

Dear parents,

Welcome to CrossBox #2! This box is all about church & weekly worship - what it's about, why we do it, and how you can make it a fulfilling experience for every member of your family each week.

The act of worship is *honoring God with great love and obedience*, which can (and should) happen anywhere and any time. Coming to worship Him at church, however, is not about what we do; it's about what is done for us. When we come to church, we receive God's gifts for us through His Word and Sacraments. God doesn't need our prayer and praise in worship -- we come to church to worship Him because *we* need the things He freely gives.

The primary objective of this CrossBox is to help you **enhance the worship experience for your family, whether you are worshipping at church or virtually at home**, by giving you...

- materials and ideas for creating a "sacred space" worship environment in your house;
- tips for establishing good worship habits in church/at home, and;
- resources for helping your children learn about different parts of the service and various places/objects around the church.

Church life this year has looked *very* different for all of us, but my heart goes out especially to young families. I know that even on a normal pre-pandemic Sunday there are unique struggles that parents face in church (or even getting *to* church), & the current circumstances have introduced even more obstacles. My prayer for each of you is that you still see worship as an essential part of your family life, pandemic or not -- because it really *is* important. I'm not asking you to promise you'll show up every week... I understand that wrangling kids (especially little ones) is not an easy task, and even beyond that, life happens. What I *am* asking you is that you would at least try to make it a priority. There are certainly legitimate reasons for missing a few weeks every now and again, but it can be easy to fall into the temptation of making excuses: it's too hard to get the whole family ready and there on time, we're too busy on the weekends, the kids are too crazy to sit still in worship, we have too much going on through the week so our weekends are our only downtime, etc. etc. etc... these are *excuses*, not reasons. I truly apologize if my tone comes across as harsh here - it's only because I take this very seriously, and I want you to as well! Raising your children in the church is absolutely essential when it comes to shaping their perception of faith and the Christian life as they grow up. Make it a priority. Yes, it will be hard. But I can promise you it will be so worth it.

I want to continually encourage you in this endeavor, so please reach out if there's anything we can do at Holy Cross to make worship life easier for you as a family. I would especially urge you to fill out the content card this week & make note on the back of any thing that might further help you. Children's bulletins? Re-introducing children's talks & worship bags (with safety precautions)? Special family-reserved seating? We'll do all we can to enhance the worship experience for you, so weekly church is not something you dread or try to avoid, but rather becomes the highlight of your week that your entire family looks forward to.

Remember: *You are loved -- by us, and even more by God!*

Your sister in Christ,

DCE Intern Dana Otto

WORSHIP CrossBox Content Guide

- **Parent Letter/Content Guide**

- This is what you're reading right now!

- **Family Cross Craft**

- Your main Project/Challenge! Create a "sacred space" to help your worship-at-home environment (and for prayers/devotional times, too!):



1. Decorate the wooden cross with markers, paint, stickers, ribbon, or whatever you like. Each member of the family should contribute to decorating the cross. Write your family's name (and first names if you'd like) across the center, and perhaps choose a Bible verse that is meaningful for you all as well to write on the front or back.
2. Use the fabric pieces in the yellow envelope to create banners or paraments for each liturgical season (see **"Colors + Seasons"** sheet). Place the decorated fabric on or under your family cross wherever you choose to display it. See the last bullet point on the **"Worship at Home"** tip sheet for more details.

- **"Worship at Home/Worship in Church" Tip Sheet**

- Some words of advice about creating healthy habits for making family worship the best experience it can be, whether at church or at home.

- **"Colors & Seasons of the Church Year"**

- Explains the calendar of the church year, from Advent to Ordinary Time, and why we associate certain colors with each season. Use this to help create your "sacred space"!

- **Memory Verse Challenge Card**

- Collect a new Verse card in every CrossBox. See if you can memorize this one before your next box arrives!

- **"A Simple Explanation of the Church Service"**

- A booklet published by CPH that explains each part of the liturgy and why we do it.

- **Kids in the Divine Service Booklet**

- A compilation of pages from the LCMS explaining some parts of the church, plus a glossary of tricky church words and what they mean.

Need another copy of a specific resource?

Go to www.hcross.com/crossbox and click on the **"Worship"** section to request it/print one at home!



Watch the LIVE Unboxing Video at 4:30pm on Wednesday* to chat with Pastor Meyer and get personal shout-outs, answer trivia questions, & learn more about all of your box contents!

Scan the code to the left, or visit hcross.com/crossbox and click the "Unboxing Videos" links to watch on Facebook or YouTube.

* Can't catch the live feed? No worries! The videos will be posted afterwards to watch whenever you are able.