



Starting this week, we will have a different format for Family Faith Time. It will involve **Read, Reflect and Respond**; along with bonus content of videos, musical pieces, activity pages, etc that goes along with the upcoming Sunday readings.

It is also intergenerational! Below are activities for different age group pairings, so you can have conversations with everyone at every life stage.

- The Adult and Small Child pairing is designed for preschool students and younger
- The Adult and Elementary pairing is for children in elementary (or grade) school
- The Adult and Youth pairing is for youth in middle and high school
- The Adult and Adults pairing is for use with young adults and adults.

Adult and Small Child

Read: Psalm 100

Reflect: Chances are, you are already a professional at being joyful. I bet sometimes you get the sillies and can't stop laughing. Or maybe you have a tickle spot that someone you love knows how to turn on. Maybe you love squealing really loud while you run as fast as you can. Or maybe you make the biggest and best splashes in the pool or the bathtub. I bet you are very joyful, at least a little bit, almost every day. God loves that about you. God loves to hear you giggle and laugh, the way you scrunch up your face or clap your hands. In fact, this whole Psalm is all about God asking us to laugh along with all of creation—to tell each other all the stories of how God has loved us and saved us and given us good things. God asks the whole world to rejoice over this love—the way you rejoice over seeing your grownups at the end of the day, or your favorite dessert on a regular Tuesday night.

Respond: Spend some time with your little having some fun—get messy, watch some cat videos, read a book, learn to fold towels into funny shapes. If you want to learn a fun and simple way to sing this psalm as a round, you can check out this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rnjeRpyoEQU> Whatever you do—rejoice. Remember to talk about the fun thing you did during evening prayer time. Read the Psalm together each night this week. There is also a video song about the 12 Disciples you can sing together <https://youtu.be/rcH3PBRkqw8>

Adult and Elementary

Read: Genesis 18:1-15

Reflect: What are some things that make you laugh? I used to like the nursery rhyme that ended with, “and the dish ran away with the spoon.” Picturing a dish and a spoon running away together makes me laugh so hard!

In this reading, Sarah heard news that was so unbelievable that she can't do anything but laugh! Elsewhere in the Bible, it says, “a cheerful heart is a good medicine” (Proverbs 17:22 NRSV). Laughter is vitally important. God helps us to be cheerful and provides us with many things about which we can laugh.

Respond: Take a walk outside and look around you. What colors do you see? What scents do you smell? Did anything in nature make you laugh? Nature is one of the things God provided to keep us cheerful.

Adult and Youth

Read: Matthew 9:35-10:23

Reflect: Telling someone about something they don't care about or don't want to hear isn't always easy. Sometimes, they end up being really interested. Sometimes, they roll their eyes at you. Jesus sent the disciples to reach out to the "lost sheep of Israel," the ones who had been rejected and sent away by the shepherds and flock for various reasons. Some of them, when they heard about the amazing things Jesus was doing and preaching, were excited. Others worried that the message wasn't for them or had been so burned by others, that they didn't want to receive the message. This can happen any time we try to speak truth or justice to our community or the world.

One of my favorite lines from this is when Jesus tells the disciples to "shake off the dust from your feet" when they are not received by a household or community. (Matthew 10:14, NRSV) This, historically, was a kind of curse placed upon that group, as is referenced later about judgement being worse there than in Sodom and Gomorrah, but it is also a good message in the face of resistance. When you speak truth and justice but are met with anger and dismissal, shake the dust off your feet and keep walking.

Respond: Check in with your friends this week. See if they have picked up a new hobby or interest this summer or share one with them.

Adult and Adult

Read: Matthew 9:35-10:23

Reflect: The first time I ever went to an Episcopal church was when I was a senior in college and my friends invited me to join them. For someone who was raised as a Southern Baptist, I was completely outside of my comfort zone and I experienced a lot of newness in that hour. I will never forget that service, and I'll never forget the sermon from that morning, either.

The preacher opened with a quote: "If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together." I was struck by the power and point of that statement, especially regarding the way that we followers of Jesus are to live in the world.

This quote is very applicable to the story in the Gospel of Matthew, in which Jesus called the Twelve and sent them out. Even as God, Jesus didn't work alone, but called together a group to be his closest co-workers in his work proclaiming and ushering in the Reign of God. As we work to proclaim truth and minister justice in our own lives, may we follow the example of Jesus, to go far and go together.

Respond: This week, reach out to those people who are your "co-workers" in Christ. Share your gratitude with them and consider how you might continue to go together into the world for Christ.

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