Worship Ideas

All Saints Sunday

The Worship Design Studio

with Dr. Marcia McFee

www.worshipdesignstudio.com
INSTANT ADVENT!!

A fully-scripted worship series from Dr. Marcia McFee and the Worship Design Studio with all liturgy, music suggestions, children’s moments, and visual arts ideas based on Matt Rawle’s book, “The Redemption of Scrooge” (and Abingdon’s small group study resources)

MAKE THIS ADVENT/CHRISTMAS MORE DEEPLY MEANINGFUL (AND LESS STRESSFUL)
WITH RESOURCES FROM WORSHIP DESIGN STUDIO AND ABINGDON PRESS

6 COMPLETE scripts for all the Sundays of Advent, Christmas Eve and Christmas Day

worshipdesignstudio.com/scrooge
The Series

Why this series for Advent/Christmas?

From Dr. Marcia McFee: "In looking for a resource that would bring a meaningful and memorable experience to Worship Design Studio churches, I was struck by Matt Rawle's treatment of this classic tale. Far from being a surface treatment of a popular secular story, Rawle helps us see the correlation of Scrooge's transformation to the one we are invited to through the birth of Jesus.

In this series we will proclaim that living in God’s economy of grace and justice is the antithesis of the life-threatening addiction to money, success, exclusion and looking out for ourselves that seems to characterize so much rhetoric these days.

Just as God’s presence was born anew into this world, we too can be born anew, awakened and redeemed into renewed life, joy, passion, generosity, humility and love."

Find out more: www.worshipdesignstudio.com/scrooge
More about Dr. McFee: www.marciamcfee.com
Worship Ideas for All Saints Sunday

IDEAS to jumpstart your creativity

1. “The Butterfly Effect”
2. “You Lift Me Up”
3. “Tables of Abundance”
   a service of Word & Table

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1. “The Butterfly Effect”

*Note:* This idea was mentioned in a PODcast by guest visual expert Todd Pick. He has generously provided us with a description here for your consideration. Questions? Contact Todd at: toddpick@mindspring.com.

**Worship Space:**
The sanctuary was filled with butterflies! We used banners as a backdrop and then strung butterflies from the ceiling so that we would indeed be surrounded by a cloud of witnesses/butterflies.

**Ritual Rubrics:**
Worshipers were given two small butterflies. During the ritual of response, each person was invited to the Communion Table to name the saints above who had impacted and/or shaped their lives. Butterflies were either placed directly on the Table or hung on empty branches they were in pots. In effect, the gathered community created butterfly ‘trees’ which adorned the Table, reminding us of the presence of the company of heaven that joins us when we feast. All were invited to take the second butterfly home to keep or to give to another as a reminder that we are the saints of the living, whose actions and words shape others and the world in which we live.

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Whether you know it or not, you have been surrounded, enveloped, hugged by a great cloud of witnesses who have come before you. From the beginning, it was made very clear this is not a race, but a sacred journey. Hand clasping hand, from the beginning, from your beginning, it becomes very clear, this is not a journey that we make alone. But rather a journey we take together—in community; in communion with those who gather here today; in communion with all who have shaped your life; and also in communion with those who have gathered as faithful believers in this place since 1823.

We have felt the brush of butterfly wings...
If you try, you can still feel those gentle touches on your life.

But guess what, you have wings too! This service is not only to remember those who are feasting at the heavenly table—the vision of which we hear from the prophet Isaiah in scripture. You have no doubt touched and changed lives by your presence—each of you has certainly touched mine.

Saints are not just those faces that you see in stained glass windows. They are the faces of friends, mothers, sons, spouses, children, sisters... You are counted among the communion of saints. You are part of that great cloud of witnesses who surround others with your faith and hope and love.

So flap your butterfly wings of love vigorously, for who knows what the consequences of our small, daily actions might be across the world?

2. “You Lift Me Up”

**Anchor Image:**
Birds in flight

**Frame Synopsis:**
The freedom of the flight of birds has long been a symbol for many peoples across time and space of the spirit soaring beyond this life. In Celtic spirituality, the wild goose in flight has been a sign of Spirit. On this All Saints Day, we utilize this symbol of flight and freedom as we remember those whose spirits now fly unfettered.

**Scripture Fragment:**
So then let’s also run the race that is laid out in front of us, since we have such a great cloud of witnesses surrounding us. Let’s throw off any extra baggage, get rid of the sin that trips us up, and fix our eyes on Jesus, faith’s pioneer and perfecter. *Hebrews 12:1-3*

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**BRAINSTORM:**
**MURALS & MOBILES**

Create seagull cut-outs to write names on, hang on mobiles…
For a small church you could create the mobiles in the service.
For medium church you might have to collect names beforehand of those who have died this year and have extras for add-ons.
For large church definitely beforehand and then a paper cutout in every bulletin to write a name and place and then tape(?) on the walls/paper mural on the walls

**MUSIC**

“You Lift Me Up” (popular genre)
“The Lone Wild Bird” FWS 2052

*Note: Marcia got this idea when she saw this display in Ireland at the Cliffs of Moher*

SUGGESTIONS FOR ALL SAINTS SUNDAY
SERVICE OF WORD AND TABLE

Note: This service is based on a United Methodist order of worship with a more “spirited traditional” feel, using United Methodist resources: (UMH = United Methodist Hymnal; TFWS = The Faith We Sing). Please adapt for your church’s modes of worship expression and denominational resources.

WORSHIP SPACE:
The chancel area - or wherever you have room - has a rectangular table (or tables) dressed in a tablecloth at the center. There are a few chairs around it, as if people just got up from the table.

On the table are 12 plates - a symbol of discipleship. These plates could be ones that have been handed down by a previous generation. There is a single candle at the center, the symbol of Christ. The rest of the table surface is open in order to accommodate pictures of loved ones and previous generations of the church which people have been invited in previous weeks to bring on this day.

Placecards are scattered in the pews for people to write the names of loved ones on. If there is room at the sides and/or back of the sanctuary, set up some tables with tea light candles for lighting during communion. If you have liturgical objects/windows/etc. that have been “given in memory of ____,” you may want to mark them in a special way on this Sunday with small ribbons, etc.

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WE GATHER

Music for Gathering  
[Either instrumental or congregational song]

The Community Gathers  
Announcements in the Life of the Church  
Naming of Joys and Concerns

Music for Centering on God  
[This is a short meditative voluntary (about 2 minutes)]

Entrance of the Light  
[The acolytes bring the light to the center of the center aisle as chimes/bells ring  
octaves of F’s and C’s randomly. The people are invited to stand and face the  
center for the introit and call to worship. The choir stands in the outside aisles,  
surrounding the congregation (as do the bells).]

Choral Introit  
“In the Lord I’ll Be Ever Thankful” TFWS #2195  
[A solo voice sings first a capella, then the choir comes in with full SATB,  
followed by an invitation for the congregation to join.  
This Taizé song is joyful and can build through the repetitions.]

In the Lord I’ll be ever thankful,  
In the Lord, I will rejoice!  
Look to God, do not be afraid.  
Lift up your voices, the Lord is near,  
lift up your voices, the Lord is near.

Call to Worship  
Based on Deuteronomy 6  
[Consider using voices of various generations]
Voice 1: Now this is the commandment that the Lord your God charged me to teach you... Hear therefore, O People of God... so that it may go well with you, and so that you may multiply greatly in a land flowing with milk and honey, as the Lord, the God of your ancestors, has promised you.

People: You, O God, have been our help in ages past.

Voice 2: Hear, O People of God: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart.

People: Be, O God, our hope for years to come.

Voice 3: Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise.

People: Be thou our guide while life shall last...

Voice 4: Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

People: Be our eternal home!

Hymn of Praise
"Oh God, Our Help in Ages Past"  UMH 117
[The acolytes come forward during this hymn and light the candle on the table. The choir processes forward from the side aisles.]

Greeting

WE PROCLAIM

Gathering the Saints
[Leader says something like (make it your own): “We give thanks this All Saints Day for those who have gone before us - those who set tables of love and grace and hospitality, feeding us in body, mind and spirit. You are invited to write the name of persons you would like to remember on the placecards you found in the pews and then to place those, and any photos you brought, on the table as the choir sings of how God’s love lifts us - and how God’s love was shown forth to us through these persons we remember today.”]

**The Word in Song**

“Love Lifted Me” [or other]

Choir

[Be prepared to extend the music if the action takes a bit longer…]

**First Reading**

Hebrews 12:1

[Read from the table after photos and name cards have been placed there]

Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith, who for the sake of the joy that was set before him endured the cross, disregarding its shame, and has taken his seat at the right hand of the throne of God.

**Gospel Reading**

Mark 12:28-34

[Reprise of chorus of “Love Lifted Me” sung here by the congregation as a transition]
The Word Proclaimed

[Sermon… some of the stories of the “ancestors” of the church who loved God with all their heart, mind, soul & strength and set the example of loving neighbors could be told here by one or several persons… or it can be done by several voices in between the verses of the next song as the offering is taken if a more traditional sermon is done here.]

WE RESPOND

Song of Offering

“As We Gather at Your Table” TFWS #2268

[At the end of the three verses sung in unison while the offering is collected, the piano/organ plays instrumentally for one verse and then, with a crescendo and as people stand (as happens with a typical “doxology”), the third verse is sung again, with the choral descant (found in the choral edition of TFWS) as the communion elements and offerings are brought forward.]

[If you don’t have the Faith We Sing songbook, you can probably find a tune to fit the words: the meter is 87.87 D]

As we gather at your table, as we listen to your word,
Help us know, O God, your presence; let our hearts and minds be stirred.
Nourish us with sacred story till we claim it as our own;
Teach us through this holy banquet how to make Love’s vict’ry known.

Turn our worship into witness in the sacrament of life;
Send us forth to love and serve you, bringing peace where there is strife.
Give us, Christ, your great compassion to forgive as you forgave;
May we still behold your image in the world you died [or “came”] to save.

Gracious Spirit, help us summon other guests to share that feast
Where triumphant Love will welcome those who had been last and least.
There no more will envy blind [or “hold”] us nor will pride our peace destroy,
As we join with saints and angels to repeat the sounding joy!
Invitation to the Table

When we gather at the table, we enter the realm of God’s time in our remembering; where past, present and future are one. We remember the past and are hosted by all those saints who came before us. We remember the present through Christ’s call to spread the banquet of love to all. We remember the future in the promise of Jesus to be with us always.

And so it is that this morning, we remember with love those whose love of God lifted us. We give thanks for their hospitality, the tables they set for us and the gifts they gave to us, and we set this heavenly banquet at which we give glory to God with them today. It is through their witness that we have tasted and we have seen the goodness of God.

We confess that at times we forget that we, too, will be the “ancestors” of those to come. We sometimes think only of ourselves, whether our own plates will be full, whether our own needs are met. In this silence, let us lift up to God the regrets of our hearts, opening ourselves to the grace of God that calls us to love our neighbors.

Silent Prayer of Confession
Pardon
Hear the good news:
Christ died for us while we were yet sinners;
That proves God’s love toward us.
In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!
**In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven!**
Glory to God. Amen.

The Peace
As forgiven and freed people, let us offer one another
signs of reconciliation and love.

The Great Thanksgiving
Adapted from the UM Book of Worship
[consider using a musical setting, using underscoring for the prayer]

The Lord be with you.
And also with you.
Lift up your hearts.
**We lift them up to the Lord.**
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
It is right to give our thanks and praise

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give
thanks to you, almighty God, creator of heaven and earth,
God of Abraham and Sarah,
God of Miriam and Moses,
God of Joshua and Deborah,
God of Ruth and David,
God of the priests and the prophets,
God of Mary and Joseph,
God of the apostles and the martyrs,
God of our mothers and fathers,
God of our children to all generations.
And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest!
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest!

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ. By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your church, delivered us from slavery to sin and death, and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: “Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me. When the supper was over he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: “Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.”

[the people are invited to stand]

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ’s offering for us, as we proclaim the mystery of faith.
Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

Renew our communion with all your saints: for saints no longer with us, especially those we have honored here; for all saints now living among us, who gift us with their presence in our lives; and for saints who will come after us, continuing Your Good News into the future.

[the people are invited to take their neighbor’s hands]

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory, and we feast at his heavenly banquet.

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever. Amen.

The Lord’s Prayer

Breaking of the Bread

Communion
[The people come forward to receive communion by intinction at two stations. They then may go to one of several side tables set up with tea light candles to light in honor or memory of someone. If your community is smaller, you may make the table of plates and pictures also the table with tea lights.]

WE ARE SENT FORTH

Closing Hymn
“For All the Saints” TFWS #2283
[Use this one or the one at the end of the document which uses the words so many are familiar with but with a different tune.]

For all the saints who’ve shown your love in how they live and where they move, for mindful women, caring men, accept our gratitude again.

For all the saints who loved your name, whose faith increased the Savior’s fame, who sang your songs and shared your word, accept our gratitude, good Lord.

For all the saints who named your will, and showed the kingdom coming still through selfless protest, prayer, and praise, accept the gratitude we raise.

Bless all whose will or name or love reflects the grace of heaven above. Though unacclaimed by earthly powers, your life through theirs has hallowed ours.

Benediction
Thanks for being part of the Worship Design Studio!

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