

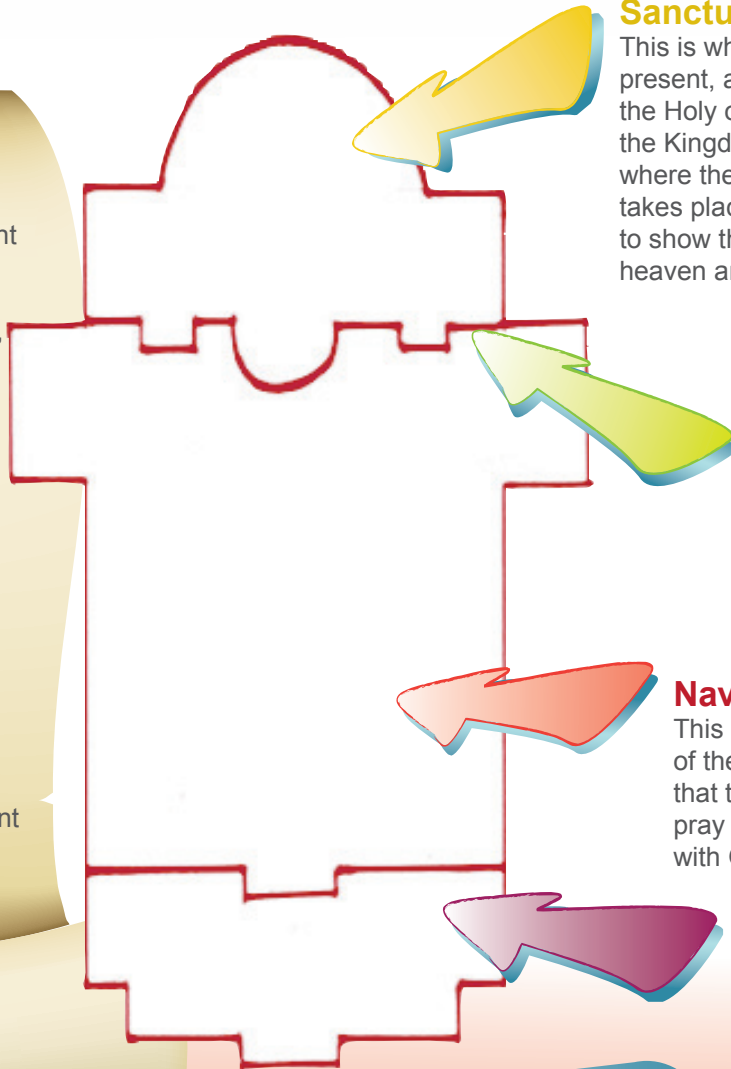
The Church Building

An Orthodox Church is a holy place where God lives and is always present. Christians go to pray so that they can feel closer to God. In the times of the apostles, there were no churches, so people gathered in private homes or secretly. As Christianity evolved with the help of St. Constantine, buildings dedicated to Christian worship were built. These Houses of God are built in a particular way in order to help us worship. Every church is dedicated either to a Feast day or to a Saint. When we are in an Orthodox Church we are surrounded by God's love, the saints, and our brothers and sisters in Christ.



1. Churches are built in specific shapes to represent different aspects of our Faith: shape of a cross (Jesus dying on the cross), shape of a ship (Noah's ark, a safe place in our stormy lives), a circle (church is a reflection of the Kingdom of God).

2. Churches are all dedicated to after a Feast day or a Saint. They usually face the rising sun in the East. There is usually a dome which represents Heaven. There are also bells to call the faithful to prayer which ring in different patterns depending on the service.



Sanctuary (Altar)

This is where we believe God is present, and where He dwells is the Holy of Holies. It represents the Kingdom of Heaven. This is where the miracle of the Eucharist takes place. The Altar is elevated to show that it is a place between heaven and earth.

Iconostas

This is a wall of icons that separates the altar from the nave. In the center are Royal Doors that only the clergy can use during Services, and two side doors with icons of the archangels on them. The icons represent Christ's life and the saints.

Nave

This is the middle section of the church. It is here that the faithful gather to pray and get sanctified with God's heavenly light.

Narthex

This is the entrance of the church. All are welcome here. This shows us that God welcomes everyone, even those who have not been baptized yet.

The Beginning of the Church

"And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hades will not overcome it." **Matthew 16:18**

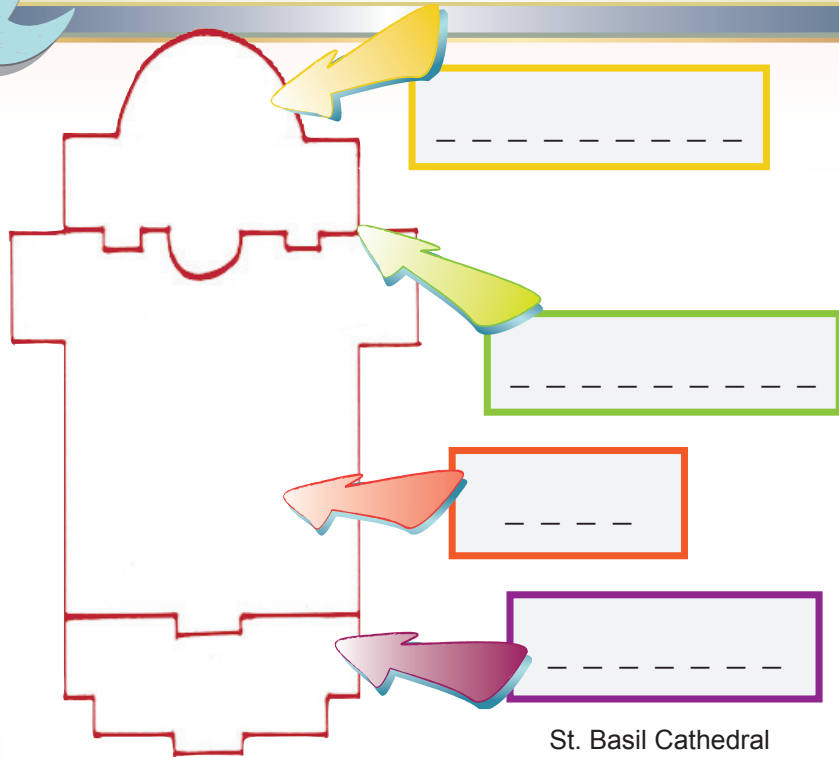
Name: _____ Date: _____

Identify the different parts of the church.

NAVE SANCTUARY NARTHEX ICONOSTAS



Hagia Sofia - exterior



Color this church using bright colors.



St. Basil Cathedral



PRAYER UPON ENTERING A CHURCH

I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear I will worship toward thy holy temple. Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness because of mine enemies; make thy way straight before me, that with a clear mind I may glorify thee forever, One Divine Power worshipped in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Church Building

{Teacher's Edition}

Lesson Objective:

To have children become familiar with the different shapes and parts of our church.

Introduction:

An Orthodox Church is a holy place where God lives and is always present. Christians go to pray so that they can feel closer to God. In the times of the apostles, there were no churches, so people gathered in private homes or secretly. As Christianity evolved with the help of St. Constantine, buildings dedicated to Christian worship were built. These Houses of God are built in a particular way in order to help us worship. Every church is dedicated either to a Feast day or to a Saint. When we are in an Orthodox Church we are surrounded by God's love, the saints, and our brothers and sisters in Christ. Orthodox Church we are surrounded by God's love, the saints, and our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Bible Reading

The Beginning of the Church

"And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church and the gates of Hades will not overcome it." Matthew 16:18

Highlights:

1. Churches are built in specific shapes to represent different aspects of our Faith: shape of a cross (Jesus dying on the cross), shape of a ship (Noah's ark, a safe place in our stormy lives), a circle (the church has no beginning and no end), and an octagon or square (church is a reflection of the Kingdom of God).
2. Churches are all dedicated to after a Feast day or a Saint. They usually face the rising sun in the East. There is usually a dome which represents Heaven. There are also bells to call the faithful to prayer which ring in different patterns depending on the service.

Sanctuary (Altar)

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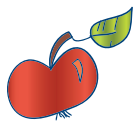
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Narthex

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Activity:

Have children identify the different parts of the church, then color the drawing.

Prayer upon entering church:

I will come into thy house in the multitude of thy mercy: and in thy fear I will worship toward thy holy temple. Lead me, O Lord, in thy righteousness because of mine enemies; make thy way straight before me, that with a clear mind I may glorify thee forever, One Divine Power worshipped in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.