the Gospels (Matthew 26:17- 35; Mark 14:12-26; Luke 22:1-38). Pause during the story and reenact when Christ blesses the bread and wine and distributes them to the disciples.
4. Read **We Learn About God**. Guide the children in a discussion as follows: "Remember our story a few moments ago about Andrew and Saro? We saw that it was possible to keep an important person in our hearts, even if they are not with us. What are some of the ways Andrew remembered Saro? (photos, gifts, memories they shared) Now we read about Jesus telling his beloved disciples how they will remember him. As God's Son, Jesus is giving us some very