

FAITH@HOME

August, 2017

For: Individuals, Couples, Families with Children or Teens

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

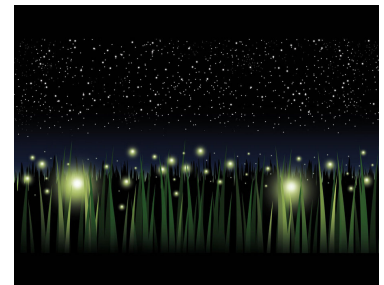
As a church, we seek to equip and empower individuals, couples and families with children to: talk about their faith, pray in ways that are comfortable and comforting, ritualize important moments, and reach out in service and support of others. Therefore, at the end of each month we provide an activity 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

Lighting Up Prayer

1. Say this prayer aloud to begin.

God of light, we joyfully greet the arrival of summer and the unhurried fun it brings. Remind us to watch for signs of your loving light in all that we do, and help us to be light to others. Amen.



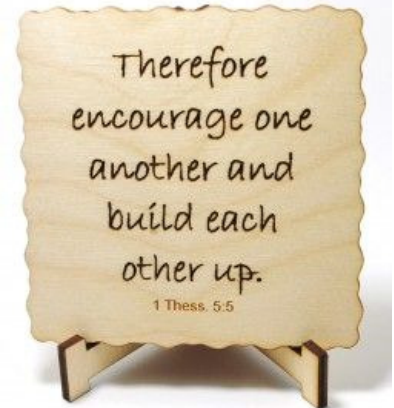
2. Throughout the Bible, the image of light is used to describe God's love for us. Read aloud [Psalm 119:105](#), [Matthew 5:14-16](#), and [1 John 1:5](#) from your Bible. Discuss:
 - In the Psalm verse, what does God's light do for us and for all people?
 - In the Matthew passage, who is the "light" that Jesus is talking about? What does it mean to "be light" to someone else?
 - In the 1 John verse, what does it mean to say "God is light"? What does that say about God?
3. Working together, make a list of the special "lights of summer" you might see. (For example: lightning bugs, campfires, fireworks, lightning, sunshine . . . you may think of others!)

4. Talk about how these lights of summer might remind your family to pray. For example, you may agree that whenever you spot a lightning bug, you'll pray for God's loving light to shine on someone who is sick. You may decide that whenever you're sitting around a campfire, you'll pray for God's help to "be light" by doing a random act of kindness the next day.
5. Post your list of summer lights and the prayer prompts you've agreed upon in a prominent place in your home.
6. Close your time together by singing, "This Little Light of Mine."
This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine! (repeat 3 times)
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.
Everywhere I go, I'm gonna let it shine! (repeat 3 times)
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.

RITUAL AND TRADITION

Honoring Life Givers

1. With friends and/or loved ones, take turns naming someone who has helped you see possibilities when you felt there were none, or someone who has done something to give you a sense of new life. You might want to go through the alphabet to make the game more challenging.
2. Agree together to write on the paper near your exit door the name of one person daily who has spoken good news to you in the past. Think about that person during the time you are away. How might you encourage someone else in honor of the person who blessed you with good news?
3. When you return to this place, write the name of someone with whom you tried to share good news.
4. At the end of the week, get together with your friends and loved ones and share your "good news" experiences and how they affected you each day.



Additional Activity: Watch the TED talk by Jarrett Krosoczka, "How a Boy Became an Artist".

SERVICE

Unexpected Care Corp

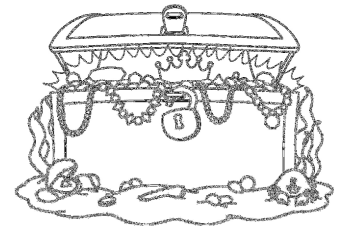


There are many people who care for our community outdoors when it is uncomfortably hot. Show appreciation and care by taking a cold refreshment and a treat to them where they are working.

CARING CONVERSATIONS ABOUT FAITH

Share a Treasure

1. Gather everyone together and give each person a treasure chest and a pen or pencil.
2. Have each family member write his or her name on the treasure chest (the littlest ones may need help with the writing portion of this activity); then write two special gifts or talents that they possess on the treasure chest.
3. Ask each person to pass his or her treasure chest to the right; then have that family member write two things they think are special about the person. Keep passing the chests until everyone has added "treasure."
4. Afterward, give everyone his or her chest and take turns reading treasures aloud.
5. Discuss the following questions:



What did you learn about yourself that you didn't know before?
Did you discover any treasures that you and no one else in your family possess?
How often do you tell others about their special qualities and "treasures?"

Optional: color and otherwise decorate the treasure chests (after or during the discussion). All are encouraged to keep their treasure chest to review every now and then as a reminder of their God-given gifts and talents.

6. Close with the following prayer:
Gracious God, thank you for revealing yourself through the gifts and talents you have bestowed on each of us. With your grace, help us to use these gifts to serve one another and bring you greater glory and honor. Amen.

