



### Children's Week (18-28 October 2008)

Jesus said: 'consider the lily'. In this worship resource, we 'consider the potato' and what it can show us about God and our life as God's children.

You can use these POTATOES 'N' US ideas for an all-age worship celebration during Children's Week or any other time.

## GENERAL NOTES

### NATIONAL CHILDREN'S WEEK

A Caring World Shares

Children's Week is celebrated annually in October. A diverse range of activities are held that focus attention of the wider community on children, in particular issues of health, childcare, education, culture, recreation, etc.

Children's Week reminds us that, as a church, we care about children, and we can teach our children to care about others.

Children's Week celebrates the right of children to enjoy childhood. It is also a time for children to demonstrate their talents, skills and abilities.

Churches can observe Children's Week by holding an all age worship service. This service provides an opportunity for children and grown-ups to enjoy being in church together. It can also be a time for children to demonstrate some of their God-given skills and abilities.

### THE YEAR OF THE POTATO

Each year the caring theme of Children's Week focuses on a theme selected by the United Nations as their annual 'Year of . . .'

2008 has been designated by the UN as the international year of several important-sounding things and also — surprisingly — the humble potato. The Year of the Potato intends to show that potatoes, and farming in general, can play an important part in resolving global problems such as malnutrition, poverty and threats to the environment. Potatoes as both food and a source of income can reduce hunger and extreme poverty in developing areas.

You can find all you ever wanted to know about potatoes, and more, on the 'Year of the Potato' web site: <http://www.potato2008.org/en/aboutiyp/index.html>

See also [www.cipotato.org](http://www.cipotato.org) and, for information about potatoes in South Australia, [www.pir.sa.gov.au](http://www.pir.sa.gov.au). In the search box, write 'potato'. Then click on 'Potatoes Overview'.

### ALL-AGE WORSHIP

All-age (intergenerational) worship is, first and foremost, worship — an encounter between God and God's people, a dialogue in which God speaks and people respond.

Intentional intergenerational worship allows this dialogue to take place through several of the senses, movement and activity and interaction among worshipers.

Carefully planned all age worship focuses on a single theme. It connects that theme with the lives of the worshipers. It reinforces the theme by examining it in several different ways. It repeats the theme several times. It presents the theme in language and experiences that are loud and clear.

Carefully planned all-age worship provides worshipers (young and old) with an experience and ideas they can remember and talk about in their homes. It may provide resources to encourage that conversation.

All-age worship differs from worship that is planned by adults for adults, with the possibility that some young people will listen in. And it differs from worship for children only — planned either by adults or by children.

All-age worship takes seriously the understanding that people of all ages worship together in the body of Christ. Worshipers — young, old and in-between — can also be involved in planning worship,

inviting people to worship, and leading worship.

Intergenerational worship recognises and values the children present in the worshipping congregation and 'the child within' each adult.

## USING THIS RESOURCE

These notes have been prepared by the Resource Centre for Children's and Family Ministry of the Uniting Church (SA) to help congregations plan worship involving children and families. You may make as many copies of the notes as needed for your worship planners. Use of music and other copyright elements is not covered in this permission.

Read through all the material. Discuss it as a planning team. You may use the sample service, or any of the ideas that are appropriate in your situation.

If you use the resource, we would appreciate your letting us know what you do. Send a brief email to [rccfm@bigpond.com](mailto:rccfm@bigpond.com)

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## PLANNING TEAM

An all-age worship service is best planned by an intergenerational team, working with the pastor/minister/priest. If possible the team should consist of at least three people: one representing the youngest, one the middle and one the oldest third of the congregation.

The team may also draw on people who have special abilities, eg in the areas of hospitality, music, drama and visual arts.

The intergenerational planning can be a valuable learning experience for all involved.

## INVITATION AND ADVERTISING

If you are planning a special all-age worship service for Children's Sunday, make sure that people know about it.

Let your regular worshipers know that it will be special and intergenerational. But keep the details a surprise.

Encourage your regular worshipers to invite family and friends who do not regularly attend worship. This could be a wonderful opportunity for grandparents to have a weekend with grandchildren and include the worship experience in that weekend.

You might promote your worship through any other Children's Week events happening in your community.

## HOSPITALITY

When you invite guests to a worship service it is especially important to provide them with a warm welcome and a comfortable environment. This is the responsibility of all members of the congregation, but specific people to take on specific duties.

## FOOD

(1) Food can be an important aspect of hospitality. And, since this worship focuses on a food, it would be appropriate to incorporate a potato-themed lunch, eg potato soup, potato pancakes or baked potatoes (with a variety of toppings).

If the smell of baking potatoes or simmering potato soup permeates the building during the worship time, you will be engaging people's sense of smell.

(2) For your POTATOES 'N' US worship you may use potatoes as decoration and in other ways. Plan ahead what you will do with the potatoes after the service: distribute them to worshipers, donate them to a homeless shelter or food bank that is set up to receive and use them. Organise an intergenerational team to deliver donations.

(3) The Children's week focus is on the possibility that the potato can be part of the solution for a hungry world. Consider having a special emphasis on any projects you already have in place to provide food and assistance to people in need in your congregation, your community or the wider world. Suggest that people bring as their 'offerings' either food products or monetary contributions for these projects.

You might consider raising funds for your hunger project by compiling and selling a 'Favourite Potato Recipes' booklet or providing an after-service potato lunch and asking for a donation or charging a small fee.

## WORSHIP SPACE

This worship can be very informal. Consider holding it in your hall rather than your formal worship area.

Having people seated at tables (ie café style) would allow various elements of the worship to be done in small/family groups. The service can be held in a regular pews-facing-the-front configuration.

## VISUAL ARTS

The old saying 'one picture is worth a thousand words' reminds us of the importance of the visual aspects of worship.

The appearance of your worship area is a big aspect of hospitality, helping guests and regular worshipers feel that this is an interesting and inviting place to be.

Visual arts can enhance various aspects of the service by illustrating what is presented and discussed.

The obvious visual theme for this service is the potato — not the most visually appealing of foods. It presents your visual arts team with a challenge, but not an impossible task:

Consider

- using the 'Potatoes 'R' Us' logo in advertising: invitations, handouts, a banner outside your church, and/or as a banner on the front of your worship table or altar
- gathering orange mesh or hessian 'potato bags' and putting them on tables or draping them on the end of pews
- using piles of potatoes instead of flowers
- displaying potato posters. Check with your local greengrocer or school or make your own.

## MUSIC

Most of the worship music will be congregational singing that allows the participation of all worshipers. Be aware, however, that some visitors (and members) may not be familiar or comfortable with, the practice of congregational singing. Invite people to sing when they are comfortable doing so, or to just listen.

Choose songs with lyrics that relate to the theme of worship and music that reflects and helps to create the mood. Include traditional hymns as well as contemporary songs. For a Children's Week worship be sure to include some songs written with children in mind.

Consider ways of involving children too young to read or sing the words, eg

- teach actions (or Auslan signs) for some key words in the song and ask everyone to do the actions as they sing
- teach one or two lines that are repeated so everyone can sing them
- give children a percussion instrument to play or a flag to wave during a song.

You will not find many — if any — 'potato' songs in your worship music resources. Choose worship songs that relate to themes that you discover as you 'consider the potato'.

There is at least one secular potato song that you can use: 'Potato Song' by Cheryl Wheeler ('They're red, they're white, they're brown'). Google 'potato song + Cheryl Wheeler' to find words and music and a clever animated version on uTube.

'Hot Potatoes' by The Wiggles, which your children may know, isn't really about potatoes.

Dance, either choreographed movement to song or an interpretive performance could be considered as one of the music-related aspects of worship. Consider getting kids (or, better still, everyone) to do the 'mashed potato' dance to a song.

Small congregations, or congregations that do not have strong musical leadership, may choose to have the congregation sing with CDs or other electronic music.

## WORSHIP LEADERS

If this service is being held in connection with Children's Week/Children's Sunday, it would be appropriate to have children in as many worship leadership roles as possible. Your priest/pastor/minister or regular lay leader may serve as the primary worship leader, with children leading specific segments under the worship leader's supervision.

## SERMON

In all-age worship the sermon should be an all-age sermon. This means it's short and simple — no more than three points. Stories, illustrations and dialogue can be helpful.

It's good to follow the adage: first tell people what you are going to say, say it, then tell them what you said. If you do each step in a different, engaging way, people of all ages are likely to remember the message.

The obvious theme for a sermon is 'Consider the potato', developing one or more of the texts or concepts on this page.

If the sermon is for 'adults only', provide a theme-related activity for children to do during the sermon, either sitting with their families in the worship area or in a special area of their own.

If children do a separate activity, allow a time for them to share what they have done with the older worshippers.

For some activity ideas for children, see [www.potatoes.com/Educational\\_Kids.cfm](http://www.potatoes.com/Educational_Kids.cfm) and download the workbook [www.britishpotato.co.uk/children/](http://www.britishpotato.co.uk/children/) click on 'colouring sheets' for a picture of a potato plant [www.internationalyearofthepotato.ie/](http://www.internationalyearofthepotato.ie/) click on 'Kids'.

Using potatoes for crafts, eg making potato prints or potato people, may seem like an obvious choice. However, there is an ethical concern about using food for purposes other than food — particularly when we are concerned with hungry people.

## REHEARSAL

Because this worship service is different from your usual worship pattern, a rehearsal is necessary. A complete walk-through will pinpoint any logistical problems, allow the worship leader/s to fine-tune instructions for the congregation and ensure that the service itself runs smoothly.

Some churches find it best to have this rehearsal in conjunction with a regular band or choir practice.

Use rehearsal time as an opportunity to pray together and to remind participants of the awesome privilege and task they have in leading worship.

## THEMES AND BIBLE TEXTS

Here are some 'consider the potato' ideas to get you started.

The word *potato* is not mentioned in the Bible. There were no potatoes in Bible times in the areas where the Bible was written.

The exception is in the *Message* translation, which uses the 'potatoes' colloquially:

- 'Small potatoes' are something insignificant, in 2 Samuel 16:11 and 2 Corinthians 4:16.
- 'Peeling potatoes' is an insignificant job, in Luke 12:42.

- 'Potato peelings' are 'garbage', in 1 Corinthians 4:9.

These references to the potato's insignificance point to the Bible theme of God's choosing and using the humble things of this world to do his work; of Jesus placing a child at the centre of his circle of care; of Jesus coming to save the lost and 'thrown away' of society.

- Potatoes, like people, are God's creation.
- Potatoes, like people, come in many sizes and shapes with skin of various colours, yet all potatoes have nutritional value.
- Each potato, like each person, is a unique creation.
- Potatoes are a way God provides food for people; a demonstration of God's love and care.
- A potato's value is in giving itself away, either dying to provide food for other living creatures or dying to produce more potatoes.

### 'FAITH LIKE POTATOES'

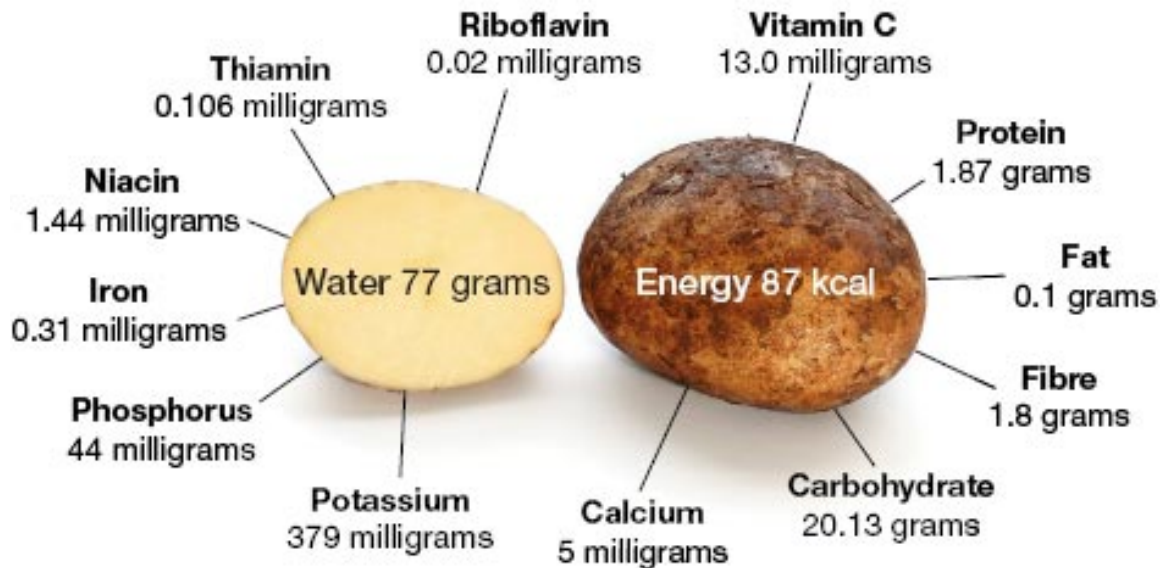
A famous American lecturer used to tell his students that they needed faith like potatoes. He meant that their faith needed to have flesh and it needed substance. As Hebrews 11:1 says, '*Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not yet seen.*'

This concept became the title for a book (1998) and then a film (2006) that trace the faith journey of Angus Buchan, a man who, like his potatoes, grows his faith, unseen until the harvest. Buchan was a Zambian farmer of Scottish heritage. Political unrest and racially charged land reclaims, forced him to leave his farm. With his family Buchan moves to KwaZulu Natal, South Africa. With nothing more than a caravan on a patch of land, and help from his foreman, Simeon Bhengu, the Buchan family struggle to settle in a new country. Angus' manic quest for material success is slowly transformed into a wild love for God and people, as he wrestles with faith, hope, natural disasters and tragic personal loss.

This film is rated M. The DVD is available from Christian Book shops. (for more, see [www.faitlikepotatoes.com](http://www.faitlikepotatoes.com) )

# POTATO FACTS

## THE HUMBLE SPUD — THE WORLD'S HIDDEN TREASURE



(PER 100 G, AFTER BOILING IN SKIN AND PEELING BEFORE CONSUMPTION)  
SOURCE: UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE, NATIONAL NUTRIENT DATABASE

The United Nations has named 2008 the International Year of the Potato, in recognition of its potential to feed the world's growing population.

**The potato** originated some 8,000 years ago in the Andes region of South America. It is now an integral part of the global food system, grown in more than 125 countries around the world. A billion people eat potatoes every year.

**The potato** is a herbaceous annual that grows up to 100 cm (40 inches) tall and produces a tuber — also called potato — so rich in starch that it ranks as the world's fourth most important food crop, after maize, wheat and rice.

The potato belongs to the Solanaceae family of flowering plants, along with at least 1,000 other species, including tomato and eggplant.

There's a great diversity of potato — 5,000 different types.

**The potato** is rich in carbohydrates, making it a good source of energy. Potatoes have the highest protein content in the family of root and tuber crops, and the protein is of a fairly high quality, with an amino-acid pattern that is well matched to human requirements. A single medium-sized potato contains about half the recommended daily intake of vitamin C and a fifth of the recommended daily potassium.

**The potato** is a moderate source of iron, and its high vitamin C content promotes iron absorption. It is a good source of vitamins B1, B3 and B6 and minerals such as potassium, phosphorus and magnesium. It contains folate, pantothenic acid and riboflavin. Potatoes also contain dietary antioxidants, which may play a part in preventing diseases related to ageing, and dietary fibre, which benefits health.

**The potato** is low in fat. Potatoes are important in many diets, but need to be balanced with other vegetables and whole grain foods.

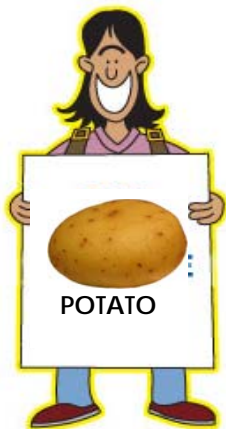
# KING OF THE GARDEN

A skit based — loosely — on 1 Samuel 16.

This skit picks up the theme 'God sees what's in your heart' of the story of Samuel anointing David. It transposes the story into a garden and the selection of the 'lowly' potato as the crop with the potential of combating malnutrition in the world.

## CHARACTERS

- Offstage voice
- Samuel, the ambassador, wears a suit, needs a briefcase with a crown in it
- Jesse, the gardener, wears work clothes, needs a hoe
- Almond
- Orange
- Grape
- Tomato
- Bean
- Cabbage
- Pumpkin
- Potato



Plant costumes

can be sandwich

board posters with pictures of the plant.

All 'plants' are written as masculine (he/his) but can be either gender.

## SCENE 1

### SAMUEL'S ROOM

*Samuel is alone. He reacts as he hears the off-stage voice of the VOICE of Truth.*

**VOICE:** Samuel.

**SAMUEL** (*looks around, then up*): Yes, Sir.

**VOICE:** The old King of the Garden is no longer able to provide food for my people. I refuse to let him be king any longer.

**SAMUEL:** But . . .

**VOICE:** Don't feel sorry for him. Go and visit a gardener named Jesse. I've chosen one of his plants to be my new king.

**SAMUEL:** What if the old king finds out and tries to have me killed?

**VOICE:** Just tell everyone you're planning a party. Invite Jesse to come and bring his plants. When I show you which one I have chosen, you will crown him king.

**SAMUEL:** Yes, Sir. (*He picks up his briefcase and walks off stage.*)

## SCENE 2

### JESSE'S GARDEN

*JESSE is in the garden, leaning on a hoe.*

**SAMUEL** *approaches him.*

**JESSE** (*suspiciously*): Is this a friendly visit?

**SAMUEL:** Yes, it is. I've come to organise a party. Go get your plants ready.

**JESSE** *walks off.*

**SAMUEL** *wanders around, humming to himself.*

**JESSE** *returns with* **ALMOND, ORANGE, GRAPE, TOMATO, BEAN, CABBAGE, and PUMPKIN**

**JESSE** (*to Samuel*): Here they are.

**SAMUEL:** And an excellent crop they appear to be.

**JESSE** (*pushing ALMOND forward*): Yes, I'm particularly pleased with Almond. Notice his firm strong shell. Everybody loves Almond.

**ALL PLANTS TOGETHER:** Amazing Almond!

**SAMUEL** (*moves aside and speaks to himself*): Almond has to be the chosen one.

**VOICE:** Samuel.

**SAMUEL** (*looking upward*): Yes, sir.

**VOICE:** Samuel, don't think Almond is the one just because he's attractive and popular. He isn't the one I've chosen.

**SAMUEL** (*returning to the Jesse*): Please introduce me to the rest.

**JESSE** (*pushing ORANGE forward*): This is Orange: perfectly round; gorgeous colour, don't you think.

**ALL PLANTS TOGETHER:** Outstanding orange!

**SAMUEL** (*moves a few steps aside and looks up*): Nice one?

**VOICE:** Not that one. People judge others by what they look like, but I judge by what's inside.

**SAMUEL** (*returns to Jesse*): And the others?

**JESSE** (pushing GRAPE forward): Another nice colour. Notice how Grape blends with the others in the bunch, yet stands out by himself.

**ALL PLANTS TOGETHER:** Glorious grape!

**SAMUEL:** (*moves a few steps aside and looks up*): Grape?

**VOICE:** Not that one.

**SAMUEL** (*returns to Jesse*): The others?

**JESSE** (*pushing TOMATO forward*): Tomato has a beautiful round shape and such rich red colour.

**ALL PLANTS TOGETHER:** Tempting tomato!

**SAMUEL:** (*moves aside, looks up*): Tomato?

**VOICE:** No.

**SAMUEL** *shrugs to indicate that he might have expected that response and returns to Jesse.*

**SAMUEL:** What else have you got?

**JESSE** (*pushing BEAN forward*): Here's a bit of a change. Bean is long and green with a nice curve.

**ALL PLANTS TOGETHER:** Beautiful bean!

**SAMUEL** *moves a step aside, looks up. Shakes his head, anticipating the answer. Shrugs slightly. Returns to Jesse.*

**SAMUEL:** There's more, isn't there?

**JESSE** (*pushing CABBAGE forward*): There certainly is. Look at this big Cabbage with ruffled light green leaves.

**ALL PLANTS TOGETHER:** Colossal cabbage!

**SAMUEL** (*steps aside and looks up. Says hopefully*): Cabbage?

**VOICE:** No.

**SAMUEL** *shakes his head and returns.*

**SAMUEL:** Was that all?

**JESSE** (*pushing PUMPKIN forward*): The biggest and best for last — Pumpkin.

**ALL PLANTS TOGETHER:** Powerful Pumpkin!

**SAMUEL** (*starts to say: You know, Jesse . . .*) *but is cut off by a stern*

**VOICE:** Sam-u-e!

**SAMUEL** *looks around to see if anyone else heard. They apparently did not. He moves to the far side of the stage.*

**SAMUEL** (*looking down, sheepishly*): Sorry, Sir. I just assumed . . .

**VOICE:** That's never a wise thing to do. In this case it could have been disastrous. Pumpkin is not the one.

**SAMUEL:** But . . .

**VOICE:** Not Pumpkin, nor Cabbage, nor Bean, nor Tomato, nor Grape, nor Orange, nor Almond. I have chosen another. Ask him.

**SAMUEL** *goes back to the group and looks at each of the plants.*

**SAMUEL:** Do you have another?

**JESSE:** No.

**SAMUEL:** No other?

**JESSE** (*hesitantly*): Well, yes, actually. There is Potato. But he's buried underground. You don't want to see him, do you?

**SAMUEL:** Dig him up. We can't have a party without him.

**JESSE** *departs.*

**SAMUEL** wanders around chatting with the crops.

**JESSE** *returns, pushing POTATO in front of him, desperately brushing dirt off of him.*

**ALL PLANTS TOGETHER:** Pathetic Potato!

**VOICE:** He's the one!

**SAMUEL** (*rushes to the side and looks up*): Potato?

**VOICE:** Yes, Potato! I have looked on the inside. Potato has the potential to feed all my people. He will be the King of my Garden. Go. Tell them.

**SAMUEL** *removes a crown from his case and goes back to the group.*

*Putting one arm around Jesse and the other around Potato, he leads them off stage saying:*

Have I got something to tell you!



## SAMPLE WORSHIP PLAN

### WORSHIP OUTLINE

#### ARRIVAL

- 1) INVOCATION START OF WORSHIP  
SONG: for beginning of worship
- 2) CHILDREN'S SUNDAY / YEAR OF THE POTATO  
SONG: about potatoes
- 3) POTATO'S PURPOSE  
SONG: about Christian life
- 4) STORIES FROM THE BIBLE  
SONG: about Jesus
- 5) COMMITMENT / OFFERING  
SONG: for offering
- 6) PRAYER
- 7) SENDING OUT / BLESSING  
SONG: for end of worship

#### FOOD & GAMES

### SERVICE NOTES

*A potato counting rhyme ties together the various elements of this service and encourages the participation of people of all ages:*

One potato, two potato, three potato, four  
Five potato, six potato, seven potato, more!

*On a table at the front (or the centre, if you are sitting in a circle, display seven large potatoes (or seven bags/baskets of potatoes, or seven papier-mâché models of potatoes, or seven pictures of potatoes).*

*You may arrange seven chairs for the Spuds near the potatoes.*

*There is no sermon, as such in this worship plan. There are, however, a number of places where the preacher can make interpretive comments.*

### PARTICIPANTS

**HOSPITALITY TEAM** is responsible for greeting worshipers and attending to their physical comfort and safety during the service. They will also provide after-service food and activities.

**WORSHIP LEADER** leads worshipers and other participants through the service. The worship leader may give responsibility for leading specific parts of the service to other people.

**TECH TEAM** is responsible for organising, coordinating and operating any technical audio and or visual aspects of the service.

**MUSIC TEAM** is responsible for coordinating and presenting musical aspects of the service and leading congregational worship.

**SPUDS** are seven children (or seven people of various ages). They demonstrate and lead the counting rhyme and may have other roles in the service. Alternatively a clown, 'Spud', may take on this role.

**POTATO EXPERT** could be:

- *a child or teen who has done a research or practical project about potatoes*
- *a farmer/gardener who grows potatoes*
- *a nutritionist who can talk about the value of potatoes*
- *an older person who recalls the World War II 'Potato Pete — dig for victory' campaign in the UK.*

**BIBLE READERS (4)** read modified Bible passages from this script; but hold the script in a large Bible to indicate that the readings come from the Bible.

**PRAYER LEADER** may lead prayers for others and for the congregation in your usual way.

# THE SERVICE SCRIPT

Spoken 'dialogue' is in plain type,  
comments and instructions are in italic.

## ARRIVAL

**HOSPITALITY TEAM** *greet people as they arrive and shows them to seats.*

**TECH TEAM** *may show photos of children and/or photos of potatoes.*

**MUSIC TEAM** *plays songs that will be used in the service, or other music.*

*When it's time to start, they play an attention-getting chord or riff.*

**SPUD/S** *stand beside the displayed potatoes. They demonstrate the counting rhyme, pointing to one potato for each number.*

One potato, two potato, three potato, four;  
Five potato, six potato, seven potato, more!  
*On 'more' they point to a WORSHIP LEADER.*

## POTATO ONE

### **INVOCATION / START OF WORSHIP**

**WORSHIP LEADER:** Thanks, spuds. You can be seated.

Good morning. Welcome to this special worship service, everyone.

God made us, God loves us, God is with us here today.

We have come together here to worship God: to say that God is number one in our lives.

We're worshipping God who relates to us as our Father and creator; Jesus our Saviour; and our guiding Spirit.

Potato One has to do with God. Let's sing a song about worshipping God.

### **SONG**

The **MUSIC TEAM** leads the congregation in singing a start-of-worship' song, eg

- 'We come by ones' (Leigh Newton) #146 in *As One Voice for Kids*
- 'This is the day that the Lord has made' #2 in *All Together Now*
- 'All things bright and beautiful' #63 in *Sing to Jesus*

At the conclusion of the song, *they play an attention-getting chord or riff.*

**SPUD/S** *stand for the counting rhyme:*

One potato, two potato, three potato, four;  
Five potato, six potato, seven potato, more!

*On 'more' they point to the WORSHIP LEADER.*

## POTATO TWO

### **CHILDREN'S SUNDAY**

**WORSHIP LEADER:** You have probably already realised that we are having a special worship celebration today.

Potato Two is about two things we are celebrating.

First of all, we are celebrating Children's Sunday in the national Children's Week. This is an annual chance for us to celebrate childhood and the children among us who have talents, skills, abilities, attitudes and feelings to share with us.

One thing that children — no matter how young they are — can do is to receive and give hugs.

Have you had a hug today? Maybe you live in a busy household and didn't take time for a hug. Maybe you live alone and don't get many hugs. Whatever your situation, now is the time for you children to give a grownup (or two or three) a hug and for you grownups to give a child (or two or three children) a hug.

If you're *really* uncomfortable with hugs, you could shake hands or give high-fives instead.

**MUSIC TEAM** *can play some quiet music.*

**SPUD/S** *can take the lead, moving among the congregation and hugging people.*

**WORSHIP LEADER:** Wow, I feel better already. Thanks, kids. It's great to be here with you.

## **YEAR OF THE POTATO**

**WORSHIP LEADER:** Each year Children's Week focuses on a theme designated by the United Nations as a 'The International Year of 'something'. 2008 is the year of . . .

*Point to the SPUD/S, who respond*

**SPUD/S:** . . . the potato!

**WORSHIP LEADER:** *may call on an expert to speak briefly about potatoes or the worship leader can interview the expert.*

*Alternatively talk about some interesting POTATO FACTS from page 5.*

### **SONG**

The **MUSIC TEAM** leads the congregation in

singing 'Potato Song' by Cheryl Wheeler, from the web.

At the conclusion of the song, *they play an attention-getting chord or riff.*

**SPUD/S** stand for the counting rhyme:

One potato, two potato, three potato, four;  
Five potato, six potato, seven potato, more!

*On 'more' they point to the WORSHIP LEADER.*

## **POTATO THREE**

### **POTATO PURPOSES**

**WORSHIP LEADER:** Potato three is three things potatoes do.

*Hold up a potato. What do you suppose a potato like this is meant to do?*

*Get some brainstorming ideas from the group OR simply go on to . . .*

What it boils down to (no pun intended) is that a potato is designed to do three things.

- 1) Be the best potato it can be: not try to be an onion or a strawberry.
- 2) Help people: feed them
- 3) Make more potatoes: When a potato is planted, its eyes grow into more potatoes.

Now, it seems to me that pretty well sums up what we Christians are intended to do.

- 1) Be the best follower of Jesus we can be
- 2) Help people in any way we can
- 3) Make more Christians by being the best follower of Jesus we can be, by helping people any way we can and by telling people about Jesus.

### **SONG**

The **MUSIC TEAM** leads the congregation in singing a song about christian living, eg

- 'Praise him... all you little children' #46 in *Sing to Jesus*
- 'The whole world is in God's hands' (traditional) #47 in *As One Voice for Kids* [add a potato verse to this one]
- 'We plough the field and scatter' (Clausus/Campbell) #59 in *The Australian Hymn Book*

At the conclusion of the song, *they play an attention-getting chord or riff.*

**SPUD/S** stand for the counting rhyme:

One potato, two potato, three potato, four;  
Five potato, six potato, seven potato, more!

*On 'more' they point to the WORSHIP LEADER.*

## **POTATO FOUR**

### **STORIES FROM THE BIBLE**

**WORSHIP LEADER:** Potato four is four stories from the Bible.

The word 'potato' is not mentioned in the Bible because there were no potatoes in Bible times in the areas where the Bible was written.

However, the Bible does have some stories about other growing things that we can use for our potato theme.

**FIRST BIBLE READER:** The very beginning of the Bible tells us that God created everything. He made it from nothing. Here's what the Bible says:

#### **The Story of Creation (Genesis 1)**

1 In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth . . .

11 God said, 'I command the earth to produce all kinds of plants, including fruit trees and grain [and potatoes].' And that's what happened.

12 The earth produced all kinds of vegetation. God looked at what he had done, and it was good . . .

27 God created humans to be like himself; he made men and women.

28 God gave them his blessing and said . . .

29 I have provided all kinds of fruit and grain for you to eat

30 And I have given the green plants as food for everything else that breathes. These will be food for animals, both wild and tame, and for birds.

31 God looked at what he had done. All of it was very good!

**WORSHIP LEADER:** From that part of the Bible we learn that:

- God made potatoes — and us
- Potatoes are good — so are we
- God gave potatoes to people to eat.

*Display these concepts on a screen or chart.*

**WORSHIP LEADER** or **PREACHER** may expand briefly on these concepts.

**SECOND BIBLE READER:** In the second part of the Bible we find stories about Jesus: what Jesus did and what he said. Here's what the Bible says:

#### **Consider the lilies (Luke 12)**

22 Jesus said to his disciples . . .

27 'Look how the wild flowers grow! They don't work hard to make their clothes. But I tell you that Solomon with all his wealth

wasn't as well clothed as one of these flowers.

28 God gives such beauty to everything that grows in the fields even though it is here today and thrown into a fire tomorrow [like potatoes]. Won't he do even more for you?

**WORSHIP LEADER:** From that part of the Bible we learn that:

- God takes care of potatoes — and us  
*Display this key concept on a screen or chart.*

This story about Jesus also shows me that it's OK to compare ourselves with potatoes: to look at potatoes and see what they teach us about God and about ourselves.

**WORSHIP LEADER** or **PREACHER** *may expand briefly on this concept.*

**THIRD BIBLE READER:** Here's another Bible story where we can learn from potatoes.

### **Vine and branches (John 15)**

Jesus said:

4 'Stay joined to me, and I will stay joined to you. Just as a branch cannot produce fruit unless it stays joined to the vine, you cannot produce fruit unless you stay joined to me.'

**WORSHIP LEADER:** A potato grows like an underground vine. From this part of the Bible we learn that

- New potatoes need to be connected to the seed potato — we need to be connected to Jesus.

**WORSHIP LEADER** or **PREACHER** *may expand briefly on this concept.*

**FOURTH BIBLE READER:** In our last story from the Bible Jesus tells us something about himself and about us. He says:

### **Jesus death (John 12:24-26)**

24 'I tell you for certain that a grain of wheat that falls on the ground will never be more than one grain unless it dies. But if it dies, it will produce lots of wheat.

25 If you love your life, you will lose it. If you give it up in this world, you will be given eternal life.'

**WORSHIP LEADER:** If Jesus had been talking about potatoes, he could have said, 'Unless a potato that falls on the ground dies, it will never be more than one potato, but if it dies, it will produce lots of potatoes'.

**WORSHIP LEADER** or **PREACHER** *expands briefly on this concept:*

- *Jesus was like a potato, dying to give life to others: to us.*

- *Because of what Jesus has done for us, we can give up the things this earth values to follow Jesus, and he will give us new life with him forever.*

### **SONG**

The **MUSIC TEAM** leads the congregation in singing a song about Jesus, eg

- 'What a friend we have in Jesus' ('adapted) #117 in *As One Voice for Children*
- 'I believe in Jesus' (Nelson) #53 in *Praise and Worship*
- 'The Power of your Love' (Bullock) #621 in *Praise and worship*

At the conclusion of the song, *they play an attention-getting chord or riff.*

**SPUD/S** *stand for the counting rhyme:*

One potato, two potato, three potato, four;  
Five potato, six potato, seven potato, more!

*On 'more', they point to the WORSHIP LEADER.*

### **POTATO FIVE**

#### **COMMITMENT / OFFERING**

**WORSHIP LEADER:** We've heard about potatoes and about Jesus. It's time to think about how we can care for others the way Jesus cares for people. It's time to think how we can share the potatoes and other wealth that God has given us with people who don't have enough.

**WORSHIP LEADER** *can invite a child or group to tell about a plan for sharing with hungry people in the community or the wider world. It would be good if the presentation is accompanied by visuals or presented dramatically.*

**WORSHIP LEADER** *thanks the presenter/s and announces the offering, explaining how it will be collected or presented. Be sure to let visitors know that they are not required to give an offering.*

*Depending on the concern/project you are focusing on, and the information you have provided prior to the service, this may be a time when people*

- *complete a pledge card, indicating their contribution plan*
- *bring forward a special monetary offering*
- *bring forward a food offering.*

### **SONG**

*As the offering is given, the MUSIC TEAM leads the singing of an offering song, eg*

- 'Wake us, O Lord, to human need' (Phyllis Kersten) sung to *Tallis Cannon*
- 'Praise and thanksgiving, Father we offer' (Albert Bayly) #569 in *The Australian Hymn Book*
- 'Thank you, Lord' (Stack/Sutherland) #595 in *Praise and Worship* [child friendly words]

At the conclusion of the offering and the song, *they play an attention-getting chord or riff.*

**SPUD/S** stand for the counting rhyme:

One potato, two potato, three potato, four;  
five potato, six potato, seven potato, more!

On 'more' they point to the **WORSHIP LEADER**.

## **POTATO SIX**

### **PRAYER**

**WORSHIP LEADER:** Potato six is prayer.

**WORSHIP LEADER** (or a PARENT from the congregation) *talks about mealtime prayers in homes as a way of remembering God's goodness to us and remembering our responsibility to share with others.*

*Distribute MEALTIME POTATO PRAYERS (see page 14). Encourage people to use the potato prayer at home each day.*

**PRAYER LEADER** *can lead prayers for others and for yourselves in your usual manner or use the general prayer outline on page 131.*

### **SONG**

The **MUSIC TEAM** leads the congregation in a close-of-worship song, eg

- 'God, whose farm is all creation' (John Arlott) #94 in *Australian Hymn Book*
- 'Take my life and let it be' (Frances Havergal) #520 in *Australian Hymn Book*
- 'God gives great things every day' #109 in *All Together Again*
- or, just for fun: 'See ya later, chip Potata' (Chris Jaensch) in *JAM (Jesus and Me)*.

At the conclusion of the song, *they play an attention-getting chord or riff.*

**SPUD/S** stand and encourage everyone to join in the counting rhyme:

One potato, two potato, three potato, four;  
five potato, six potato, seven potato, more!

On 'more' they point to the **WORSHIP LEADER**.

## **POTATO SEVEN**

### **SENDING OUT / BLESSING**

**WORSHIP LEADER:** We've come to the conclusion of our Children's Sunday Potato Worship. Thanks for sharing in this special time with us.

But there is more. [*Explain the lunch or games that are planned for after the service.*]

And . . .

God — who makes potatoes and you — goes with you as you leave this place. May God bless all you think and say and do in the coming days. Amen.

### **SONG**

As people leave, the **MUSIC TEAM** plays a reprise of the final song.

## **MORE**

### **FOOD & GAMES**

The **HOSPITALITY TEAM** provides a potato-based meal.

Have copies of the MEALTIME POTATO PRAYER on tables and encourage people to say the prayer before eating; or lead the whole group in saying the prayer.

The **HOSPITALITY TEAM** organises some games for people of all ages.

See [www.youthwork-practice.com/games/potato-applegames.html](http://www.youthwork-practice.com/games/potato-applegames.html) for some great game suggestions.

# GENERAL PRAYER

This prayer is based on the pattern for prayer that Jesus taught in **THE LORD'S PRAYER**.  
Use the version of the prayer that is familiar to your congregation.

*The words from the Lord's Prayer can be projected onto the screen, one phrase at a time when they are to be read. The whole congregation reads these phrases.*

*The SPUD/S introduce each part of the prayer with their own ideas or the following words.*

**WORSHIP/PRAYER LEADER:** We're going to pray a prayer that Jesus taught us. Listen to some thoughts about the prayer, and then read the words together when they come on the screen.

1. God, we know that you are the mighty creator of all things. You love and care for everything you made — including potatoes and us. You loved us so much that Jesus told us we can come to you as a loving father. Thank you for hearing our prayer.  
We pray:

## OUR FATHER IN HEAVEN

2. Father God, your name stands for you. You are good and great and powerful and loving, so your name is good and great and powerful and loving. Help us to treat it that way: to use your name to pray to you and to talk about you. Forgive us for any time we have used your name in disrespectful ways.  
We pray:

## HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME

3. Father God, you ultimately rule over everything you made — including potatoes and us. Jesus came among us to show us what life is like when we let you be in charge. Help us stay attached to you the way new potatoes are attached to the seed potato.  
We pray:

## YOUR KINGDOM COME

4. Father God, help us to understand your will and to do what you want us to do. Please forgive us for times we have acted as if our own will was more important than yours. Today we pray specifically to know and do your will about [list particular concerns of the day].  
We pray:

## YOUR WILL BE DONE, ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN

5. Father God, you provide food for every living creature. In the world today there are people who are starving. We know that the problem is not with your provision, but with our distribution. Help us to remember the needs of others when we enjoy all the good things you give us — not just bread (and potatoes), but more food, more clothing, more entertainment, more luxuries than we ever need. Help us to accept your gifts thankfully. Show us what you want us to do to feed people who are not getting their fair share.  
We pray:

## GIVE US TODAY OUR DAILY BREAD

6. Father God, we thank you for guiding us. Thank you for Jesus' example, for the teaching in the Bible, for teachers and mentors who help us know how we should live. Help us remember this guidance when people and forces and events in our lives tempt us to turn from your way.  
We pray:

## LEAD US AWAY FROM TEMPTATION

7. Father God, we thank you for Jesus who has delivered us from every evil force and situation in this world. His death gives new life to people like a potato being planted gives abundant new growth of new potatoes.  
We pray:

## DELIVER US FROM EVIL

**LEADER:** Finally we join in praising God:

**THE KINGDOM, POWER AND GLORY ARE YOURS  
NOW AND FOREVER.  
AMEN.**

## MEALTIME PRAYER

Use this acrostic potato prayer or another prayer created by people in your congregation.

Photocopy this sheet onto potato-coloured paper or light card

Cut out each of the prayers in rough potato shapes.

Consider laminating the potato shape prayers.

On the back of the potato shapes you can put information about any project you are supporting that involves helping hungry people in your community or overseas.

### MEALTIME PRAYER

**P**apa,  
**O**ur God in Heaven,  
we  
**T**hank you for the good things  
you give us  
**A**nd ask you to  
**T**each us to use them  
the way you want us to.  
**O**pen our  
**E**yes to  
**S**ee  
what other people need  
**Amen.**

### MEALTIME PRAYER

**P**apa,  
**O**ur God in Heaven,  
we  
**T**hank you for the good things  
you give us  
**A**nd ask you to  
**T**each us to use them  
the way you want us to.  
**O**pen our  
**E**yes to  
**S**ee  
what other people need  
**Amen.**

### MEALTIME PRAYER

**P**apa,  
**O**ur God in Heaven,  
we  
**T**hank you for the good things  
you give us  
**A**nd ask you to  
**T**each us to use them  
the way you want us to.  
**O**pen our  
**E**yes to  
**S**ee  
what other people need  
**Amen.**