

FAITH @ HOME

Week of February 9, 2020

Fifth Sunday after the Epiphany

ADULT AND SMALL CHILD

READ: Matthew 5:13-20

REFLECT: Where do we usually put the lights in our house? Not on the ground or in a closet. They are on the ceiling or up on a table, where they can shine light all over our house.

We need light. If there is no light, you bump into things. You might hurt yourself and hurt others. Light helps you see where you should go.

In the same way, our actions, when they are loving and kind, show others how God wants us to live. Love is like a light and so are you.

When you see your family or friends being kind to one another, it often makes you want to be kind. The good things we do are an example to other people. They show other people how God wants them to live and how they should treat others. We can all be lights for each other.

RESPOND: Ask an adult to light a candle in a dark room. Try to be silent for a minute and think about how the light makes you feel. Think about why you need light. Talk to each other about what you feel. Then, take another minute to think about the people who are like a light for you and show you how to be kind. Say a prayer for them together.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: JEREMIAH SIERRA



Jeremiah Sierra is currently the communications manager for Cities of Service, a nonprofit that works to change the way local government and residents work together. He has worked for a variety of other nonprofit organizations and Episcopal churches, most recently Trinity Church Wall Street, where he was the managing editor of the quarterly magazine. He has written for *Forward Day by Day* and other publications about faith. He lives in Brooklyn with his wife and three-year-old daughter.

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ADULT AND ELEMENTARY

READ: Matthew 5:13-20

REFLECT: Have you ever lit a candle in a darkened room or turned on a flashlight while walking outside at night? Isn't it incredible that a small, simple light can cast a bigger glow than we realize in the darkness? The season of Epiphany, as well as the weeks after it, is also known as the "season of light." It is during this season that we remember the light of the world that has been brought into the darkness of the world to bring light to all who would seek it. Jesus comes to fill the law and bring justice and restoration to the lowly and broken. Likewise, we who follow Jesus carry that light within us, and we are called to let that light shine in how we love God and love those around us. We are called to be the light that shines brightly--for the lost, the outcast, the widow, the prisoner, the immigrant, the lonely. The light of God we carry within our hearts, even on our own, can light another's dark day. But if all of us shine together? We can set the world on fire with the love of Jesus.

RESPOND: With your family, friends, or another trusted grown-up, watch this music video to learn the song "This Little Light of Mine:" <https://youtu.be/ty9bZNX4uWA>. As you learn it and sing it, think about how you can take your little light and let it shine in the world around you. You could share the song with others, or you can offer to do something kind to help another person out. Take the time to share your light with another person this week.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: ERIN WOLF



Erin Wolf is a Youth Minister hailing from Little Chute, WI where she lives with her four kids. She serves both All Saints Episcopal in Appleton and the Episcopal Diocese of Fond du Lac. Her focuses include children & youth, camp & retreats, music, service work, interactive prayer for all ages, and more. You can connect with her via email at ewolf@diofdl.org.

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ADULT AND YOUTH

READ: Matthew 5:13-20

REFLECT: Do you identify as a disciple of Jesus? Jesus tells the disciples they are indeed the salt of the earth and the light of the world. He gives them an identity. He also reminds them that with the identity comes responsibility. Having knowledge about God is not enough. To truly be a disciple of God, we must live it. What does that look like?

We can know that God desires for the world to be whole. We can know it isn't, and we can see it in the world around us. We know there are people who are lonely. We know there are people who are on the margins because of their race, sexuality, gender, or because of their socio-economic status. We know there are people who are hungry and homeless. And we know we can't fix everything.

Culture often tells us the problems are too big or it's none of our business. Culture sometimes tells us to "stay in our lane." Jesus tells us we are free to respond in love because he first loved us. Jesus tells us we can't do everything, but we can do something.

Where do you see this in your daily lives? Is there someone who sits alone every day in the cafeteria? Do you pass the same homeless person every day? Is there someone who works in a store you frequent who looks sad or even angry?

RESPOND: Make a plan to do something and then do it. Sit with the person who always sits alone. Will others find it strange? Possibly--but do it anyway. Stop and talk to the person who is homeless. Respond kindly to the disgruntled store employee no matter what they say or do. Above all—love.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: KATHERINE DOYLE



Katherine is the Coordinator for Youth and Young Adult Ministries and the rector of St. Thomas Episcopal Church in the Diocese of Kentucky. She lives in Louisville with her husband and whichever of her four young adult children happen to be home at the time. Katherine's greatest joy is being a mama: first to her own four and then to all the children, youth, and young adults who call her Mama Doyle. She often finds God in the ordinary messiness of everyday life and writes about it on her blog thesixdoyles.blogspot.com.

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ADULT AND ADULT

READ: Matthew 5:13-20

REFLECT: When we find something we love, we can't help but tell others about it. A good meal, a great book, and a classic movie are all things we rave about to others. Many of us are guilty of not doing the same with Jesus. We have placed our hope in this life-saving Savior and yet we keep Jesus' good news to ourselves. We become a light that is hidden; a lamp placed under the table. We are called to shine brightly before others. If we can celebrate our favorite sports teams, singers, and foods, how much more should we proclaim the love of Jesus to others?

Don't feel the pressure to do this perfectly. Your job is to proclaim the excellency of Jesus and trust him to do the work in people's hearts. You are simply sharing of the transformation that has happened in your heart with others. Let your light shine in this world. Let your coworkers and family see how you live and when they ask why, be prepared to tell them.

RESPOND: Spend time praying for how you can let your light shine in this world. Think of your gifts, talents, and abilities and how you can use those for the glory of God. Do one thing this week that shares your gifts, talents, and abilities with others.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: CJ QUARTLBAUM



CJ is a writer and speaker from Brooklyn, NY. He spends most of his time hanging with his family, playing with his daughter, playing basketball, and reading. He's passionate about seeing the gospel spread in his city, in Brooklyn as it is in heaven. You can catch up with him on Twitter @CJ_Quartlbaum or at CJQuartlbaum.com

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