

All Age Service Outline on Matthew 6:25-34: Do Not Worry

At Ōtūmoetai Baptist Church we spent a number of months working our way through Jesus' Sermon on the Mount. We thought this passage would work well for an interactive service, with all ages in together.

Service outline:

Opening song, prayer and notices.

A break for morning tea and time to discuss a whakawhanaungatanga question:

What things do you (or people you know) worry about?

Feedback on the question – we recorded people's answers on a whiteboard.

Reading Matthew 6:25-34 – we asked four people from four different generations to read several verses each.

Context of the passage:

This is part of Jesus' message known as the Sermon on the Mount, which we have been looking at for most of this year. Jesus is teaching his disciples about what it looks like in the kingdom of God. He's covered a lot of ground!

In today's passage he is talking about worry but these verses are connected to what comes before. This passage comes after Jesus' words, "No one can serve two masters... You cannot serve both God and money."

'So therefore', he says, 'do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink, or about your body, what you will wear.'

Our choice is who will we serve? Who is our master? This choice, that we all have to make, will effect our attitude about the necessities of life – food and clothing. If money is our master, we will become preoccupied with our own security and our physical well-being. We will be distracted and incapable of thinking about anything else. We will worry. If Jesus was saying this today, I wonder what examples he would give? Maybe food and housing? Maybe some of the other things we have on our board, that we need money to buy?

If God is our master, we will not be anxious about those things but instead focus on the concerns of God. He is not saying it is wrong to provide food and clothing for ourselves and our families, what Jesus is warning against is anxious, distracted thought about the daily things of life and letting the acquisition of those things become our master.

What a challenge! Easier said than done... We really want to hear from you about this. On your sheet are discussion questions...

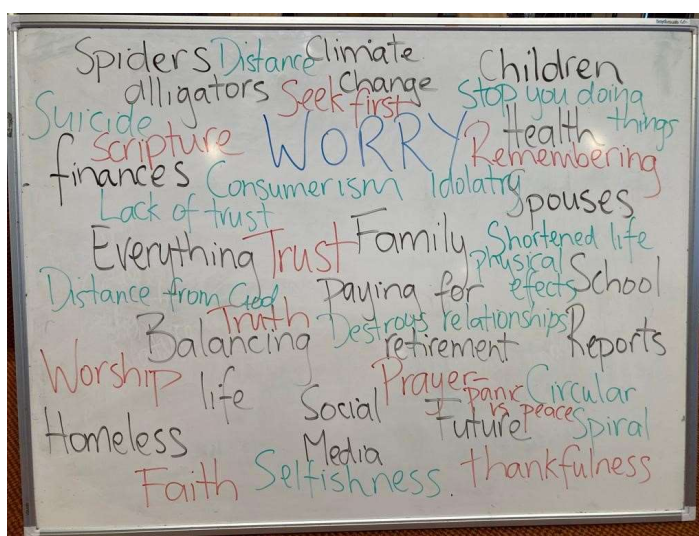
Discussion in groups – verses and questions on an A3 piece of paper for people to use in small groups.

What do you notice? Underline, circle, highlight and share.

What is the effect of worry on our lives and our society?

What is the antidote/cure for worry? Have you experienced this in your own life?

Feedback – each group was invited to share one thought or idea which were added to the whiteboard. (The black writing are the things people worried about, the green is the effect of worry on our lives and society, and the red is the antidote.)



Testimonies/Stories - we asked several people to share short (2-3 minute) stories about a time when they were feeling worried and experienced God's peace.

Prayer for one another in groups Breath Prayer – we introduced the idea of a breath prayer and did this 5 times. (Pray as you breath in, 'loving Jesus', and as you breath out, 'take our worries'.)

Video – The Singer from the Jesus Storybook Bible. (You can see this here <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EuOqOnl-il8&t=56s> You will probably want to fast forward the long introduction!)



It was the song all of God's creation had sung to him from the very beginning. It was the song people's hearts were made to sing: "God made us. He loves us. He is very pleased with us."

It was why Jesus had come into the world: to sing them that wonderful song; to sing it not only with his voice, but with his whole life – so that God's children could remember it and join in and sing it, too.

Creative Prayer Artwork – the song people's hearts were made to sing.

We re-read the words from the end of The Singer (see slide above). We distributed large paper music notes, with the instructions below.



It was the song people's hearts were made to sing...

Choose a music note from your table. On the blank side of your note, write or draw a statement or prayer e.g...

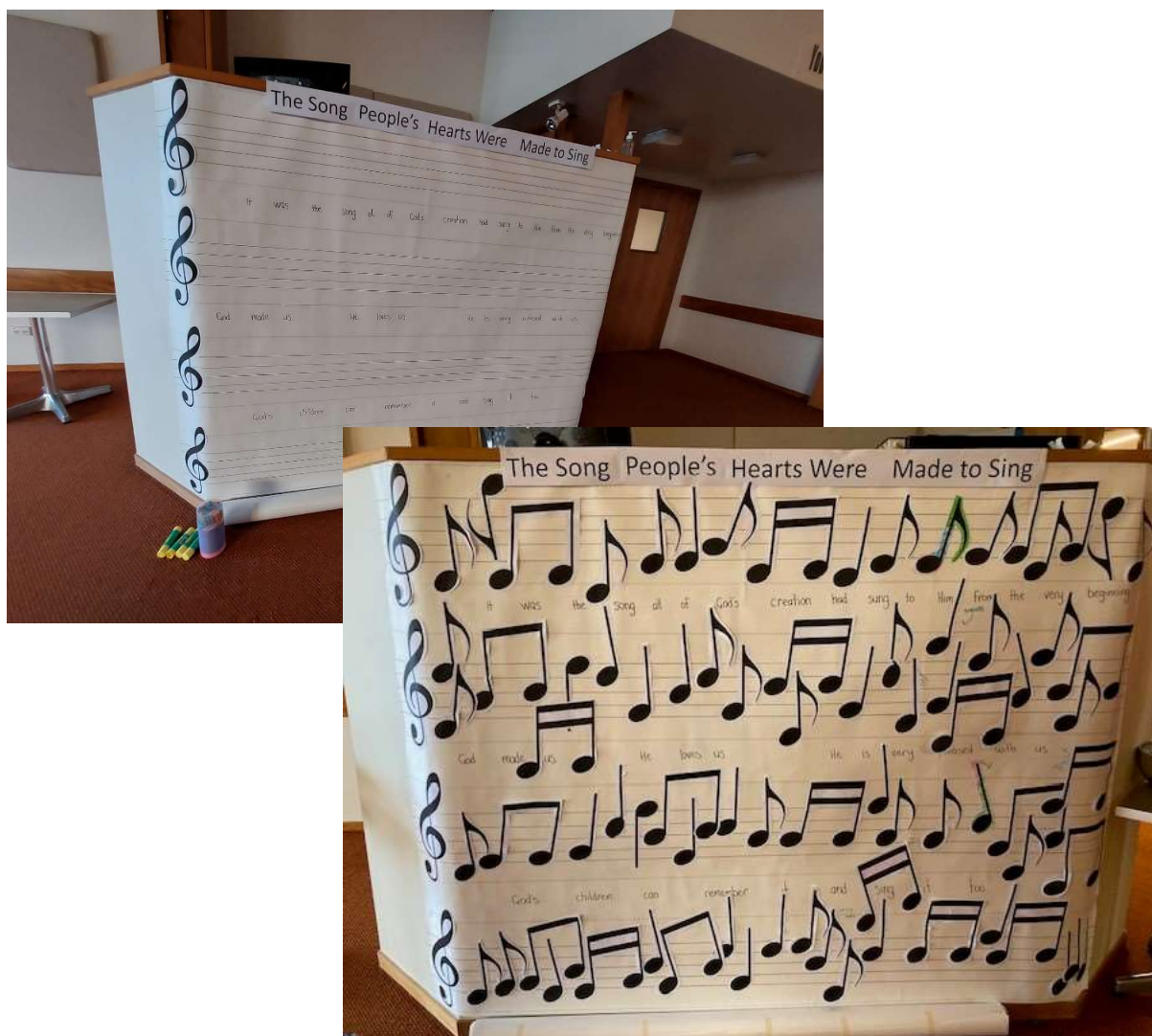
What have you forgotten because you have been worrying?

What are the lyrics of God's song is he singing to us today?

Stick your note onto the music sheet at the back of the room. Write your name.

If you like, you can choose a word or two to write beside your note.

And created this piece of artwork together...



We concluded our service with a final worship song.

What made this service work for all ages was the variety of activities, using different mediums, learning styles and a combination of group discussion and individual reflection.

If you have questions or would like copies of the resources mentioned here, please email jan@obc.org.nz.