All Age Worship Service

("I am the Door")

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“I AM THE DOOR”

Service Aim:
To unpack what Jesus meant when He said: “I am the door.”
Note: I am using the word “door” instead of the word “gate” as it is just as justifiable a translation of the Greek word “thura,” and is the more recognisable image in an all-age context.

Biblical Reference(s):
John 10:7-10, Romans 5:8, Psalm 136:1, John 1:12, Romans 5:1b

Outline of Service:

Welcome: Introduce the theme
Opening Prayer:
Opening songs: A couple of songs to draw people into worship (See Appendix 1)
Warm up: Open doors can give us access to good things.
Memory verse: John 10:9a using simple cardboard doors that open to show the word(s)
Link: Shepherds in Jesus’ time kept the sheep safe by being the door of the sheepfold. Build a simple sheepfold.
Reading: John 10:7-10 as a monologue.
Songs: A couple of songs about salvation (See Appendix 1)
Talk 1: Jesus is the “open door” through whom we can find salvation.
Response 1: Coming to Jesus the door and putting our trust in Him.
Songs: Song/s putting our trust in Jesus (See Appendix 1)
Memory verse: John 10:9a using simple cardboard doors that open to show the word(s)
Talk 2: The shepherd was also the door through which the sheep went out to find good pasture.
  • Jesus is the “open door” through whom we receive good things.
Response 2: Receiving “good grass” by “feeding on” a Bible verse
Songs: Song/s thanking Jesus for His blessings (See Appendix 1)
Memory Verse: John 10:9a from memory
Prayers: Using responses.
Lord’s prayer
Summary:
Final song: Final song (See Appendix 1)
Blessing:
Notes for the service:
General notes and instructions for the service are in black font.
Prayers or responses said by the congregation together are in bold purple font.
The full script of a talk or other activity is in purple font.

Welcome:
Welcome everyone to the service and explain to people that you will be looking at the third of Jesus’ seven “I am” statements that are recorded in John’s Gospel; “I am the door.”

Opening Prayer:
You may choose to open the service with:
- an informal prayer or
- a prayer from a book like “New Patterns for Worship”¹ that the congregation can say together.
- Alternatively you could pray:

  Father we are here to worship You today,
  We praise You for Your goodness
  Jesus we honour You for who you are,
  And for all that You have done for us,
  Holy Spirit we welcome Your ministry amongst us,
  Come and fill us afresh with Your love
  that we might bring You glory.
  Amen.

Opening Songs:
A couple of songs to draw people into worship as per Appendix 1

Warm up:
The warm up involves showing people a few different doors and asking them what an open door would give them access to. Either PowerPoint the pictures from Appendix 2 or magnify them and stick them onto card. You might say something like:

  Doors are important aren’t they?
  - Every day we walk through all sorts of doors and they give us access to different people, experiences and opportunities.

  Can anyone tell me whose house this is the front door to?  (Show picture of Buckingham Palace front door)
  - That’s right….it is the front door of Buckingham Palace where the Queen and Prince Philip live.
  - Imagine if you arrived at the front door and after you rang the bell it was opened to you.
  - You would have access to one of the most famous people in the world.

  Can anyone tell me what this is the front door to?  (Show picture of Legoland)
  - That’s right….it is the front door of Legoland in Windsor.

¹ Church House Publishing – ISBN 0715120603
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Imagine if you arrived at the front door and as you arrived it was opened to you.
- You would have access to having a really fun day out in an amazing theme park.

Can anyone tell me what building this is the front door to?  *(Show picture of No.10 Downing Street)*
- That’s right …..it is the front door of No.10 Downing street….where our Prime Minister lives and works.
- Imagine if you arrived at the front door and as you arrived it was opened to you.
- You would have access to the leader of our government.

Open doors can give us access to some really good things like new relationships, great experiences and different opportunities.

**Memory Verse:**
The memory verse is John 10:9a and I have used the International Children’s Bible. You could present the memory verse using simple cut out card doors, stuck on a piece of backing card and which people then open to reveal some of the words of the memory verse. *(See Appendix 3 for more details)*

| Door 1: | “I am |
| Door 2: | the door. |
| Door 3: | The person who |
| Door 4: | enters through me |
| Door 5: | will be saved" |
| Door 6: | John chapter 10, verse 9 |

You might say something like:

Jesus said something very interesting about himself.
- We are going to discover that today by opening up 6 doors…..so I need 6 helpers to come and open up the doors for me. *(Give out 6 cards with the closed doors on them to 6 different people and then invite people to open them up one at a time to reveal part of the memory verse behind them)*
- Let’s say the memory verse together a couple of times and then we will shut a couple of the doors and we will see whether we can still remember it!

**Link:**
This link would benefit from showing a picture of a New Testament outdoor sheepfold. You will also need a number of hassocks or chairs to build a simple sheepfold from (and eventually a large cross later on in the service). You could say something like:

I wonder what Jesus meant when He said that He was the door?
- It is an odd thing to say about yourself isn’t it?
- When Jesus said that He was the door (or the gate, which is another way of translating the Greek word), He was talking to people about sheep and their shepherds.

In Jesus’ day the shepherds would normally keep their sheep in two different types of pen.
- When they were near a city, they would leave their flocks in a big pen in the city that was guarded at night by a gatekeeper.
However when the sheep were in the countryside and it was good weather, the
shepherd would keep his sheep in a small sheepfold at night.
- This sheepfold would have been made of piles of rocks….it was unroofed and
circular. (Show picture of a sheepfold)
- There was no door or gate to the sheepfold, just an opening for the sheep to enter
through.

Once the shepherd had got his sheep safely into the sheepfold, he would lie across
the opening of the sheepfold.
- By doing this the shepherd would keep his sheep safe from thieves and robbers
and wild animals.
- By lying across the opening of the sheepfold the shepherd literally became the
door for the sheep.

So let’s build a sheepfold together ……I will need a few helpers to do that. (Build a
simple circular or square sheepfold using hassocks or chairs. Leave an opening at the front for people
to be able to enter into the sheepfold and certainly big enough for a large cross.)

Listen to what Jesus says again.

Reading:
The Bible reading is John 10:7-10 and it would work very well as a monologue delivered by
someone dressed up as a shepherd. (See Appendix 4 for details)

Songs:
A couple of songs about salvation as per Appendix 1

Talk 1:
For this talk it would be helpful to project pictures of doors in the appropriate place.
Jesus said in our memory verse today: “I am the door. The person who enters
through me will be saved” John chapter 10, verse 9
- As we have just seen and heard, in Jesus’ day the shepherd was the door for the
sheep into the sheepfold.
- By being the door the shepherd kept the sheep safe and secure. (Project these
words)

Jesus is saying that we are like sheep and He is the “door” through whom we can
come in and be saved.
- He means that He is the One through whom we have access to salvation …..or to
put it in another way, eternal safety. (Project these words)
- Let’s unpack that a little.

In the beginning when Father God created us, He created us to be His children,
- to know His wonderful love, to be with Him with full access to His presence.
- His door, if you like, was always open to us. (Project picture of open door)

Sadly however, the first people that He made and everyone who has been born since
has turned their back on Father God and lived life their own way, which is called sin.
As a result of that, because Father God is holy, it is like the door into His presence is now shut (Project picture of shut door)

- and so we no longer have access to Him.

Jesus came to be the door through whom we can once again have access to our Heavenly Father and become members of His family.

- He did this by living a perfect life,
- dying on a cross to pay for our sins, and then rising from the dead three days later.

Through Jesus there is now an open door into heaven for us. (Project picture of open door)

So how do we enter through this open door you might ask?

- We simply need to turn away from our sins and turn to Jesus, putting our lives into His hands.

If we do that, we are welcomed into Father God’s family.

- Difficult things will still happen while we are living on earth, but we are safe for all eternity. (Project these words)

Now some people will tell you that there are lots of different ways or doors into God’s presence, but Jesus didn’t say, “I am A door”……He said “I am THE door.”

- Will you choose to turn away from your sins, turn to Jesus the door, and put your life into His hands so that you are safe for all eternity?

**Response 1:**

For the 1st response you need to put a large cross in the entrance to the sheepfold and attach to it a large cardboard “open door” (using the same template you used for the cardboard doors for the memory verse, but larger. Make it as big as your congregation needs to let them take part in a reasonable time). You will also need a selection of felt tip pens for people to use to write their names inside the open door.

Let’s take a moment of quiet. PAUSE.

If you agree with this prayer in your heart, please say Amen at the end of it.

Lord Jesus we come to You.

Thank you that You died for our sins.

We now turn away from living our lives just doing what we want, and we choose to follow You.

Thank you that through You we are safe for all eternity.

Amen.

As a way of saying that you are choosing to put your trust in Jesus, can I invite you to come and write your name on the open “door” during our next song/s.

**Songs:**

Song/s worshipping Jesus for His gift of salvation.

**Memory verse:**

Repeat the memory verse John 10:9a a couple of times using the simple cardboard doors that open to show the words.
Talk 2:

For this talk you will need four pieces of card. On one side of the card is a picture of green grass. (See Appendix 6) On the other side of the card is written the following:

- Card 1: - I AM LOVED BY GOD
- Card 2: - GOD IS GOOD
- Card 3: - I BELONG TO GOD’S FAMILY
- Card 4: - I HAVE PEACE WITH GOD

You may also want to project the relevant words as each card is held up.

We have heard how the shepherd kept the sheep safe when they came into the sheepfold by being the “door” of the sheepfold,

- and how Jesus is our “door” to eternal safety.

But the shepherd was also the “door” of the sheepfold through which the sheep would go out to find pasture….

- to find good grass to feed on…
- to receive what they really needed.

Jesus is the “door” through whom we find “good grass” to feed on.

- But what is the good grass that we need to feed on I wonder?

I need 4 volunteers to come and help me. (Give each volunteer one of your cards and encourage them to hold them up with the grass side facing the congregation)

What does our first piece of grass give us to feed on? (Volunteer reads out “I am loved by God”)

- I AM LOVED BY GOD (Volunteer turns their card around so the congregation can see the words)

What a wonderful truth to feed on…..that through Jesus we are loved by God.

- Listen to what the Bible says: “but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.” (Romans 5:8)

Maybe some of you today need to receive this truth that you are dearly loved.

- Feed on the “good grass” of being loved by your Heavenly Father.

What does our second piece of grass give us if we feed on it? (Volunteer reads out “God is good”)

- GOD IS GOOD (Volunteer turns their card around)

Another wonderful truth to feed on…..that our Heavenly Father is good.

- Sometimes when we are having a hard time we may doubt that He is good, but this is what Psalm 136:1 says:
- “Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good…” (Psalm 136:1)

Maybe some of you today need to receive this truth that your Heavenly Father is good.

- Feed on the “good grass” of His goodness.

What does our third piece of grass give us if we feed on it? (Volunteer reads out “I belong to God’s family”)

- I BELONG TO GOD’S FAMILY (Volunteer turns their card around)
Another wonderful truth to feed on.....that through Jesus we become children of God and are welcomed into God’s family, where we belong.

- Listen to what Saint John says: “Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God” (John 1:12)

Maybe some of you today need to receive this truth that you belong.

- Feed on the “good grass” of belonging to your Heavenly Father’s family.

What does our fourth piece of grass give us if we feed on it? (Volunteer reads out “I have peace with God”)

- I HAVE PEACE WITH GOD (Volunteer turns their card around so the congregation can see the words)

Another wonderful truth to feed on, that we have peace with our Heavenly Father through Jesus.

- Listen to what Paul says in his letter to the Romans: “we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (Romans 5:1b)

Maybe today some of you need to receive this truth that you have peace with God.

- Feed on the “good grass” of being at peace with your Heavenly Father.

Jesus is the door through whom we receive all the good things that we need.

- Today we have only mentioned four of those things,
- but out of those four things, I wonder which patch of “good grass” you need to feed on today. PAUSE

Response 2:
The response involves inviting people to look at and “feed on” one of the Bible verses mentioned in talk 2. Hand out a sheet with the 4 Bible verses on so that each person has one. There is an A4 version of the sheet after Appendix 6, which could be reduced to A5 size. As people read their verse through quietly it might be helpful to have some music playing. Encourage people to take the sheet home and to continue “feeding” on the Bible verses. You might say something like:

When sheep eat grass they chew it round and round in their mouths to get out all of the goodness.

- For the next few minutes we are going to “chew” on one of the Bible verses that we have just heard read,
- so that our souls are well fed with the “good grass”

You will each receive a sheet with the four Bible verses we have talked about.

- Choose one and read it through once.....then think about it,
- Read it through again......and think about it a bit more......
- And read it through once again.....and think about it even more.
- Keep chewing it over until I draw this time to a close.

If you are a parent you may want to read one of the verses to your child/ren, and then ask them to think about it before you read it again.

- As we do this together, we will have some quiet music playing. (Hand out sheet of Bible verses)
Can I encourage you to make chewing on the truths of Scripture a habit…..
- so that like sheep eat good grass, you too are well fed with what you need.

**Songs:**
Song/s thanking Jesus for His blessings as per Appendix 1

**Memory verse:**
Repeat the memory verse John 10:9a a couple of times from memory!

**Prayers:**
Prayers could be led by the service leader or by a family or by a Sunday school group etc. You could lead the prayers in the following way:

1) Praising Jesus that through Him we have access to the gift of salvation and ending with the refrain.
   
   **You are the door. Thank you that through You we receive salvation.**

2) Praying for those who don’t yet know Jesus’ goodness, that they too would find the door to salvation and ending with the refrain:
   
   **You are the door. Help them to find Your salvation.**

3) Praising Jesus that through Him we have access to the good gifts of being loved, of belonging, of being valuable and being secure, ending with the refrain:
   
   **You are the door. Thank you that through You we receive good gifts.**

4) Praying that we might share the good gifts that we have received with others
   
   **You are the door. Help us to share Your good gifts with others.**

End the time of prayer with the Lord’s prayer.

**Summary:**
Summarize the teaching points of the service ie:

- Open doors can give us access to “good things.” Jesus is “the door.”
- Through Him we have access to salvation…..eternally we are safe.
- Through Him we have access to the “good grass” that we are loved by God, God is good, we belong to God’s family and we have peace with God as well as many, many other blessings.

**Final Song:**
Lead into the final songs as per Appendix 1

**Blessing:**
Pray a simple prayer to end the service something like:

**Jesus, You are the door.**
Through You we are kept safe eternally and receive many blessings,
And the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

**Notices:** If your church gives out verbal notices my suggestion is that you do that just before the final song. That way the flow of worship is unbroken.]
Appendix 1 - Ideas for Songs and Hymns:

i) A couple of opening songs to draw people into worship. Ideas include:
   - Bless the Lord O my soul (Jonas Myrin & Matt Redman © 2011 Thankyou Music)
   - Come, now is the time to worship (Brian Doerksen © 1998 Vineyard Songs (UK/Eire))
   - God is good we sing and shout it (Graham Kendrick © 1985 Thankyou Music)
   - Praise is rising (Brenton Brown & Paul Baloche © 2005 Thankyou Music)
   - Praise my soul the King of heaven (Henry F. Lyte)

ii) Song/s about salvation. Ideas include:
   - Before you made the skies (Mark and Helen Johnson © 1995 Out of the Ark Music)
   - God so loved that He gave His Son (Ben Cantelon ©
   - Jesus is greater than the greatest heroes (Gill Hutchinson © 1992 Sea Dream Music)
   - Safe in the shadow of the Lord (Timothy Dudley-Smith © 1970 Timothy Dudley-Smith OUP)
   - Who O Lord could save themselves? (Matt Redman & Jonas Myrin © 2008 Thankyou Music)

iii) Song/s worshipping Jesus for His gift of salvation:
   - Be still for the presence of the Lord (David J Evans © 1986 Thankyou Music)
   - I stand amazed in the presence (Charles H. Gabriel)
   - My lips shall praise you (Noel & Tricia Richards © 1991 Thankyou Music)
   - Salvation belongs to our God (Adrian Howard & Pat Turner © 1985 Restoration Music Ltd)
   - Thank you for saving me (Martin Smith © 1993 Curious? Music UK)
   - What can wash my sin away? (Robert Lowry Arr.Beth Croft © 2010 Thankyou Music)

iv) Thanking Jesus for His blessings
   - Blessed be your name in the land (Beth & Matt Redman © 2002 Thankyou Music)
   - Give thanks to the Lord our God and King (Chris Tomlin © 2000 worshiptogether.com songs/sixsteps Music)
   - Jesus said, “I have come that they may have life” (Chris Jackson © 1990 Powerpack/Learning Curve Music)
   - Thank you Father for your love for me (Gareth Robinson © 2006 Thankyou Music)
   - Your love is amazing (Brian Doerksen and Brenton Brown © 2000 Vineyard Songs (UK/Eire))

v) Final song. Ideas include:
   - Forever (Nick and Becky Drake © 2012 Thankyou Music)
   - From the breaking of the dawn (Keith Getty & Stuart Townend © 2005 Thankyou Music)
   - God in my living (Tim Hughes © 2005 Thankyou Music)
   - Great is thy faithfulness (Thomas O Chisholm)
   - We rejoice in the goodness of our God (Carol Owen © 1994 Thankyou Music)
Appendix 2 – Pictures for “Warm up”

1. Buckingham Palace

2. Legoland Windsor

3. No. 10 Downing Street
1. Photocopy the door above six times onto six pieces of A4 white card. Colour each door a different colour.

2. For each photocopied set of doors, cut along the dotted lines then stick the left hand and right hand edges of the cut out doors onto another piece of white card, so that the doors can open and shut.

3. On the piece of white card behind the doors, write down the appropriate words of the memory verse:
   Behind door 1 write, “I am” behind door 2 write, “the door.” behind door 3 write, “The person who” behind door 4 write, “enters through me” behind door 5 write, “will be saved.” and behind door 6 write, “John chapter 10, verse 9.”
Appendix 4 – Monologue Reading: John 10:7-10

Cast: Shepherd (dressed in a long robe and covering over the head), 4-5 children acting as sheep. They could walk on all fours and be dressed in a white t-shirt

Props: A staff if possible for the shepherd.

(Enter Shepherd who walks towards the sheepfold with 4-5 children acting as His sheep. When he reaches the sheepfold he stops and says:)

Shepherd: I tell you the truth. I am the door for the sheep. (Goes and stands in the opening of the sheepfold) All the people who came before me were thieves and robbers. The sheep did not listen to them. I am the door. (Shepherd herds his sheep into the sheepfold. When he has done that he lies down across the entrance)

The person who enters through me will be saved. He will be able to come in and go out and find pasture. (Shepherd stands up and herds his sheep out of the sheepfold and they go and find pasture)

A thief comes to steal and kill and destroy. But I came to give life—life in all its fullness. (Shepherd exits with his sheep)

Appendix 6 – Picture of Green Grass for Talk 2
“Good Grass” To Feed On

1. I AM LOVED BY GOD

“but God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.”
(Romans 5:8)

2. GOD IS GOOD

“Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good…”
(Psalm 136:1)

3. I BELONG TO GOD

“Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God”
(John 1:12)

4. I HAVE PEACE WITH GOD

“….we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.”
(Romans 5:1b)