

LEARNER SHEET:

PSALMS FOR HELP

Psalms 22:1-31; 23:1-6; 25:1-6, 10; 40:1-3; 51:1-19; 74:1-23



PRAYER TIME

Remember your partner's prayer needs—record them here.

DISCUSSION TIME

- **Do you recognize the wide range of emotions expressed in the psalms? Find examples of psalms that you think prove they could have been written by teenagers your age. Then find examples that prove they were written by adults.**
- **Read Psalm 23, a well-known psalm that is a plea prayer for help. The psalm addresses God as a good shepherd. What image for God is a comforting one for you? Rewrite the psalm in words that are meaningful for you today.**
- **What tragedy or disaster has recently affected people? Talk about it as a psalm expressing to God a plea for help.**
Lament: Express your feelings about the event.
Plea: Suggest what could happen to improve the situation.
Help: Ask God to help.
Thank you: Acknowledge that God is present and express thanks to God.
- **A poem, though often filled with unusual images, typically holds the “thread” of a thought. Holding onto this thread can help a reader stay with the poet. Listen for the theme in Psalm 51.**
- **Review “How to Forgive Someone” on page 101 in *The Lutheran Handbook*. We can forgive others because God forgives us.**



THE BIG IDEA

God's people have always expressed their fear and pain to God.



BIG FUN IDEA

Read Psalm 40:1-3 as a group. Create a miry bog outside or in a place inside that can get messy. Lay a tarp on the ground; sprinkle a bag of potting soil around the tarp; water the soil with a watering can until it is soaked. Barefoot learners slish around the miry bog and then stand on rocks (or a rock facsimile) and sing a new song of praise to God.



BIG SERVING IDEA

How does God respond to the cries of God's people when they face all types of disasters, as illustrated in the psalms? Sometimes it is through other communities of God's people. Help out an agency in your community or go to www.elca.org and discover how you can participate in what the ELCA is doing locally and globally.

LEARNER TAKE-HOME SHEET: PSALMS FOR HELP

Psalms 22:1-31; 23:1-6; 25:1-6, 10; 40:1-3; 51:1-19; 74:1-23



KEY WORDS

Keep a family white board someplace near the dinner table, and write these words on it. Try writing a family definition for each one during the week.

PSALM

ANGUISH

LAMENT

Take this sheet home and keep it someplace near the dinner table like on the fridge. At least three times next week at dinner, use Prayer Time and one other family activity to make your confirmation learning come alive!

PRAYER TIME

Read Psalm 40:1-3, 17 as a family prayer.

I waited patiently for the LORD; he inclined to me and heard my cry. He drew me up from the desolate pit, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure. He put a new song of in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the LORD. As for me, I am poor and needy, but the LORD takes thought for me. You are my help and my deliverer; do not delay, O my God. Amen

TALK TIME

- The psalms pose some very honest questions. Here's one or your family: Do you know where the Bibles are in your home? If so, great! If not, find them so that you have access to the psalms. Make sure that young people have a Bible available to them for personal devotions. Leave a Bible open to the psalms on your meal table.
- Psalmists brought their anguish to expression and assumed God would hear and respond. Do you pray for one another in your family? Praying for one another is different from worrying about one another. No issue is too raw, no emotion too ugly to share with God. Ask God to help with the most painful times, the most broken relationships.
- Need to shout out at God, like the psalms writers did? Try doing so when you're alone in the car (or another soundproof environment). Tell God (as loudly as you want) the truth about how your life is going and how much you could use God's help. God can take it!



WEB TIME

Gather around the family computer and search for ways your church or the ELCA (www.elca.org) is helping people in need. What can your family do to participate?

RITUAL TIME

Tables play such an important part in our faith, especially the communion table. Tables offer a place to eat together and be together. Make an agreement in your family that if someone needs to talk, but can't seem to ask for attention, he or she will sit at the table and someone will notice (you may need to set up a code of some sort). Leave a Bible open to the psalms on the table. Borrow any words you might need!