

# Christian Vocation Sunday

## September 2, 2012

While occupation may only be a portion of our call as disciples, the PC(USA) programmatic emphasis for the Sunday before Labor Day is appropriately, Christian Vocation Sunday. Resources are provided by the Office of Christian Vocation for the purpose of cultivating a culture of call in congregations by claiming our theological perspective of the priesthood of all believers.

Use these resources for worship planning on September 2, 2012 or another worship experience. Adjust them for use in a study or a particular class. Additional resources such as a skit and a reader's theatre script are also available on the Christian Vocation website at [www.pcusa.org/christianvocation](http://www.pcusa.org/christianvocation). In addition, a Minute for Mission for Christian Vocation Sunday is available in the *2012 Mission Yearbook for Prayer & Study*.

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) *Book of Order, W* – 5.6000

### Christian Vocation

God calls a people

- a. to believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior;
- b. to follow Jesus Christ in obedient discipleship;
- c. to use the gifts and abilities God has given, honoring and serving God
  - (1) in personal life,
  - (2) in household and families,
  - (3) in daily occupations,
  - (4) in community, nation, and the world.

A person responds to God's call to faith in Jesus Christ through Baptism and through life and worship in the community of faith.

Persons respond to God's call to discipleship through the ministries of God's people in and for the world.

Persons respond to God's call to honor and serve God in every aspect of human life

- a. in their work and in their play,
- b. in their thought and in their action,
- c. in their private and in their public relationships.

God hallows daily life, and daily life provides opportunity for holy living. As Christians honor and serve God in daily life, they worship God. For Christians, work and worship cannot be separated.

These resources were prepared by Greg Allen-Pickett, a third-year student at Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary who, as of August 2012, is serving as PC(USA) General Assembly Mission Council staff as General Manager for World Mission. Greg grew up Presbyterian in Flagstaff, AZ at Federated Community Church. Before starting seminary Greg worked for a faith-based non-profit called Healing Waters International in Denver, CO and is an active member of Wellshire Presbyterian Church.





*But be doers of the word, and not merely hearers who deceive themselves. . . Those who look into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and persevere, being not hearers who forget but doers who act—they will be blessed in their doing.*

*James 1:22-25*

As Christians, we are called to be “doers of the word.” That is our call; that is our vocation.

There is some confusion in our culture about this word “vocation.” Because so much of our identity is tied up in what we do to make a living, we tend to associate “vocation” with our wage-earning jobs. Think about it. When first meeting someone and starting to get to know them, what is one of the first questions usually asked of them? “What do you do?” Implied in that question is the idea of what you do for a living, how you support yourself and your family. But as Christians, especially as reformed Christians, vocation means so much more than that.

Our text from the letter of James provides us some insight into what vocation means for Christians. We are called at all times and in all areas of our lives to be “doers” of the word. That means our vocation includes what we do to earn a paycheck, but it also includes what we do in our families, in our communities and in the world. It includes how we interact with the grocery store clerk, our bosses, co-workers and employees, our partners, children and parents, the homeless people on the corner, everyone. It includes what we do with our time and resources, our gifts and our talents. Every aspect of our life is included in the Christian understanding of vocation.

This “word” that we are supposed to be “doers” of as part of our “vocation” is summed up nicely in Micah 6:8: “He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God” and Matthew 22:37-39: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’”

*How is your life a reflection of this? Are you a “doer of the word?”  
How are you letting your Christian vocation permeate every aspect of your being  
as we are called to do?*

## CHRISTIAN VOCATION

*Book of Order (W.5.6000) Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)*

God calls a people  
to believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior;  
to follow Jesus Christ in obedient discipleship;  
to use the gifts and abilities God has given,  
honoring and serving God

- in personal life,
- in household and families,
- in daily occupations,
- in community, nation, and the world.

A person responds to God’s call to faith in Jesus Christ  
through Baptism and

through life and worship in the community of faith.

Persons respond to God’s call to discipleship  
through the ministries of God’s people in and for the world.

Persons respond to God’s call to honor and serve God  
in every aspect of human life

- in their work and in their play
- in their thought and in their action
- in their private and in their public relationships.

God hallows daily life, and in daily life provides opportunity for holy living.

As Christians honor and serve God in daily life, they worship God.

For Christians, work and worship cannot be separated.



---

Office of Certification and Christian Vocation; Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Office of Vocation, a shared ministry of the Office of the General Assembly and the General Assembly Mission Council. For additional resources on call and vocation, visit [www.pcusa.org/christianvocation](http://www.pcusa.org/christianvocation) or “like” the PC(USA) Christian Vocation Facebook page. Read our blog at [www.pcusa.org/throughthewaters](http://www.pcusa.org/throughthewaters).

---

# Christian Vocation Sunday

## Worship Notes

### Call to Worship (based on Psalm 45)

Leader: My heart overflows with praise to you, O God!

*Congregation: You call us to serve you God*

Leader: Your throne, O God, endures forever and ever.

*Congregation: You call us to serve all of humanity in your name*

Leader: You love righteousness, O God!

*Congregation: You call us to do what is right, and speak the truth of your love from the heart*

Leader: Let us serve God now in our worship and in all of our lives

*ALL: Let us serve and worship God with gladness and thanksgiving!*

### Call to Confession

As your people, you call each one of us by name to serve you through our whole lives. You ask us to walk blamelessly with you, and we turn away. We come before you this day to confess our sins once again, and we hope and trust in your grace and mercy. Let us pray the prayer of confession:

### Confession

God, you call us to believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior; to follow Jesus Christ in obedient discipleship; to use the gifts and abilities you have given us, honoring and serving you in our personal lives, in our households and families, in our daily occupations, in our communities, our nation and the world.

And yet the way that we live our lives does not always show this. We ignore the call to obedient discipleship. We squander our gifts and abilities on things of this world that don't glorify you. We neglect to honor and serve you in our lives, we don't heed your call in our families, we deny our faith in our workplaces and communities and we fail to work for your glory in the nation and the world.

Forgive us we ask you. Empower us to hear and respond to your call to discipleship. Strengthen us to respond to your call to honor and serve you in every aspect of our lives. Remind us every moment of every day to answer the call to demonstrate the gospel in all that we do and say. Amen.

**Assurance of Pardon**

God's call on our lives is unceasing, relentless and full of mercy and love. Each time we turn away, God calls us back. In Christ, we know our sins are forgiven and we are called to live a new life each day. With that knowledge, let us celebrate our forgiveness and live into our call!

**Scripture** (Lectionary for Sunday, September 2, 2012)

Song of Solomon 2:8-13

Psalm 45:1-2, 6-9

James 1:17-27

Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23

**Invitation to Offering**

Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above. God calls us to give our entire lives, our gifts, our talents, our time, and our resources. With gladness and joy in our hearts, we offer these gifts to God.

**Prayer of Thanksgiving Following Offering**

We give you thanks, O God, for the opportunity we have to serve you with these gifts, and with our lives. Continue to call us into your service and use these gifts and our vocations to bring your kingdom closer each day. Amen.