

FAITH@HOME

September, 2017

For: Individuals, Couples, Families with Children or Teens

St. James United Church of Christ (Havertown, PA)

As a church, we seek to equip and empower individuals, couples and families with children to: talk about their faith, pray in ways that are comfortable and comforting, ritualize important moments, and reach out in service and support of others. Therefore, at the end of each month we provide an activity in each of these areas, which you can do at home to grow and strengthen your faith. We hope you will try at least one, maybe even all four, during the month.

DEVOTIONS: PRAYER AND THE BIBLE

Hand Prayers

1. Gather in a comfortable space and pray aloud: *Dear God, thank you for always listening to our prayer. Amen.*
2. Recall that the apostle Paul taught people about living as Jesus' followers. One thing he told Christians to do was to pray every day. Read aloud, Philippians 4:4, 6-7
"Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."
3. Our hands can be a simple guide for prayer. Offer up your prayer petitions as you wiggle each finger:
Thumb: The thumb is closest to the heart. Begin by thanking God for the people who are closest to you, including parents, siblings, grandparents and other relatives, and close friends and neighbors. Ask God to love and protect these people.



Pointer finger: The pointer finger reminds you to pray for those who teach and heal - people who "point" you in the right direction. This might include teachers, doctors, coaches, ministers, and Sunday School teachers. Pray that the Spirit will give them wisdom and patience.

Tallest finger: The tallest finger reminds you to pray for those who are in charge, including leaders of nations, and area leaders. Pray that God will guide them to make wise decisions.

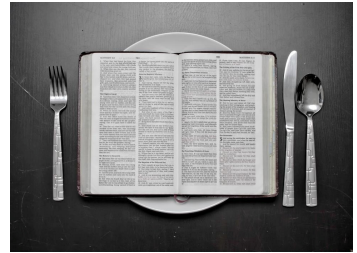
Ring finger: The ring finger is the weakest finger; it reminds you to pray for those who are weak, sick, hungry, or in pain. Pray that God will strengthen and heal them, and send people to care for them.

Little finger: The smallest finger reminds you to pray for yourself.

RITUAL AND TRADITION

Breakfast or Dinner Devotions

Start the academic year/school year by adding God's Word to your family's breakfast or dinner menu. Like a good breakfast or dinner, incorporating this simple practice into your daily routine will help everyone start and end the day right!



1. Cut slips from the Breakfast/Dinner Devotions worksheet; place in a basket on your table, as you would a basket of bread.
2. Each breakfast or dinner, have one family member choose a slip of paper from the basket and read the verse aloud.
3. Conclude the reading with the following response:
Reader: *This is the Word of God.*
All: *Thanks be to God.*
4. Take a moment to discuss these questions:
Who said this?
What do you think it means.
Don't worry if you're not able to answer the questions on the spot, but keep them in mind, as they'll make for good family conversation later when you have time to look them up in your Bible.
5. Say this prayer aloud to close:
God, we know that we need your Word every day, just like we need food. Help us to learn the things you want us to learn, and to show your love to everyone we meet today. Amen.

SERVICE

Change for a Change

Help others by saving pennies or nickels or dimes.
Measure your progress along the way.



1. Say this prayer aloud to begin.
God, guide us as we save pennies to help spread your love to others. Amen.
2. Read aloud the two Bible verses. Talk/think about their meaning.
*Luke 6:38: "Give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you."
2 Thessalonians 3:13: "As for you, brothers, do not grow weary in doing good."*
3. Gather all the pennies or nickels or dimes in your wallet and in your car. Put them in a plastic container or jar.
4. Decide if your church or another charitable organization will receive your money when you have finished collecting at the end of the month or year.
5. On your family calendar, mark four check-in dates to meet and count the money to date. Write the amount and date, and tape it on the jar or plastic container.
6. On the fourth check-in date, celebrate what your family has accomplished. Arrange to deliver the money you've gathered to your church or other organization you chose. Then, deliver the money.

CARING CONVERSATIONS ABOUT FAITH



Friendships: Old and New

With each new school year comes new friendships. Whether you are currently a student or not, think and talk about the friendships that have been in your life and the ones that remain over time.

1. Make a list of people you used to be close friends with, but don't spend much time with now. After each name, write a short note about why you used to be friends and why you stopped spending time with that person.
2. Have each person tell about their lists. Talk about the different types of friendships indicated by these lists. Discuss: What types of friendships have remained present in your life? In what ways have your friendships changed over the years?
3. Invite family members to describe how it feels when friendships change or end. Encourage each other to recall some examples and stories. Identify coping strategies that help when friendships change.
4. Pray aloud:
God, thank you for friend - friends who were part of our lives in the past and friends who bring joy to our lives today. Help us be open to new friendships and relationships. Amen.

Mealtime Devotions

<p>Psalm 150:6</p> <p>Let everything that has breath praise the Lord! Praise the Lord!</p>	<p>Proverbs 3:5</p> <p>Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding.</p>
<p>Matthew 5:14</p> <p>You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden.</p>	<p>Matthew 28:20</p> <p>Behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.</p>
<p>Ephesians 4:32</p> <p>Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.</p>	<p>Deuteronomy 6:5</p> <p>You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.</p>
<p>Isaiah 43:1, 5</p> <p>Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine ... Fear not, for I am with you.</p>	<p>Hebrews 13:8</p> <p>Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever.</p>
<p>Psalm 119:105</p> <p>Your word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.</p>	<p>Luke 6:35</p> <p>But love your enemies, and do good, and lend, expecting nothing in return, and your reward will be great.</p>
<p>1 Thessalonians 5:15</p> <p>See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone.</p>	<p>Matthew 22:37</p> <p>And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.</p>
<p>Matthew 22:39</p> <p>You shall love your neighbor as yourself.</p>	<p>Philippians 4:6</p> <p>Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.</p>