



## FUSION — Worship – Learning – Service

What would happen if we took our traditional church school and worship and put them together into one blended experience that connects to our discipleship throughout the week? We would have **FUSION** – our new approach to our Sunday morning gatherings beginning on the first Sunday in September. **FUSION** will be an integrated set of worship, learning, and service experiences on Sunday morning that continue during the following week. It will include a mix of whole congregation, group, and personal experiences, some by age-level and some intergenerational. It will also have a mix of some of the traditional ways we have worshipped and studied together along with some new experiences of worship, learning and serving together.



**Worship**



**Learning**



**Service**

### Questions about FUSION

**What will the FUSION experiences be based upon?**

**FUSION** will make use of two primary resources. First we will use the weekly worship helps from the World Church. We will also be using a resource called **SeasonsFUSION** from **Seasons of the Spirit**. **Seasons of the Spirit** is a set of Christian education resources which the World Church has recommended for use in our Christian education programs. The **SeasonsFUSION** resource, in particular, is focused on integrating or fusing worship, learning, and service. Additionally, we will be using music, art, and multimedia resources from various sources.

**Why are we making this change to our worship and church school?**

At a casual glance, it may seem that things are going fine with our worship services and classes. A closer look, however, reveals some growing problems. It is true that we have had some good worship experiences together under our present approach to worship. But there are fewer people now who are willing or who feel able to plan and lead our worship experiences. There are also fewer people willing to preach, making it

more difficult to sustain a worship approach focused on preaching ministry. We also know that while preaching-based worship may be comfortable for many of us, it isn't the only approach to worship. We don't intend to abandon preaching ministry or other familiar forms of worship, but we won't rely just on these forms of worship. Just as we learned to worship as we presently do, we hope we will learn to worship in some new ways, too, that will become meaningful worship experiences for all of us.

For Christian education, we have a significant participation issue. Discipleship formation is a life-long process, yet we have only a small percentage of our people who actively participate in adult Christian education. It really hasn't mattered what we have chosen to study or who has taught our classes—we aren't reaching most of the adults in the congregation. Integrating learning with our worship experiences helps us reach more adults and provides ways to translate our worship emphasis into meaningful discipleship development and practice.

Children's ministry also presents a couple of problems. One is availability of teachers. The other is not having children who regularly attend coupled with having only one or two children in an age group when they are present. There is no meaningful children's Christian education experience as we do things now. There is also no meaningful children's worship experience as things are done now with our adult-oriented worship services. **Fusion** offers a potential way to include children in meaningful learning and worship experiences.

### **Why is FUSION two hours rather than one hour as our worship is now?**

With church school included, we actually have been meeting from 8:30-11:00. The **FUSION** experience will be from 9:00-11:00. So it's a bit shorter for those who have been participating in our classes and a bit longer for those who have only participated in the worship service. The reason for two hours is basically that we have more to do and experience in **FUSION** than we have had with either our classes or our worship alone.

### **What about those of us who can't sit for two hours?**

**FUSION** will involve more than sitting. While we won't have you running around, there will be some times of movement as we share in the various worship and learning experiences of the morning. There will also be a fellowship break roughly half-way through the morning. For those who don't feel you can handle the entire two hours, there will still be meaningful worship and learning experiences for whatever portion of the morning you can participate in. Obviously, we would like you to participate in the full experience, but we know people have different physical needs and other constraints to deal with. So if you can't be there for the entire time, you can still participate for whatever period of time you feel is best for you.

Please don't feel that if you can't participate for the full two hours that you can't or shouldn't participate at all. It is certainly not our intent to drive anyone away from our

sharing and fellowship on Sunday morning. We value everyone's presence and participation for whatever period of time you can share with us.

### **How will Fusion continue into the week?**

As part of the planning for each week's **FUSION** experience, materials will be prepared to put into practice or apply the experiences and ideas from Sunday morning in our day-to-day living during the following week. Some of these may be individual activities and some may be done with family or friends. Some may extend to other people and situations that we encounter during the week. The basic idea is that our experience with God and with our fellow disciples in the congregation doesn't end at 11:00 on Sunday, but continues throughout the week until we gather together the next Sunday. These are voluntary responses to the Sunday **FUSION** experience, but if we choose to do them, they will broaden the experiences shared on Sunday morning and help us grow as disciples.

### **How can you help?**

Any time we change the way we do things, there tends to be resistance. We can easily think of things we think we won't like and reasons why things won't work. The first way you can help is to allow for the possibility that you might actually find **FUSION** to be a meaningful and enjoyable experience for you and for your family and friends. There's a cliché, "Give peace a chance." For us it's, "Give **FUSION** a chance." Hopefully you will find it better than expected.

Second, get involved. **FUSION** is about participation. And while we appreciate your willingness to do things like offer prayers or collect the offering, we could really use your help as we plan and lead the **FUSION** experiences. Your ideas and your active help in developing these experiences will ease the burden on others and bring your unique gifts and perspectives to our planning efforts and to the actual **FUSION** experiences. You can contact Linda or Greg Barentine who will be happy to add you to one of our planning teams.

Third, consider inviting someone to share with you in the **FUSION** experiences. Their presence will enrich the experience for everyone and help begin building a relationship with our faith community. It will also help begin or deepen their relationship with Jesus.

### **Additional questions**

We've tried to anticipate some of the questions you might have about **FUSION**, but there are probably other questions you have that we haven't addressed. Please get in touch with Linda or Greg Barentine about any additional questions that you may have.

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