

FATHER'S

DAY

Purpose

For all members of the church community to explore together who God created fathers and each of us, to be.

Key Scripture

"He will say to me, 'You are my Father and my God, as well as the mighty rock where I am safe.'" Psalm 89:26 (CEV)

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Consider & Prepare

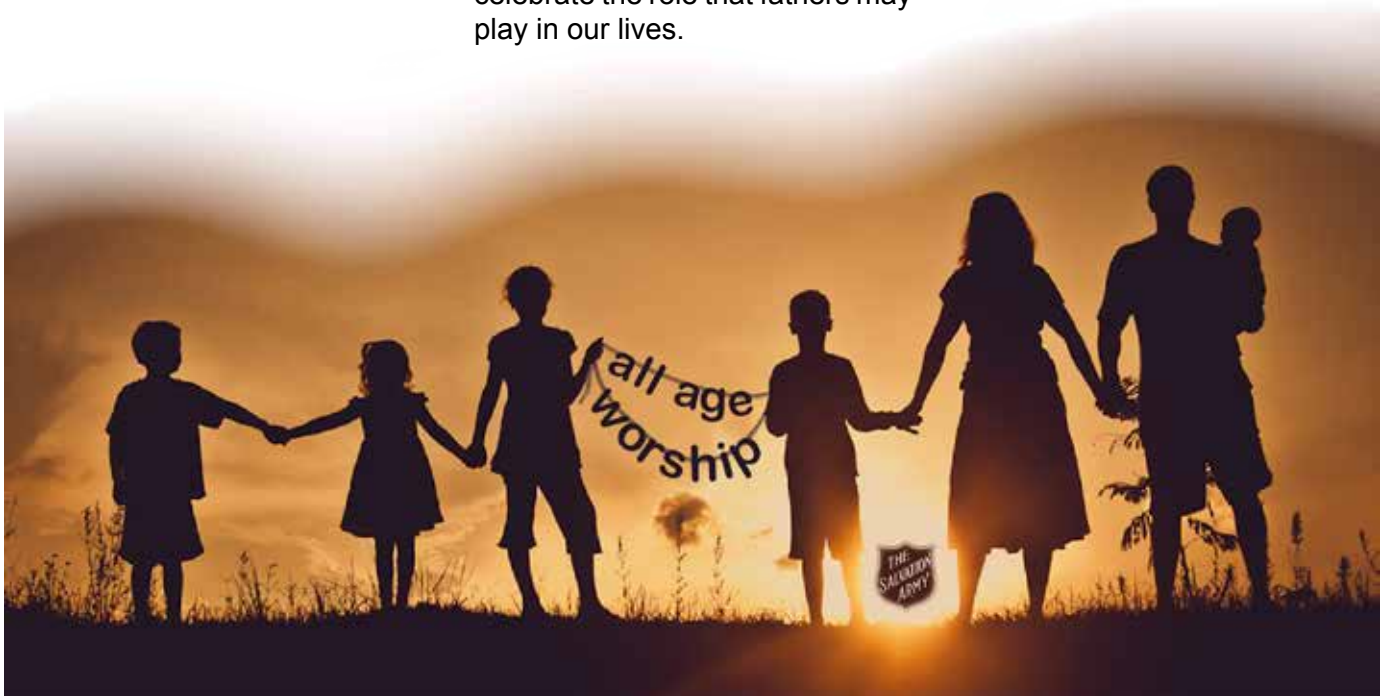
God created each of us in His image. Reflecting on who God is and what he does, gives us an understanding of who He has created us to be. Remember that this will be a challenging day for some members of your church community. Keep the focus on who God is while making space to celebrate the role that fathers may play in our lives.

Take the time to read Psalm 89 and reflect on the character of God. Consider which of those characteristics you see reflected in your own life. Consider which of these characteristics you would love to see God develop further in you.

You Will Need

For Activity 1 – Characteristics of God the Father

- ❖ A set of cards – one characteristic written on each card from the list in the table.
- ❖ A sticky wall – Hang a large sheet of fabric and spray it with fabric adhesive. This is available from Spotlight, Lincraft or craft stores. You will be able to stick and remove cards from it.
- ❖ If you do not want to create a sticky wall then you can supply blu-tac instead.
- ❖ Optional – some small prizes for correctly identifying the characteristic, making the fastest freeze frame, making the most creative freeze frame, etc.



For Activity 2 – Roles of God the Father

- ❖ Copies of the verses in Appendix A – one copy per group
- ❖ Nine blank cards per group
- ❖ Markers or pens

For Activity 3 – How am I like God?

- ❖ Depending on the option that you choose, you will need a flat pack item, or a picnic blanket
- ❖ Optional – some small prizes for your volunteers

For Prayer Activity

- ❖ Set up a simple obstacle course

Prayer Activity + Opportunity for Reflection and Response

- ❖ Print multiple copies of the verses in Appendix B
- ❖ Cut the verses up into individual cards
- ❖ Put them in a box or basket or scatter them across a table
- ❖ Blank cards
- ❖ Markers or pens

Outline / Key Components

Call to worship	Psalm 89 (Selected verses)
Introduction	Focus on THE Father
Activity 1	Characteristics of God the Father
Link 1	
Activity 2	Roles of God the Father
Link 2	
Activity 3	How am I like God?
Link 3	
Prayer Activity	
Benediction	

Call to Worship

Psalm 89 - selected verses (CEV)

"Our Lord, I will sing of your love forever. Everyone yet to be born will hear me praise your faithfulness. ² I will tell them, "God's love can always be trusted, and his faithfulness lasts as long as the heavens."

⁵ Our Lord, let the heavens now praise your miracles, and let all of your angels praise your faithfulness. None who live in the heavens can compare with you.

⁸ You are Lord God All-Powerful! No one is as loving and faithful as you are. ⁹ You rule the roaring sea and calm its waves. ¹¹ The heavens and the earth belong to you. And so does the world with all its people because you created them ¹² and everything else.

¹³ You are strong and mighty! ¹⁴ Your kingdom is ruled by justice and fairness with love and faithfulness leading the way.

¹⁵ Our Lord, you bless those who walk in the brightness of your presence.¹⁷ Your own glorious power makes us strong, and because of your kindness, our strength increases.

¹⁸ Our Lord and our King, the Holy One of Israel, you are truly our shield.

²⁰ David, my servant, is the one I chose to be king, ²¹ and I will always be there to help and strengthen him. ²⁴ He will always be able to depend on my love, and I will make him strong with my own power.

²⁶ He will say to me, 'You are my Father and my God, as well as the mighty rock where I am safe.'

⁵² Our Lord, we praise you forever. Amen and Amen."

Introduction – Focus on THE Father

As we worship today, we want to keep our minds firmly focused on our Heavenly Father. This is what true worship is. We also want to acknowledge the gift of fatherhood that God has given to us.

Today is Father's Day. We understand that there will be a variety of responses amongst us.

Whatever your experience is of your father or as a father, it is important to remember that God is a Good Father. He helps us to understand who fathers were created to be. Today we are going to explore this together.

Activity 1 – Characteristics of God

There are fathers within our church family too. They may or may not actually have children of their own but they take on the role of father to people within our church.

I wonder what positive characteristics you see in your own father or in a father within our church family? Allow for some responses.

Divide into groups of approximately five people, with a mix of ages in each group.

Read out each of the following verses one at a time.

I am going to read out some verses that tell us about who God is. After I read each verse you can discuss with your group then call out the characteristic that we learn about in the verse. You will then have 30 seconds for your group to work out a freeze frame to represent that characteristic. A freeze frame is like a still mime.

God is love, and anyone who doesn't love others has never known Him. 1 John 4:8	Loving
The Lord isn't slow about keeping his promises, as some people think He is. In fact, God is patient, because He wants everyone to turn from sin and no one to be lost. 2 Peter 3:9	Patient
Just as parents are kind to their children, the Lord is kind to all who worship him, because He knows we are made of dust. Psalm 103:13-14	Kind
As bad as you are, you still know how to give good gifts to your children. But your heavenly Father is even more ready to give good things to people who ask. Matthew 7:11	Generous
Have pity on others, just as your Father has pity on you. Luke 6:36	Merciful
Always live as God's holy people should, because God is the one who chose you, and He is holy. 1 Peter 1:15	Holy
Be my defender and protector! Keep your promise and save my life. Psalm 119:154	Defender
You judge the world fairly and treat all nations with justice. Psalm 9:8	Fair

As you complete each one, take a card with that characteristic and ask someone to add it to the sticky wall.

Link 1

These are just some of the characteristics of God the Father that we might also see in earthly fathers.

Hebrews 12:9 says

Our earthly fathers correct us, and we still respect them. Isn't it even better to be given true life by letting our spiritual Father correct us?

Fathers can have characteristics that are like those of God. They also have roles within families and within the church family that may be similar to the roles that God has in our lives.

Activity 2 - Roles of God the Father

In your groups, look at these scripture verses about the roles of God as Father.

What do these verses tell us about what God does?

Write your answers on cards and add them to the sticky wall.

Where or when have you seen an earthly father reflect or fulfil one of these roles?

For example: 2 Peter 3:9 says *"The Lord isn't slow about keeping his promises, as some people think he is. In fact, God is patient, because He wants everyone to turn from sin and no one to be lost."*

This verse reminds us that God keeps his promises. Can you think of a time when your father, or a father in your church family kept a promise.

Don't forget to give everyone in your group a chance to answer.

Verse	Role/ Responsibility
The Lord isn't slow about keeping his promises, as some people think he is. In fact, God is patient, because He wants everyone to turn from sin and no one to be lost. 2 Peter 3:9	Keeps his promises
Only people who don't know God are always worrying about such things. Your Father in heaven knows that you need all of these. Matthew 6:32	Knows our needs and provides
Jesus went on to say, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, you will know who I am. You will also know that I don't do anything on my own. I say only what my Father taught me. John 8:28	Teaches us
The Lord will protect you and keep you safe from all dangers. Psalm 121:7	Protects us
If any of you need wisdom, you should ask God, and it will be given to you. God is generous and won't correct you for asking. James 1:5	Gives wisdom
Our earthly fathers correct us, and we still respect them. Isn't it even better to be given true life by letting our spiritual Father correct us? Hebrews 12:9	Corrects us
Praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! The Father is a merciful God, who always gives us comfort. 2 Corinthians 1:	Provides comfort
God saves me and honours me. He is that mighty rock where I find safety. Psalm 62:7	Provides a safe place
The Lord cares for his nation, just as shepherds care for their flocks. He carries the lambs in his arms, while gently leading the mother sheep. Isaiah 40:11	Leads us

Link 2

These are some of the roles of God the Father that we can see reflected in earthly fathers.

Fathers often also need to be problem solvers. Let's find some volunteers to show us how good they can be at problem solving.

Activity 3 - How am I like God?

Ask 6 men to volunteer and give them one of the following tasks to do:

- ❖ Put together a flat pack item
- ❖ 6 men to stand on a picnic blanket and turn it over while all still standing on it

Who has God created fathers to be?

He has created them to be like Him. He has created fathers to reflect some of the character and roles of God. They are not God so they can't be perfect but they can keep on trying to be like God with his help.

Who has God created you to be?

God has created each of us to be like him too. He has created us to be like him and to try to live his way.

God has equipped each of us with unique characteristics and given us unique roles and responsibilities.

- ❖ Choose a characteristic card from the sticky wall (or write your own card) that represents a strength that you have.
- ❖ Choose a characteristic card from the sticky wall (or write your own card) that represents an area in which you would like to become more like God.
- ❖ Choose a role and responsibility card from the sticky wall (or write your own card) that God has given to you and ask for His help in fulfilling that role.

How can we step into these roles and continue in them?

- ❖ Keep these character and role cards somewhere that you will see them often.
- ❖ Make choices to act in ways that match up with who God is and what he does.
- ❖ We can ask other people to help us.
- ❖ We can ask God to help us.

Link 3

Today, whether we are fathers or not, we each are

trying to be more like God. We can and should share this with each other and encourage each other. We are going to take some time now to encourage the men that are here today.

Prayer Activity

We have some Scripture verses here that you might like to use to encourage someone right now by praying with them.

- ❖ Children can pray over their fathers.
- ❖ Wives can pray over their husbands.
- ❖ Fathers can pray over their families.
- ❖ Fathers can pray for themselves.
- ❖ Friends can pray over other men in the church family.

Allow time for the church family to pray over each other.

AND

Provide some blank cards on which people can write their own prayers.

AND

Provide a quiet space where people can go to pray on their own.

Benediction

We pray for God's power to help you do all the good things that you hope to do and that your faith makes you want to do. ¹² Then, because God and our Lord Jesus Christ are so kind, you will bring honour to the name of our Lord Jesus, and He will bring honour to you. 2 Thes 1:11-12 (CEV)

Roles of God the Father
The Lord isn't slow about keeping his promises, as some people think he is. In fact, God is patient, because he wants everyone to turn from sin and no one to be lost. 2 Peter 3:9
Only people who don't know God are always worrying about such things. Your Father in heaven knows that you need all of these. Mt 6:32
Jesus went on to say, "When you have lifted up the Son of Man, you will know who I am. You will also know that I don't do anything on my own. I say only what my Father taught me. John 8:28
The Lord will protect you and keep you safe from all dangers. Psalm 121:7
If any of you need wisdom, you should ask God, and it will be given to you. God is generous and won't correct you for asking. James 1:5
Our earthly fathers correct us, and we still respect them. Isn't it even better to be given true life by letting our spiritual Father correct us? Hebrews 12:9
Praise God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! The Father is a merciful God, who always gives us comfort. 2 Cor `1:3
God saves me and honors me. He is that mighty rock where I find safety. Ps 62:7
The Lord cares for his nation, just as shepherds care for their flocks. He carries the lambs in his arms, while gently leading the mother sheep. Isaiah 40:11

- ❖ What do these verses tell us about what God does?
 - ❖ Write your answers on cards and add them to the sticky wall.
 - ❖ Where or when have you seen an earthly father reflect or fulfil one of these roles?
- This verse reminds us that God keeps his promises. Can you think of a time when your father, or a father in your church family kept a promise.*
- ❖ Don't forget to give everyone in your group a chance to answer.

For example: 2 Peter 3:9 says "The Lord isn't slow about keeping his promises, as some people think he is. In fact, God is patient, because he wants everyone to turn from sin and no one to be lost."

<p>I pray that God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ will be kind to you and will bless you with peace! Ephesians 1:2</p>	<p>I ask the glorious Father and God of our Lord Jesus Christ to give you his Spirit. The Spirit will make you wise and let you understand what it means to know God. Ephesians 1:17</p>	<p>God is wonderful and glorious. I pray that his Spirit will make you become strong followers ¹⁷ and that Christ will live in your hearts because of your faith. Stand firm and be deeply rooted in his love. Ephesians 3:16-17</p>
<p>I pray that your love will keep on growing and that you will fully know and understand¹⁰ how to make the right choices. Then you will still be pure and innocent when Christ returns. And until that day, ¹¹ Jesus Christ will keep you busy doing good deeds that bring glory and praise to God. Philippians 1:9-11</p>	<p>Always be glad because of the Lord! I will say it again: Be glad. ⁵ Always be gentle with others. The Lord will soon be here. ⁶ Don't worry about anything, but pray about everything. With thankful hearts offer up your prayers and requests to God. ⁷ Then, because you belong to Christ Jesus, God will bless you with peace that no one can completely understand. And this peace will control the way you think and feel. Philippians 4:4-7</p>	<p>Every time I think of you, I thank my God. ⁴ And whenever I mention you in my prayers, it makes me happy. ⁵ This is because you have taken part with me in spreading the good news from the first day you heard about it. ⁶ God is the one who began this good work in you, and I am certain that he won't stop before it is complete on the day that Christ Jesus returns. Philippians 1:3-6</p>
<p>I pray that God, who gives peace, will make you completely holy. And may your spirit, soul, and body be kept healthy and faultless until our Lord Jesus Christ returns. 1 Thes 5:23</p>	<p>We pray for God's power to help you do all the good things that you hope to do and that your faith makes you want to do. ¹² Then, because God and our Lord Jesus Christ are so kind, you will bring honor to the name of our Lord Jesus, and he will bring honor to you. 2 Thes 1:11-12</p>	<p>We pray that our Lord Jesus Christ and God our Father ¹⁷ will encourage you and help you always to do and say the right thing. 2 Thes 2:16-17</p>

I pray that the Lord will guide you to be as loving as God and as patient as Christ. 2 Thes 3:5	We always pray that God will show you everything he wants you to do and that you may have all the wisdom and understanding that his Spirit gives. Colossians 1:9	Just as shepherds watch over their sheep, you must watch over everyone God has placed in your care. Do it willingly in order to please God, and not simply because you think you must. 1 Peter 5:2
Keep alert. Be firm in your faith. Stay brave and strong. ¹⁴ Show love in everything you do. 1 Cor 16:13	Make your light shine, so that others will see the good that you do and will praise your Father in heaven. Matthew 5:16	You know that many runners enter a race, and only one of them wins the prize. So run to win! 1 Cor 9:24
I pray that God will take care of all your needs with the wonderful blessings that come from Christ Jesus! Philippians 4:19	Be alert and think straight. Put all your hope in how kind God will be to you when Jesus Christ appears. ¹⁴ Behave like obedient children. Don't let your lives be controlled by your desires, as they used to be. ¹⁵ Always live as God's holy people should, because God is the one who chose you, and he is holy. 1 Peter 1:13	As you share your faith with others, I pray that they may come to know all the blessings Christ has given us. ⁷ My friend, your love has made me happy and has greatly encouraged me. It has also cheered the hearts of God's people. Philemon 6