



## AN INTERGENERATIONAL WORSHIP SERVICE

The United Nations has designated 2009 as The Year of Astronomy — the study of the stars.  
In this service we worship God as creator of the universe.

In Australia, the most recognizable cluster of stars in the night sky is known as the Southern Cross.  
In this service we worship God who demonstrated his love for us on a cross.

The service can be used in large or small congregations, and can be easily adapted for home use.

### NOTES

#### ALL-AGE WORSHIP

Worship is an encounter between God and God's people; a dialogue in which God speaks and people respond, both in the worship service and in their lives.

Throughout history, people have looked at the night sky and sensed God starting the dialogue in what they could see there. They have responded in various ways. One was worship.

All-age (intergenerational) worship is, first and foremost, worship. Intentionally *intergenerational* worship

- allows this dialogue to take place in a variety of ways
- focuses on a simple theme and connects that theme with the lives of the worshipers
- provides worshipers (young and old) with an experience they can remember and talk about in their homes
- encourages interaction and dialogue among people of the various generations
- takes seriously the understanding that people of all ages worship together in the body of Christ. People of all ages can also plan worship, invite people to worship, and lead 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 a special worship for people of all ages.

You may make as many copies of the notes as needed for your worship planners and leaders.

The 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 any of the ideas that are appropriate in your situation or you may use the entire sample service.

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)

For other intergenerational worship ideas see <http://mrn.sa.uca.org.au>

#### KCO CONNECTION

The Uniting Church's Kids Camp Out: KCO-at-Home, 2009, had a space theme. Talk to any members of your congregation who attended KCO as campers or leaders. They may suggest activities or ideas from KCO that can be incorporated into this service.

If people attended KCO who do not regularly worship with you, you might invite them to this worship service as a related event.

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## THEME

The theme of this service is suggested by the 2009 United Nations International Year of Astronomy (IYA 2009).



There is more about the IYA 2009 on page 11.

If a school, astronomy club, observatory or other organization in your community is planning a family observation of IYA 2009, you may want to plan your service to coordinate with that event.

Alternatively plan your own family stargazing event and invite people interested in astronomy to be involved in the event. Your worship could either be a nighttime service as part of the event or the worship could be the morning following the event.

There is more about planning a family event on page 14.

## WORSHIP PLANNING

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

Planning as an intergenerational team can be a valuable experience for all involved.

Suggested planning steps:

1. Begin with prayer, and trust God's Spirit to guide your planning.
2. Consider how the theme relates to people in your congregation and community.
3. Look through these notes to see how they can help in planning the kind of service you want to hold.
4. Use these notes and your regular worship format to develop a worship outline.
5. Flesh out the outline; consider your own people and facilities.
6. Work with worship leaders to plan details: who does what, when and how?

## INVITATION AND ADVERTISING

The first people to notify about your service are the members of your congregation. Begin early to let them in on the excitement of what is being planned. Encourage them to catch the vision of the intergenerational worship event (and the family event linked with it).

Encourage grandparents and godparents of children who do not worship regularly to see this as an opportunity to organize a special weekend with their child/children.

You may want to extend the invitation to the event to others in the community. Be sure to include the date, time and location of the service in all of your promotional material.

You might promote your worship through any other IYA 2009 events happening in your community.

You might invite everyone who comes to the service to 'bring a star' and have a show-and-tell session before the service in which people can share what they have brought. Let people be creative in their interpretation of what it means to bring a star: a student might bring a gold star sticker on a school report, a quilter might bring a star-pattern quilt, a beach-lover might bring a starfish, a

photographer might bring a photo of a starry sky.

This is a good activity for bringing together people of different generations in conversation.

## WORSHIP SPACE & VISUALS

This service lends itself to being held outdoors, 'under the stars'.

If you do plan outdoor worship, think through the special logistics, particularly lighting, seating, amplification, stage area (if it will be a large area) and weather conditions. You'll need an alternative venue in case of inclement weather, and possibly an alternative date in case of overcast conditions.

A location away from ambient street and home lighting is best for seeing the stars, but may add some safety concerns.

If you worship indoors, remember, a clean, tidy and attractive worship area can help guests and regular worshippers feel that this is an inviting place to be.

Call on people with technical and artistic skills to create an atmosphere that supports the theme of the service.

Consider special decoration, eg

- Cover windows with black plastic. Have 'stars' in the shape of the Southern Cross cut in the plastic so that the starlight shines through.
- Decorate the front of the worship area with cutout stars (insulation foil is good for this). Stars can be attached to the wall in the form of the Southern Cross or lots of stars can be suspended from the ceiling.
- Search the Internet for appropriate images to project on the screen if you have this facility.
- In preparation for the service, children make star (wands). Children (or all worshippers) could carry the wands into church in a procession at the start of the service and/or wave the wands at appropriate times during the service.

## MUSIC

Most of the music in the service will be congregational singing. All worshippers are invited to participate. However, remember that some people may not be familiar with — or comfortable with — the practice of congregational singing. Invite people to join in the singing when they are comfortable doing so, or just to listen.

Your regular instrumentalists (organist, band) lead/accompany the singing. Display song words in your usual manner.

Include traditional hymns as well as more contemporary songs and songs written with children in mind.

When using the more adult songs, explain or illustrate briefly any obscure images or language. Consider ways of involving children who are too young to read or sing the words, eg

- teach Auslan symbols or other actions for some key words in the song and ask everyone to do the actions when they come to the words in the song (See [www.auslan.org.au](http://www.auslan.org.au) for a vocabulary of signs)
- teach one or two lines that are repeated in the chorus and give a cue when everyone can join in singing these lines
- give children a percussion instrument they can play or star wands they can wave during some songs.

Small congregations, or congregations that do not have strong musical leadership, sing with CDs or other electronic music.

## SONG SUGGESTIONS

**Use at least one traditional hymn, such as:**

For stars —

- *All creatures of our God and King* (Francis of Assisi) selected verses
- *From all who dwell beneath the skies* (Watts)
- *Morning has broken* (Farjeon)
- *This is my Father's world*

For cross —

- *In the cross of Christ I glory* (Bowring)
- *When I survey the wondrous cross* (Watts)

**Some more contemporary songs to consider:**

For stars —

- *Creation stands in awe* (Bullock)
- *How great thou art* (Boberg)
- *I just want to praise the Lord* (Bullock)
- *Lord of all creation (God of wonders, beyond our galaxy)* (Byrd, Hindalong, Tomlin)
- *Lord of Creation* (Bullock)
- *Lord of the heavens* (Fisher)
- *Shout to the Lord* (Zscheck)
- *The heavens shall declare* (Bullock)

For cross —

- *At the cross* (Butler)
- *I believe in Jesus* (Nelson)
- *Jesus dying on the cross* (Simpson)

- *Lift high the cross* (Newbolt)
- *Worthy is the Lamb: Thank you for the cross, Lord* (Zschech)
- *To God be the glory* (van Alstynne)
- *We believe* (Kendrick)

### Some songs for children:

For stars —

- *And God made the sun to shine . . . (and it was so, was so)*

For cross —

- *Fairest Lord Jesus* (Munster)

### Get creative:

- The spiritual '*Were you there when they crucified my Lord?*' would definitely fit among the 'cross' songs. However you could draw on some of the discussions in Job to write your own verses about the wonder of the stars, eg

Were you there when he flung the stars in space? . . . O, it causes me to wonder, wonder, wonder . . .

- *Twinkle, twinkle little star* (the original lyrics attributed are attributed to Jane Taylor) you could add a 'Christian' verse, eg

Twinkle, twinkle, little star,  
God has placed you where you are.  
God who made your light to shine,  
He made me and all that's mine.  
Twinkle, twinkle, little star,  
You and I know what we are!

- *God gives* (Boucher) Add some 'star' verses, eg God makes shiny things.

### Recorded music

You may also use some instrumental or sung performance or recorded music in the service.

For recorded secular music check

[http://astronomy2009.us/a\\_and\\_e/music-inspired-by-astronomy//](http://astronomy2009.us/a_and_e/music-inspired-by-astronomy/)

## HOSPITALITY

Hospitality is the responsibility of all members of the congregation.

People who invite and bring people to the service have the primary responsibility for looking after their special guests.

A designated **HOSPITALITY TEAM** has responsibilities that include:

- being aware of the safety aspects of the worship space, eg location of alternate exits, location of first aid equipment, identity of people with first aid training
- greeting people as they arrive
- helping people to get settled

Pay special attention to the very young, the very old and people with handicaps. Seat them where they will be able to see/hear, but not feel conspicuous

- being alert to needs of people during the service, and assisting as required.

In a service like this one with special emphasis on worshiping as extended families, your hospitality team (and your planning team) need to be aware of the people who may be marginalised by this approach: some teens and young adults, singles, families with no children, people who are experiencing family problems and people who worship alone.

## WORSHIP LEADERS

The sample service requires:

- A **WORSHIP LEADER** who serves as host (or compere) leading worshipers through the service. The role of Worship Leader can be taken by a minister and/or layperson; an individual or two people.
- **MUSIC TEAM/SONG LEADER** who encourage and lead congregational singing along with instrumentalists and other vocalists.
- A **BIBLE READER** (or several readers of different ages) who reads the texts directly from the Bible.  
You may want to consider more visual ways of presenting the texts.
- A **PRAYER LEADER** (one or several people of different ages) who prepare and lead prayers.
- **THREE ACTORS** for a skit
- **FOUR PEOPLE** to lead the confession activity.

## SERMON

A sermon in an all-age worship service should be an all-age sermon.

This means it's short and simple — generally no more than three points. However in this service you may want to use a five-pointed star as a way of organizing five main points. Stories, illustrations and dialogue can be helpful.

If an adults-only sermon is used, you will need to organize an activity for young people to do during the sermon.

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.

Any of the 'Astronomy in the Bible' texts could be the basis of a sermon in this service.

The sample service has two very short sermons: one on each of the two main themes

- seeing the Creator in the stars
- seeing our Saviour in the cross

### **UPSIZING & DOWNSIZING**

This service can be used in large or small congregations. It can also be used in a home setting.

Each planning group will need to adapt the ideas to suit their own particular situation: the people and the facilities.

### **REHEARSAL**

Because this service will be different from your usual service, it requires careful planning. It also requires rehearsal. A complete walk-through will pinpoint any logistical problems, allow the worship leader/s to fine-tune instructions for the worshipers and ensure that the service itself runs smoothly.

Use rehearsal time as an opportunity to pray together.

- Praise God for his amazing creation and the demonstration of his love for us in the cross of Christ.
- Thank God that you, as a team, have the privilege of leading people in worship.
- Ask God to bring people to worship who need to hear the good news.
- Ask God to be with all who worship with you.
- Ask God to accept your planning and worship leading as acts of love and service to him.
- Ask God to bless your efforts and to work through what you do and say — for his glory and the benefit of all worshipers.

# ASTRONOMY IN THE BIBLE

Quotations from the Contemporary English Version unless otherwise indicated.

Although they did not have telescopes, people in Bible times were better able to observe and appreciate the stars with their naked eyes than we are in our perpetually lighted urban environments.

The Hebrews identified the stars and other heavenly bodies as part of God's creation and under God's ongoing care and control.

- *God made two powerful lights, the brighter one to rule the day and the other to rule the night. He also made the stars. Then God put these lights in the sky to shine on the earth, to rule day and night, and to separate light from darkness.* (Genesis 1:16–18)
- *I am the Lord All-Powerful. I command the sun to give light each day' the moon and stars to shine at night and ocean waves to roar. I will never forget to give those commands. . .* (Jeremiah 31:35)
- *But the LORD created the stars and put them in place. He turns darkness to dawn and daylight to darkness.* (Amos 5:8)
- *You alone are the LORD, Creator of the heavens and all the stars, Creator of the earth and those who live on it, Creator of the ocean and all its creatures. You are the source of life, praised by the stars that fill the heavens.* (Nehemiah 9:6)

The Hebrews described the wonders of the stars in poetic — rather than scientific — language.

- *God lives in the heavens above the highest stars, where he sees everything.* (Job 22:12)
- *... while morning stars sang, and angels rejoiced?* (Job 38:7)
- *Sun and moon, and all of you bright stars, come and offer praise.* (Psalm 148:3)
- *In the heavens a tent is set up for the sun. It rises like a bridegroom And gets ready like a hero eager to run a race. It travels all the way across the sky. Nothing hides from its heat.* (Psalm 19:4b-6)

God's wisdom and power are displayed in the starry heavens.

- *The heavens keep telling the wonders of God, and the skies declare what he has done.* (Psalm 19:1)

- *Look at the evening sky! Who created the stars? Who gave them each a name? Who leads them like an army? The LORD is so powerful that none of the stars are ever missing.* (Isaiah 40:26)
- *You let your glory be seen in the heavens above. . . I often think of the heavens your hands have made, and of the moon and stars you put in place. Then I ask, 'Why do you care about us humans? Why are you concerned for us weaklings?'* (Psalm 8:1a, 3,4)

Although people in other cultures worshiped stars, God forbid his people to worship the stars (or any other created thing).

- *And when you see the sun or moon or stars, don't be tempted to bow down and worship them. The LORD put them there for all the other nations to worship. But you are the LORD's people, because he led you through fiery trials and rescued you from Egypt.* (Deuteronomy 4:19)
- *I will make Jerusalem as unclean as Topheth, by filling the city with your dead bodies. I will do this because you and your kings have gone up to the roofs of your houses and burned incense to the stars in the sky, as though they were gods. And you have given sacrifices of wine to foreign gods.* (Jeremiah 19:12,13)
- *Not a trace will be found of those who worship stars from their rooftops, or bow down to the god Milcom, while claiming loyalty to me, the LORD.* (Zephaniah 1:5)

The Hebrews observed not just 'stars' in general, but identified individual stars and clusters of stars.

- . . . the stars of heaven and their constellations . . . (Isaiah 13:10, NIV)
- *The sun isn't like the moon, the moon isn't like the stars, and each star is different.* (1 Corinthians 15:41)
- *God alone stretched out the sky, stepped on the sea, and set the stars in place — the Big Dipper and Orion, the Pleiades and the stars in the southern sky.* (Job 9:8,9)

They used 'the number of stars in the sky' for quantities beyond numbering.

- *Then the LORD took Abram outside and said, 'Look at the sky and see if you can count the stars. That's how many descendants you will have.'* (Genesis 15:5)
- *The LORD our God has blessed us, and so now there are as many of us as there are stars in the sky.* (Deuteronomy 1:10)
- *There will be more descendants of David and of the priests from the Levi tribe than stars in the sky or grains of sand on the beach.* (Jeremiah 33:22)

Stars were also used as the epitome of beauty and purity.

- *My dearest. . . Your charms are more powerful than all of the stars in the heavens.* (Song of Solomon 6:4)
- *Everyone who has been wise will shine as bright as the sky above, and everyone who has led others to please God will shine like the stars.* (Daniel 12:3)

The oldest divisions of time were mainly based on the observation of the movements of the heavenly bodies.

- *God said, 'I command lights to appear in the sky and to separate day from night and to show the time for seasons, special days, and years. I command them to shine on the earth.'* (Genesis 1:14,15)

Observation of stars and other heavenly bodies led to the division of the year into months and the mapping out of the appearances of the stars into twelve portions, which received from the Greeks the name of the 'zodiac'.

Astronomical observations were also used by the Jews to fix the proper time for sacred ceremonies, the 'new moons', and the 'Passover'.

Phenomena observed in the sky were seen as indicators of what was happening or would happen among people on earth.

- *Light will disappear from the stars in the sky; the dawning sun will turn dark, and the moon will lose its glow.* (Isaiah 13:10)
- *I will cover the whole sky and every star with thick clouds, so that the sun and moon will stop shining.* (Ezekiel 32:7)
- *... 'Where is the child born to be king of the Jews? We saw his star in the east and have come to worship him'.* (Matthew 2: 2)
- *Right after those days of suffering, the sun will become dark, and the moon will no longer shine. The stars will fall, and the powers in the sky will be shake'.* (Matthew 24:29)

- *Strange things will happen to the sun, moon, and stars. The nations on earth will be afraid of the roaring sea and tides, and they won't know what to do. People will be so frightened that they will faint because of what is happening to the world. Every power in the sky will be shaken. Then the Son of Man will be seen, coming in a cloud with great power and glory.* (Luke 21:25-27)

Astrologers (including the Magi who found Jesus at Bethlehem) were knowledgeable about the signs and portents observed in the skies. But their power was limited.

- *You have worn yourself out, asking for advice from those who study the stars and tell the future month after month. Go ask them how to be saved from what will happen.* (Isaiah 47:13)

Jesus was described as the morning star (now identified as the planet Venus).

- *You, the bright morning star, have fallen from the sky!* (Isaiah 14:12)
- *I am Jesus! And I am the one who sent my angel to tell all of you these things for the churches. I am David's Great Descendant, and I am also the bright morning star.* (Revelation 22:16)

Desert nomads and sailors in Bible times relied on stars for navigation.

- *For several days we could not see either the sun or the stars. A strong wind kept blowing, and we finally gave up all hope of being saved.* (Acts 27:20)

## OTHER HEAVENLY BODIES

### THE SUN

- *The sun comes up, the sun goes down; it hurries right back to where it started from.* (Ecclesiastes 1:5)
- *I have never openly or secretly worshiped the sun or moon. Such horrible sins would have deserved punishment from God.* (Job 31:26-28)
- *Isaiah prayed, and the LORD made the shadow go back ten steps on the stairway built for King Ahaz.* ( 2 Kings 20:11) [Possibly referring to a sundial.]
- *Our LORD and our God, you are like the sun and also like a shield.* (Psalm 84:11)
- *But for you that honour my name, victory will shine like the sun with healing in its rays.* (Malachi 4:2)

- *But let everyone who loves you shine brightly like the sun at dawn.* (Judges 5:31)
- [Joshua prayed] . . . *So the sun and the moon stopped and stood still until Israel defeated its enemies.* (Joshua 10:12,13)

#### THE MOON

- *May the Lord bless their land with wonderful dew from heaven, with water from the springs below, with the best fruits that the sun brings, and with the best fruits that the moon brings.* (Deuteronomy 33:13,14, NCV)
- *You created the moon to tell us the seasons.* (Psalm 104:19)
- *I have never openly or secretly worshiped the sun or moon.* (Job 31:26,27)
- They must also give thanks and sing praises when sacrifices are offered on each Sabbath, as well as during New Moon Festivals and other religious feasts. There must always be enough Levites on duty at the temple to do everything that needs to be done. (I Chronicles 23:31)

#### THE PLANETS

When the Bible was written no one knew that the brightest 'stars' in the night sky — the wandering stars — were really the visible planets Mercury, Venus, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn.

They did not know that the heavenly bodies we know as the moon and planets of our solar system appeared brighter than the far-distant 'fixed' stars simply because they were much closer to the Sun and to the Earth than the 'real' light-emitting stars, and they were just reflecting the Sun's strong light back to us on Earth.

- *Their shameful deeds show up like foam on wild ocean waves. They are like wandering stars forever doomed to the darkest pits of hell.* (Jude 1:13)

# STAR WORDS

**ASTRO-:** A word element meaning 'star', from Greek combining form *astron*.

**-NOMY:** A final word element meaning: distribution, arrangement, management or having reference to laws or government, from the Greek word *nomos*, custom, law.

**-LOGY:** A word element based on the Greek word for 'story' or speaking about.

**ASTER:** A kind of flower with star-shaped blossoms.

**ASTERISK:** A star-shaped printing symbol (\*).

**ASTEROID:** One of several hundred star-like planetoids with orbits lying mostly between those of Mars and Jupiter.

**ASTRAL:** Pertaining to or resembling stars.

**ASTROLABE:** An instrument for taking the altitude of the sun or stars and for the solution of other problems in astronomy and navigation. Used by Greek astronomers from about 200BC and by Arab astronomers from the Middle Ages until superseded by the sextant.

**ASTROLOGER:** One who practices astrology; one who professes to foretell events by the aspects and situation of the stars.

**ASTROLOGY:** The study of the positions and aspects of celestial bodies in the belief that they have an influence on the course of natural earthly occurrences and human affairs. Said to be the earliest form of the science, astrology is now generally considered a 'pseudoscience', claiming divination by the positions of the planets and sun and moon.

**ASTRONAUT:** A person trained to pilot, navigate, or otherwise participate as a crew member of a spacecraft. The word was first used in the late 1920's.

**ASTRONAUTICS:** The science and technology of flight outside the atmosphere of earth.

**ASTRONOMER:** 1. An expert in astronomy; a scientific observer of the celestial bodies. 2. A physicist who studies astronomy. The word has been used since the middle of the 14<sup>th</sup> century.

**ASTRONOMICAL:** 1. Having to do with astronomy. 2. Very large, like the numbers used in astronomical calculations.

**ASTRONOMICAL UNIT:** A unit for measuring distance within solar systems, based on the distance from the centre of the earth to the centre of the sun (149.6 X 10<sup>9</sup> metres).

**ASTRONOMY:** 1. The branch of physics that studies celestial bodies and the universe as a whole. 2. The scientific study of matter in outer space, especially the positions, dimensions, distribution, motion, composition, energy, and evolution of celestial bodies and phenomena. 3. A system of knowledge or beliefs about celestial phenomena: *the various astronomies of ancient civilizations*.

**ASTROPHYSICS:** A branch of physics treating of the physical properties and phenomena of the celestial bodies.

**CONSTELLATION:** 1. *In Astronomy*, groups of stars to which definite names have been given, eg the Southern Cross. 2. *In Astrology* the grouping or relative positions of the stars as supposed to influence events, especially at a person's birth.

**HOROSCOPE:** 1. The aspect of the planets and stars at a given moment, such as the moment of a person's birth, used by astrologers. 2. A diagram of the signs of the zodiac based on such an aspect.

3. An astrological forecast, as of a person's future, based on a diagram of the aspect of the planets and stars at a given moment.

**STELLAR (STELLULAR):** Of or pertaining to stars, consisting of stars, star-like.

**ZODIAC:** 1. *In Astronomy*, A band of the celestial sphere that represents the path of the principal planets, the moon, and the sun. 2. *In Astrology*, this band divided into 12 equal parts called signs, each named for a constellation (Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius and Pisces). 3. A diagram or figure representing the zodiac.

## References in Shakespeare:

The fault, dear Brutus, is not in our stars,  
But in ourselves. – *Julius Caesar (Act I, scene ii)*

Not from the stars do I my judgment pluck;  
And yet methinks I have Astronomy.

But not to tell of good or evil luck,  
Of plagues, of dearths, or season's quality.

– *Sonnet XIV*

## THE SCIENCE OF THE STARS

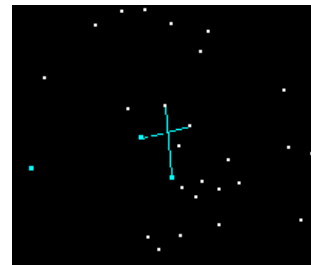
In the ancient world there was not a distinction between what we now call astronomy and astrology.

Differentiation began in the late 1400s when Astrology became the parent of modern astronomy, just as alchemy developed into modern chemistry.

# THE SOUTHERN CROSS

The constellation Crux (known as the Southern Cross) is the best known star group in the Southern Hemisphere. The group's distinctive shape is easily located because of its brightness and the close proximity of the stars to one another. Crux can be seen all year round from almost anywhere in Australia.

The Southern Cross contains five stars. The four bright stars are seen as marking the points of a Latin cross.



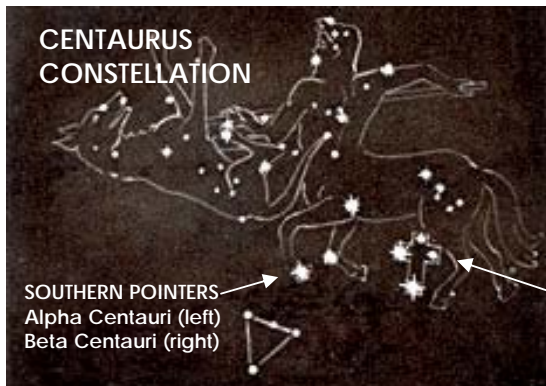
## DESCRIPTION

Like all heavenly bodies, the Southern Cross appears to alter its position in the skies. It completes a circle in the southern sky each year. In May it stands upright almost overhead to the south, in August it lies further to the west on its side pointing westwards, by November it stands on its head near the horizon and due south, and in February it lies on its side pointing to the east.

Always the head of the cross points outwards. In one night it will be seen to be making a circle in the sky like the hour hand of a clock travelling at half speed. The constellation appears to complete a revolution in about four minutes less than a day. It is possible to tell the time by the Southern Cross like a twenty-four-hour clock.

Since the Southern Hemisphere does not have an easily visible pole star, Alpha and Gamma (known as Acrux and Gacrux respectively) are commonly used to mark south. Following the line defined by the two stars for approximately 4.5 times the distance between them leads to a point close to the Southern Celestial Pole.

Alternatively, if a line is constructed perpendicularly between Alpha Centauri and Beta Centauri, the point where the above line and this line intersect marks the Southern Celestial Pole. The two stars are often referred to as the 'Pointer Stars' allowing people to easily find the top of Crux.



## CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

The Southern Cross is part of the constellation identified by the ancients as Centaurus.

Thousands of years ago the four main stars of Crux were observed and revered in the Near East. The stars were said to represent the four pagan virtues — justice, fortitude, prudence and temperance.

In the Biblical times they were just visible at the horizon. Crux was last seen from the latitude of Jerusalem at about the time of the crucifixion of Christ.

Crux is no longer visible at latitudes north of 25 degrees.

The constellation was rediscovered by European navigators and explorers in the Southern oceans who used it to steer by and also to calculate the time of day.

Crux figures in the astronomy of most southern hemisphere cultures. In Australian Aboriginal astronomy the Crux is said to be a possum sitting in a tree. The Maori name for Crux is *Te Punga* — 'the anchor'. In Tonga it is known as *Tolua* — a duck flying over, heading south. In Indonesia and Malaysia, it is known as *Buruj Pari* — the stingray.

Some of the early Christian emigrants to South America regarded it as a good omen planted before them in the sky as an emblem of their faith.

Rev Fred Nile in Australia claims: 'Almighty God has put a Christian cross in the sky above our nation — the Southern Cross in the shape of the cross of Jesus Christ.'

The Southern Cross appears on the national flags of Australia, New Zealand, Samoa, Brazil, and Papua New Guinea.

**SOUTHERN CROSS**  
Gamma Crucis (Gacrux) – upper  
Beta Crucis (Mimosa) – left  
Delta Crucis – right  
Alpha Crucis (Scrux) – lower

## IYA 2009

The International Year of Astronomy, 2009, is a year-long, worldwide, public celebration of astronomy.

The International Year of Astronomy 2009 (IYA 2009) celebrates the first astronomical use of the telescope by Galileo — a momentous event that initiated 400 years of astronomical discoveries and triggered a scientific revolution, which profoundly affected our worldview. Now telescopes on the ground and in space explore the Universe, 24 hours a day, across all wavelengths of light.

The IYA 2009 highlights global cooperation for peaceful purposes. It aims to convey the excitement of personal discovery, the pleasure of sharing fundamental knowledge about the Universe and our place in it, and the merits of the scientific method.

For more information on the International Year of Astronomy visit the website at [www.astronomy2009.org](http://www.astronomy2009.org)

### IYA 2009 IN AUSTRALIA

Activities in Australia are being coordinated by the Anglo-Australian Observatory and CSIRO Australia Telescope National Facility (Sydney). IYA in Australia has four goals:

- Raise awareness of Australia's contributions, strengths and role in astronomy
- Use astronomy to encourage people, particularly young people, to engage with the natural world and deepen their understanding of it through education
- Promote understanding of how science is done, using astronomy as an example
- Promote appreciation of the scientific and technological skills that enable discovery in astronomy and are themselves driven by its challenges.

For more information see [www.aao.gov.au](http://www.aao.gov.au)



## GALILEO

I do not feel obliged to believe that the same God who has endowed us with sense, reason, and intellect has intended us to forego their use.  
— Galileo Galilei

**Galileo Galilei** (1564-1642) was a Roman Catholic astronomer, philosopher, and mathematician in Italy.

Galileo was born in Pisa, son of a famous musician. He was educated in the Camaldolese Monastery near Florence and studied mathematics at the University of Pisa.

At the Universities of Pisa and Padua, he taught geometry, mechanics and astronomy and made significant discoveries in both pure science and

applied science (including improvement of the telescope).

In 1609 Galileo's observations of the moons of Jupiter led him to argue in favor of the sun-centered, Copernican theory of the universe against the dominant earth-centered theories.

At the time, the Roman Catholic Church believed the Copernican theory conflicted with the Bible's description of God's universe.

Galileo was told to neither advocate nor teach Copernican astronomy

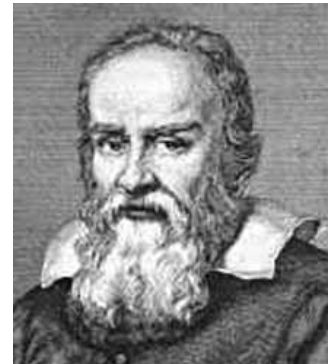
In 1633, the Inquisition placed Galileo under house arrest. He spent the rest of his life at his country house near Florence.

Refusing to abandon science, Galileo spent much of his remaining life studying the motion and strength of materials.

Galileo's books include: *The Assayer* (1621) and the *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems* (1632).

Galileo has been called the Father of Modern Science.

Today one of the world's largest and most respected telescopic observatories is located at the Vatican.



# VIEWPOINTS



**Setting:** arrange a debate setting for two speakers and a moderator. This may be a long table with three chairs or three podiums. Make sure that all three speakers have adequate amplification.

**Characters:** Moderator, Telescope and Bible.

Moderator can be addressed by his/her real name.

'Telescope' and 'Bible' could be costumed as a telescope and a Bible (or wear signs identifying them as telescope and Bible) and speak in the first person as in the script.

Alternatively, two people can be spokespeople for the telescope and the Bible. Each can hold the item they represent. Change the wording of the script to suit.

**Script:** The following script can be used as a starting point for improvisation.

**MODERATOR:** Welcome to this week's session of 'Viewpoints'. 'Viewpoints' is an opportunity to probe the ideas and concepts that shape our world.

Today, in recognition of the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Telescope, we are privileged to have two world-renown experts: Telescope (*enters, applause*) and Bible (*enters, applause*).

Each speaker will have two minutes to give us a brief personal background. Telescope first, if you please.

**TELESCOPE:** Thank you, Mr. Moderator (*or use the real name*). It's a real privilege to be with you today. It is an anniversary for me. Although telescopes have been around for a long, long time, we really came into our own 400 years ago.

In 1609 in Italy, Galileo made some modifications to existing telescopes. That allowed him to see the planets and stars more clearly than anyone had before. His observations led to the conclusion that Earth is NOT the centre of the universe. Earth is one of several planets that revolve around the Sun.

Since that time there have been many more exciting developments to telescopes and people's understanding of the universe.

**MODERATOR:** Thank you, Telescope. Now, Bible.

**BIBLE:** It's a privilege to be with all of you again. I, too, have been around for a long time. About as long as the telescope, actually. And then about 500 years ago translators and printers made me more accessible to more people. As people started using me, they discovered that people are NOT the centre of the universe. God is.

**MODERATOR:** Now, I'd like to pursue the question of 'improvements' a bit.

**BIBLE:** I don't like the word 'improvement' in my case. The first Scriptures were lots of separate, hand-written scrolls that different people wrote when they felt God was telling them to write. It's what we call 'inspiration'.

Eventually the scrolls were all brought together: first the Old Testament of the Hebrew people, then the New Testament about Jesus.

Hand-written, then printed. Translated into many languages. But always what they started out to be: God's written message for people.

**TELESCOPE:** I reckon God inspired people who invented and improved me, too. God gave them the brains they used.

**MODERATOR:** We've moved from 'improved' to 'inspired'. But both of you claim to begin with God.

**TELESCOPE:** Right.

**BIBLE:** Absolutely.

**MODERATOR:** Can we get on to how you work?

**BIBLE:** Work? How does the Bible work? Now there's a huge question. I, myself, I'm just a book. I don't 'work'. God works through me to help people see God — and themselves — more clearly.

**TELESCOPE:** That's my area. Helping people see more clearly. And I can tell you exactly how I work.

*(speaking rather quickly and precisely)* I consist of an aperture that is used to gather light and an eyepiece that is used to spread light. The larger the aperture, the more light I collect and bring to focus, and the brighter the final image.

My magnification is my ability to enlarge an image it depends on the combination of . . .

**MODERATOR** *(interrupting)*: Excuse me, I'll have to break in here. That's fascinating, Telescope, but our time is limited. Perhaps you could direct people to a web site if they want more information.

**TELESCOPE:** Just go to 'www.howstuffworks'. That's what I'd do.

**MODERATOR:** A question for each of you. Which is more important: you or what you help people see?

**TELESCOPE:** Good question. I'm a great achievement by mankind. But since I've helped people see how insignificant mankind is in the whole universal scheme — then I get to wondering. The stars and galaxies are probably more important than the telescope.

**BIBLE:** Interesting you should say that. You know, one of the people who first wrote the Bible — long, long ago, looked at the stars (without a telescope) and wondered that same thing.

But, Mr. Moderator, in answer to your question. I help people see God, and God is undeniably more significant than the Bible.

**TELESCOPE:** I'm not used just for gaining information, you know. I have practical uses. For one, I help people navigate — to find their way.

**BIBLE:** I could say almost the exact same thing. Through me, God helps people find their way through life.

**MODERATOR:** Thank you both. Another question: What is your biggest problem?

**TELESCOPE:** Interference. I have to overcome the interference of nearby lights — artificial lighting, the moon and our own sun — in order to see what lies beyond.

**BIBLE:** In some ways it's the same for me. It's interference, competing voices and ideas that sometimes interfere with people using me effectively to see God.

**MODERATOR:** Our time is coming to an end.

Let me re-cap. You've both been around for a long time. You both help people see things more clearly than they do on their own.

**Telescope:** I help people see stars — and how they operate.

**Bible:** And I help people see God who made the stars and how God loves them.

**Moderator:** So there's no conflict?

**Telescope:** None that I can see.

**Bible:** None that I can see.

**Moderator:** That is good news. Thank you for sharing your 'Viewpoints' today.

*(to audience)* That's all for today's 'Viewpoints'.

# SEEING STARS — A FAMILY NIGHT

In this Year of Astronomy it would be fun to organize a family stargazing night. You can do this as an individual family or organize an event for several families or a whole congregation. The night can be tailored to the ages and interests of the people involved, particularly the children.

Some things to consider when planning a 'seeing stars' night.

**SCHEDULING:** Watch the news or read the newspaper for the latest weather forecasts. It should not be too cloudy, windy, or humid. You should also avoid nights when the moon is very bright.

Be sure to have a back-up plan if your planned night is unsuitable.

**LOCATION:** Hold your stargazing night where it is possible to actually see the stars. If there is an observatory nearby, that would be the ideal location. Otherwise try to get away from city lights.

This will need to be organized ahead of time. Be sure to have permission if you are going on a school oval or a person's property.

**EQUIPMENT:** Try to have at least one good telescope (and someone who knows how to use it effectively).

Participants may bring any telescopes (binoculars or even cameras with telephoto lenses) that they have. They should also bring lawn chairs or blankets, bug repellent and a torch.

It's a good idea to cover the lens of the flashlight with red cellophane (red light interferes the least with night vision). Turn off the flashlight when you're not using it.

**EXPERTISE:** Try to involve an astronomer (professional or amateur) who can point out things to look for and interpret what people are seeing.

Check with a local astronomy hobby group or high school science department.

**PATIENCE:** Most things in astronomy take time. Be Patient.

Allow your eyes several minutes to start adjusting to the darkness and at least 30-45 minutes to really adjust. Your eyes will naturally become more sensitive to light as time passes.

Allow plenty of time for the instruments to adjust to the air temperature. If condensation forms on a lens, do not wipe

it off. This could scratch the lens. Let the condensation evaporate naturally.

## ACTIVITIES FOR A SINGLE FAMILY

The simplest (and possibly the most enjoyable) way of stargazing is for the family to lie on a blanket and look up at the stars. Form a 'star' with your heads together. Begin at twilight when stars are just beginning to appear.

- See who first spots various stars.
- Count how many stars you see.
- Distinguish between stars (that twinkle) and planets (that do not twinkle).
- If someone knows names of stars and planets, name them.
- Find stars you can join (like a dot-to-dot puzzle) to form letters of your names or simple shapes.
- Find the Southern Cross.
- Have a family devotion under the stars.
  - Talk about how you feel when you look at the stars.
  - Read (or say from memory) a 'star' Bible verse.
  - Praise God for what you see in the stars.
  - Thank God for the experience of looking at the stars together.
  - Pray for one another.
  - Bless one another.

It's OK if younger children fall asleep.

## ACTIVITIES FOR A LARGER GROUP

- Family groups and clusters of families can do any of the activities listed for single families.
- If you have an expert, they can share some of their knowledge about what you see in the night sky. Alternatively come prepared with a star map. Check the web site of the Astronomical Society of SA ([www.assa.org.au/observing/nightwatch](http://www.assa.org.au/observing/nightwatch)). The map is published in *The Advertiser* on the third Saturday each month.

- If you have a telescope. The expert can focus it on a particularly interesting spot in the sky and give many people an opportunity to look at that spot. If there is time, do the same for several spots.

Plan some extra activities, particularly for children.

### STAR GAMES

- **Star Jumps:** Take a break from quiet stargazing to do some star-jump exercises.
- **Ball games:** Toss a ball with a bell in it (often available from pet stores) or play any simple ball game in the dark using the bell in a ball.
- **Shadow chasing:** If the moon is bright enough to cast a shadow, try standing on one another's shadow.



### STAR CRAFT

- **Shining Stars:** Dip star-shaped sponges into white paint and press them on paper to make prints. Sprinkle glitter on the wet paint to make shining stars.
- **Night-time Surprises:** Use a white crayon or candle to draw stars on a piece of white construction paper. Press down hard with the crayon while drawing. Paint over the entire paper with black tempera thinned with water to make a wash. The stars that will show through.

### STAR SNACKS

- **Star Shapes:** Use star-shaped biscuit cutters to make star shaped biscuits OR to cut bread for fairy bread OR to cut sandwiches.
- **Space Pudding:** This is a chance to have a snack like astronauts have in a weightless environment.

Use Instant Pudding packs. Divide the pudding mix into single serves and spoon into Ziplock bags. Add milk or other ingredients as per the packet instructions.

Seal the bags carefully, then squish the ingredients to mix.

When it's all mixed, cut a small hole in the corner of the bag and suck the pudding out.

- **Moon Rocket** Make an edible rocket, eg stand half a banana upright on a plate, add apple wedges as rocket fire and baby carrots as wings.
- **Star Waffles:** If someone in your group has a star-shaped waffle iron, Scandinavian waffles would be a special treat.

### WISHING ON A STAR

There is an old tradition of wishing on the evening star, often accompanied by the rhyme:

Star light, star bright,  
first star I see tonight,  
I wish I may, I wish a might  
have the wish I wish tonight.  
I wish . . .

This star-wishing is epitomised in songs from two animated films: 'When you wish upon a star' from Disney's *Pinocchio* and 'Somewhere Out There' from Steven Spielberg's *An American Tail*.

Stargazing may be a good time to discuss the difference between wishing and praying.

Begin by asking kids what they think. Then in discussion, bring out these concepts:

- Wishing is expressing what you want. There's nothing wrong with that.
- Wishing on a star (or in a well) is talking to something God has made. It is asking that thing to do something that God did not make it to do. An inanimate object cannot grant your wish.
- Prayer is part of a relationship. It is conversation with the living, loving, all-powerful God. Prayer is telling God what you want and aligning your wishes with what God wants for you.

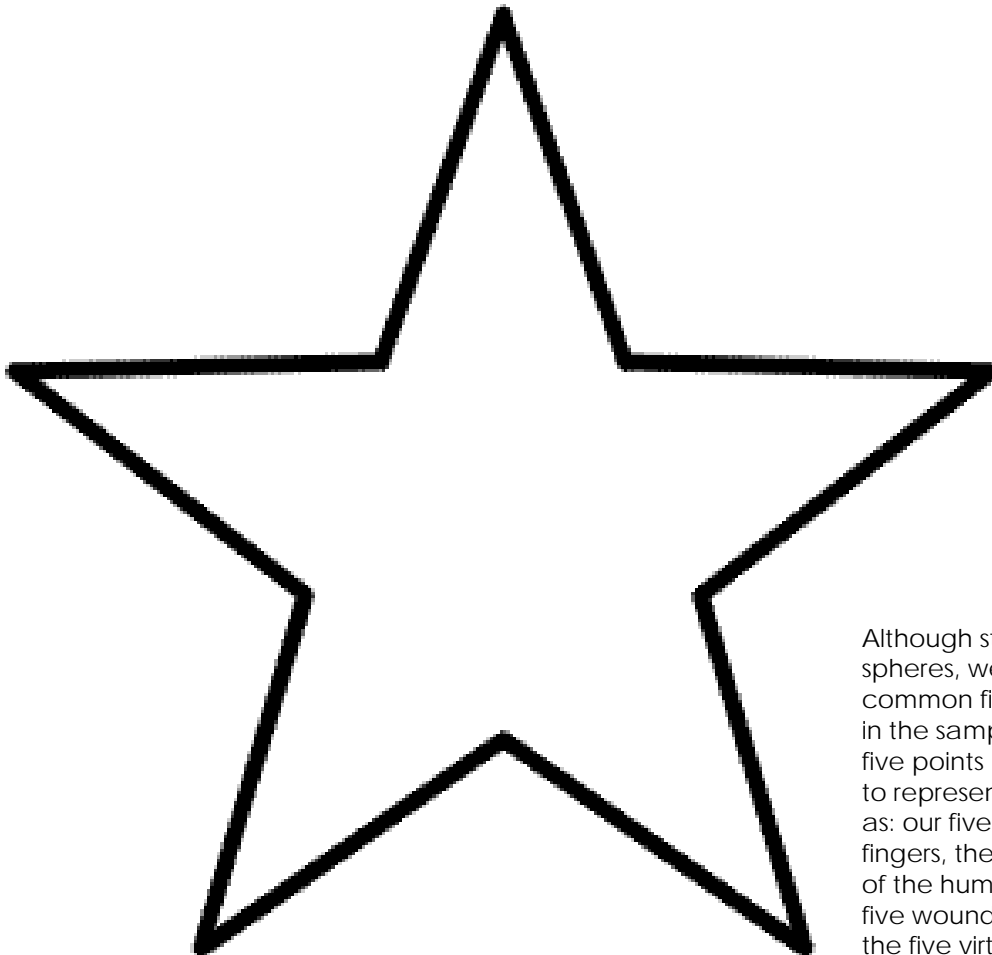
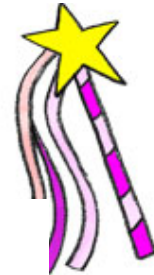
# STAR PATTERN

Use this pattern to make a template for a five-pointed star. You can fit two stars this size on an A-4 sheet.

**For the sermon activity** in the sample service, you will need a star shape printed on paper or light card for each worshiper. They may cut out their stars as they arrive for worship.

**For star wands**, as suggested in the notes on decorations...

For each wand cut two stars from coloured card. Use a skewer, chopstick or garden stake approximately 30 cm long. Tape one end of the stick to one of the stars. Place the other star over the first star and the stick. The end of the stick will be between the two stars. Join the stars by stapling them together at all five points. You may add glitter or ribbon trim.



Although stars are, in fact, spheres, we use the common five-pointed star in the sample service. The five points have been said to represent such things as: our five senses, five fingers, the five extremities of the human body, the five wounds of Christ and the five virtues of knighthood: generosity, fellowship, purity, courtesy and compassion.

Seven-pointed stars feature in the official Southern Cross design on the Australian flag. There are also star polygons with an infinite number of points.





## SAMPLE WORSHIP PLAN

This service has two distinct themes and sections:

- 1) Considering the stars and the Creator      2) Considering the cross and our Saviour.

Suggested wording for worship leaders is in *italic print*

### 1. ARRIVAL, BEFORE WORSHIP

As people arrive the **HOSPITALITY TEAM** directs them to a craft table where everyone can choose a five-pointed star and cut it out. (See page 16).

For five minutes before the service begins **TECH TEAM** shows artwork that reflects an artist's feelings about the universe, eg Van Gogh's painting 'Stary Night'. And plays a recording of music reflecting a musician's feelings about the universe, eg 'Venus' from Gustav Holst's *The Planets Suite*

Alternatively, if you have just had a family stargazing night, show photos of the event or show some 'star' clips from YouTube, eg 'Cosmic Journey', 'Journey to the edge of the universe' or 'Stargazer — Tim Lapse Night Skies over Santa Clarita'.

**HOSPITALITY TEAM** welcomes people to the service and helps them settle into seats. Make sure each person has a pen or pencil.

### 2. WELCOME / INVOCATION

**BIBLE READER: Psalm 19:1**

*The heavens keep telling  
the wonders of God  
And the skies declare  
what he has done.*

**TECH TEAM:** Change the image to a picture of the Southern Cross constellation or the 'Under the Southern Cross' logo

**WORSHIP LEADER:** *Welcome to this special time of worship. We are gathered here under the Southern Cross to worship God.*

Make a large sign of the cross while speaking the invocation.

**At the top point of the cross:** . . . *the creator of the universe, who showed his love for us by sending*

**At the low point:** . . . *Jesus who died on a cross to pay for our selfishness and self-centeredness, and*

**At the horizontal line:** . . . *the Holy Spirit who gathers us here to believe and to worship. Amen.*

### 3. OPENING SONG

**MUSIC TEAM** leads people in singing: 'God of wonders beyond our galaxy' or another of praise of God, the Creator.

### 4. THEME INTRODUCTION 1

[**WORSHIP LEADER:** introduces the first theme, using some of the following information. Or **SEVERAL PEOPLE** can present this section, one reading each of the statements. Children may have prepared posters to accompany each statement or the **TECH TEAM** can project appropriate images.]

- *For as long as there have been people on earth, they have looked at the stars in the night sky. And wondered about them. They saw the stars as evidence of a Creator god.*

- *Today scientists tell us that Earth is one of several planets that revolve around our Sun. Our sun is one of many stars in our galaxy and our galaxy is just part of the whole universe. More than ever we see the hand of the Creator in the complexity of the creation.*
- *The United Nations is an organization that represents almost all the people who live on planet Earth. The UN has named 2009 as The International Year of Astronomy.*
- *Astronomy is the study of the planets, the stars, the galaxy and what is beyond it. 2009 is a good year to think about astronomy, because it is the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary of discoveries Galileo — the father of Modern Science — made about the earth, the sun and the planets.*
- *The very first words in the Bible tell us that God created the earth, the planets, the stars, our galaxy, the universe — everything that exists, whether we can see it or not.*

**BIBLE READER: Genesis 1:1,16-18**

*In the beginning,  
God created the universe...  
God made two powerful lights,  
the brighter one to rule the day  
and the other to rule the night.  
He also made the stars.  
Then God put these lights in the sky  
to shine on the earth;  
to rule day and night,  
and to separate light from darkness.*

**5. SONG**

**MUSIC TEAM** leads people in singing 'The heavens shall declare' or another song about God's creation.

**6. SERMON 1 (PSALM 8:1,3,4)**

*You let your glory be seen  
in the heavens above.  
I often think of the heavens  
your hands have made  
And of the moon and stars  
you put in place.  
Then I ask, 'Why do you care  
about us humans?'*

**WORSHIP LEADER** or **PREACHER** briefly explores five points based on this passage. Ask people to write each main point on a point of their star. Children too young to

write, can simply decorate one side of the star.

1. What we see in **the sky shows us** the glory of **God**
2. **God made the universe.** What matters is not so much *how* God made things, but *that* God made them.
3. **God is always in charge** of what he made.
4. Even if we seem insignificant in comparison to the vastness of the universe, **God cares** about each of **us**.
5. **God gave us eyes** to see the sky he made and brains to devise instruments to help us see it better.

**7. STATEMENT OF BELIEF**

**WL:** *For thousands of years people have looked at the stars and believed in the God who made them. Please join with me in reading . . .*

**CONGREGATION** reads from screen or worship booklet.

*I believe in one God, the Father  
Almighty, maker of heaven and earth,  
and of all things visible and invisible.*  
Article 1, Nicene Creed

**8. SONG**

**MUSIC TEAM** leads the congregation in singing 'Twinkle, twinkle, little star' (with an extra 'Christian' verse). Ask people to hold up their stars when they sing the word 'star' or to 'twinkle' their fingers when they sing 'twinkle'.

**9. SKIT: VIEWPOINTS**

**THREE ACTORS** present the skit 'Viewpoints'. See page 12.

**10. THEME INTRODUCTION 2**

[**SEVERAL PEOPLE** can present this section, one reading each of the statements. Alternatively, the **WORSHIP LEADER** can lead the presentation. Children can prepare posters to accompany each statement or the **TECH TEAM** can project appropriate images.]

- *Some 2100 years ago astronomers saw a sign in the stars. They followed the star and found the baby Jesus.*

**BIBLE READER: Matthew 2:9-11 (NCV)**

*The star that they had seen in the east went before them until it stopped above the place where the child was. When the wise men saw the star, they were filled with joy. They came to the house where the child was and saw him with his mother, Mary, and they bowed down and worshiped him.*

- *When the planet we know as ‘the morning star’ appears, it gives people a sign that daylight is about to overcome the darkness of night. Jesus is sometimes compared to the morning star. Jesus came to overcome the darkness of sin. He did this by his death on a cross.*
- *When we look at the night sky, we can see the Southern Cross — a cluster of stars that reminds us of Jesus’ death on a cross.*

### 11. SONG ABOUT JESUS’ CROSS

**MUSIC TEAM** leads people in singing ‘*At the cross*’ or another song about Jesus’ cross.

### 12. SERMON 2 (2 CORINTHIANS 5:17-19)

*Anyone who believes in Christ is a new creation. The old is gone! The new has come! It is all from God. He brought us back to himself through Christ’s death on the cross. And he has given us the task of bringing others back to him through Christ. God was bringing the world back to himself through Christ. He did not hold people’s sins against them. God has trusted us with the message that people may be brought back to him. (NIRV)*

**WORSHIP LEADER** or **PREACHER** briefly explores five points based on 2 Corinthians 5:17-19. Ask people to write the main points on the reverse side of their star. Children too young to write can simply decorate the reverse side of their star.

1. **Jesus died** on the cross for us. This fact has amazing impact on our lives. Because of Jesus death . . .
2. **We are forgiven**
3. **We are new people**

### 4. We are in relationship with God

5. **God trusts us with a task** of telling others about what God has done.

## 13. CREED SECOND ARTICLE

**WORSHIP LEADER:** *All of this is true for ‘anyone who believes in Christ’. Christians who live under the cross have for hundreds of years said that they believe in Jesus Christ, using words like this.*

*Please read them with me:*

**CONGREGATION** reads (from screen or service booklet):

*We believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only begotten Son, our Lord: who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he will come to judge the living and the dead.*

Article 2, Apostles’ Creed

### 13. SONG

**MUSIC TEAM** leads people in singing ‘*I believe in Jesus*’, or another song about Jesus.

### 14. CONFESSION

**WORSHIP LEADER:** *Now that we have been reminded about what Jesus has done for us. What are we going to do about it?*

*The Southern Cross can point us to some answers.*

**WORSHIP LEADER** asks people to form small groups of four (or a few more) people. Each group arranges four stars in the form of the Southern Cross (on the pew, a spare chair, on the floor, in the aisle or even just holding them).

**WORSHIP LEADER:** *The Southern Cross reminds us that Jesus died for us.*

*The stars of the Southern Cross are given the letters of the Greek Alphabet: Alpha, Beta, Gamma, and Delta.*

*We can think of them as A, B, C, D.*

Please write the letter 'A' on the bottom star of your cross. [ALLOW TIME]

'A' stands for 'Admit' — admit to yourself that you do not always think, speak and act like the new person God made you through Jesus' death on the cross.

Please write the letter 'B' on the left-hand star of your cross. [ALLOW TIME]

'B' stands for 'Believe' — believe that Jesus died on the cross to show that God loves you and forgives you.

Please write the letter 'C' on the top star of your cross. [ALLOW TIME]

'C' stands for 'Confess' — tell God about the things that are bothering you: the things you have done, thought or said that you know were wrong.

Please write the letter 'D' on the top star of your cross. [ALLOW TIME]

'D' stands for 'Decide' and 'Do' — decide that you want to be better from now on and ask God to help you Do so.

We can go through these A,B,C,D's by ourselves. But it can help to do them with our families or here in church. We'll do that now.

Let's pray.

**FOUR PEOPLE (A,B,C & D)** lead this section.

**A:** Point to the 'A' star of your Southern Cross. Say after me:

Dear God,  
I admit  
that I do not always  
think and do and say  
what you want me  
to think, do and say.

**B:** Point to the 'B' star on your Southern Cross. Say after me:

I believe  
that Jesus died on the cross  
to show that God loves me  
and forgives me.

**C:** Point to the 'C' star on your Southern Cross. Say after me:

I confess these things  
I have thought, said and done  
that I know were wrong.  
— You can silently add your own thoughts.  
[ALLOW TIME]

Thank you for forgiving me.

**D:** Point to the 'D' star on your Southern Cross. Say after me:

I have decided that I really want to stop doing hurtful things. Please help me to do better from now on.  
Amen.

## 15. ANNOUNCEMENTS

**WORSHIP LEADER** makes any necessary brief announcements. Include

- take home your stars. Consider doing the A,B,C,D's with your family.
- invitation to after-service activities or refreshments
- invitation to further activities and services of the congregation, including prayers for individuals after the service
- explanation of the way the offering will be used to spread the light of Christ.

## 16. OFFERING

The offering is collected in your usual manner.

## 17. PRAYER

**PRAYER LEADER/S** lead the congregation in prayers.

They may add other concerns of the congregation, community, nation and world.

You may conclude with the Lord's Prayer.

## 18. SONG

**MUSIC TEAM** leads the congregation in singing 'How Great Thou Art' or another celebration song.

## 19. BENEDICTION

**WORSHIP LEADER:** Remember, when you look up at the stars, think of the wonderful God who made the stars. Find the Southern Cross and remember how Jesus died on a cross to show how much that wonderful God loves you.

Please join me in marking the sign of the cross:

**At the top point of the cross:** God created the universe and everything in it, including you and me. God showed his love for us by sending . . .

**At the low point:** Jesus who died on a cross to pay for our selfishness and self-centeredness.

**At the horizontal line:** God's Spirit helps us believe all this and share the Good News with other people. Amen.

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.