

FAITH @ HOME

Week of July 5, 2020

Fifth Sunday after Pentecost

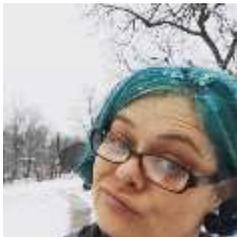
ADULT AND SMALL CHILD

READ: Matthew 11:16-19, 26-30

REFLECT: Jesus sometimes has really hard things to say to grown-ups. But every time he talks to little children—or about little children—he only says the best things. Jesus knows that you pay attention to what people are doing, not just what they are saying. Jesus knows that you understand love better than bigger people give you credit for, and that you aren't bothered by complicated factors like money or bills or how time zones work. You know that love always wins—you know what it looks like and feels like, even when love isn't giving you your own way. You might not like it, but you also know that God knows more than you. I know plenty of grownups who forget that—but Jesus doesn't and he loves that you remember those things. You also know when to rest, when to lean on your favorite grown up, when to cuddle up and be still. Jesus asks us to pay special attention to you, when you trust that love always shows up and that it's ok to rest, because you're teaching us that lesson too. Thank you, friends.

RESPOND: Ask your little one if there are things about God they want to teach you, things they might not think you know, or stories they want to tell you. See what you learn.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: RACHEL JONES



Rachel Jones is the associate editor for Forward Movement. She and her husband live on a farm with a dog, too many cats, several rabbits, and a flock of very opinionated chickens.

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ADULT AND ELEMENTARY

READ: Matthew 11:16-19, 26-30

REFLECT: Have you ever helped your parents (or another trusted adult) transport groceries from the car to the house? I have! One time when I was in the 4th grade, we purchased groceries for the whole month at one time. My brother and I helped by lifting and carrying bag after bag. When we were done, I had to sit down and take a break. Jesus invites us to take rest. If you begin to feel tired, frustrated or fed up with how things are going, ask Jesus to give you rest.

RESPOND: Take 3 deep breaths in and out. As you feel your chest rise and fall, remember that Jesus gives you rest.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: IMANI DRISKELL



Imani Driskell is the Director of Children's, Youth, and Family Ministries at St. Michael's-in-the-Hills Episcopal Church in Toledo, Ohio. Imani was born and raised in Brooklyn, New York and is a bagel and pizza enthusiast. She enjoys learning, teaching and speaking about Faith Formation. Her favorite novel is *The Living is Easy* by Dorothy West.

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ADULT AND YOUTH

READ: Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

REFLECT: Perspectives can be very different. One person could think something looks like a rabbit, and another could think it looks like an old man. When the world met Jesus, he didn't fit their perspective of a Messiah. The Messiah, some thought, was supposed to be a great warrior who would fight to be the King of the Jews, but that wasn't Jesus' message. Jesus sought to bring comfort and care to those who were broken and heavy, those who weren't cared for, and he called others to do the same. These battered and broken people believed with their whole hearts, some to the point that just touching Jesus' cloak produced a miracle. This wholly and holy devotion to Jesus and God shows the power of resting in God and turning to God. Now, Jesus isn't telling us to just pass everything off to him. Jesus is asking us to also take up his way of love, of caring for others, and if we all work together, this yoke will be light as we work together. It's this way of love that we are called to follow with our thoughts and words and deeds.

RESPOND: Pick up a rock. Nothing huge. Carry it with you today. At the end of the day, hold that rock, that burden, and pray that Jesus will take that rock and whatever may be burdening you onto himself. If you can, hide that rock/burden somewhere, outside, in a pond, or in the back of your closet. Just let it go, and let Jesus carry it for a while.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: MAGGIE PAUL



Maggie Paul is the Assistant Director for Youth and Family Ministry at Christ Episcopal Church in Charlotte, NC where she focuses on Middle School and relational ministry as well as curriculum. She previously served at the Cathedral of St. Philip in Atlanta, GA where she developed and implemented a comprehensive Confirmation curriculum. She is very excited to bring aspects of this curriculum to her new parish. As an undergraduate with a passion for youth ministry, she served as a summer camp counselor and Episcopal student center "church mouse," and she continues to use her gifts and talents as a singer and musician to nurture her own journey and inspire others on theirs.

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ADULT AND ADULT

READ: Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

REFLECT: Every Wednesday, following our big community gathering and dinner at UGA, we pray Compline. It's no surprise that around midterms and towards the end of semesters, the students who lead us often choose the reading that is also the conclusion of our Gospel reading this week.

"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11:28, NRSV) These words are beautiful to the souls of those who are in the midst of final papers, projects, and exams. Jesus speaks directly to those students and to all who know what it means to be exhausted, to be burdened, to be weary.

This promise of restoration and relief is important to we who seek to be devoted to God with our whole heart. God does not expect us to work ourselves into the ground. Instead, Jesus names his Way as one that provides rest and healing, so that we might follow Jesus with burdens removed and with hearts filled with love.

RESPOND: Every day this week, take a few minutes to be quiet and simply rest in the presence of God. Hand your burdens over to Christ as an act of trust and worship of God.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: CLAYTON HARRINGTON



Clayton Harrington is the Episcopal Campus Missioner at the University of Georgia. He is also the Rector's Associate for Youth and Young Adult Ministries at Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Athens, Georgia. In these roles, Clayton is passionate about the potential of Christian community, worship, and service to empower youth and young adults to grow into the people that God has made them to be. Clayton is a transitional deacon and will be ordained a priest in June 2020 in the Diocese of Atlanta.

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