

CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY: WE SHARE BECAUSE WE CARE!

The following activities can be tailored to both the time and space available. Choose one, more, or all to do with the children. There is a survey game, a lesson, and an art activity.

Survey Game – Would You Rather?

In groups of 2, ask the following questions and ask the groups to share thoughts with one another based on questions like (you can add more should you like):

- Would you rather know what's going to happen or be surprised?
- Eat a doughnut or a muffin?
- Sit in the front of the sanctuary or back?
- Listen to music or make a new friend?
- Dress up for worship or dress casually?
- Sit in worship with your friends or your family?
- Spend time inside or outside?
- Share with a neighbor or share with a family member?

Discuss

We all have different things we like, different ways to do things, but all of us like to know that God loves us and that our church family loves us. We all want to know that we are welcome just as we are.

In the large group, talk to each other about what it feels like to be welcome. What does it feel like to not be welcome? What does it feel like to share something with another person?

Jesus encourages us to share with others, but in a very particular way. Let's look at this scripture and see if we can make sense of it together.

Scripture Reading

Read the One Great Hour of Sharing focus text in these two versions:

Matthew 5:14-16 from THE MESSAGE paraphrase:

¹⁴⁻¹⁶ "Here's another way to put it: You're here to be light, bringing out the God-colors in the world. God is not a secret to be kept. We're going public with this, as public as a city on a hill. If I make you light-bearers, you don't think I'm going to hide you under a bucket, do you? I'm putting you on a light stand. Now that I've put you there on a hilltop, on a light stand—shine! Keep open house; be generous with your lives. By opening up to others, you'll prompt people to open up with God, this generous Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:14-16 from THE INTERNATIONAL CHILDREN'S BIBLE:

¹⁴ "You are the light that gives light to the world. A city that is built on a hill cannot be hidden. ¹⁵ And people don't hide a light under a bowl. They put the light on a lampstand. Then the light shines for all the people in the house. ¹⁶ In the same way, you should be a light for other people. Live so that they will see the good things you do. Live so that they will praise your Father in heaven.

Song

Sing "This Little Light of Mine" and teach the actions. There are lots of action videos on YouTube.

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Lesson

You will need the following supplies:

Battery-operated votive candles

Bowls big enough to cover the candle.

Have enough supplies for all the children participating.

Remind the children about the scripture passage - people don't hide light under a bowl.

Ask the children to light the candle and then go around the room and ask them to name something they are willing to share with another person. Since kids often think concretely, you might want to share examples like love, happiness, joy, but they might also want to share things like their snack with a friend at school. It is okay to let them be creative. Share with them that what they are offering are actually GIFTS they are giving to others.

After they have a chance to share, ask the children to cover their candle and then ask them what happens to the gift (named above) they were going to share?

Give some time for responses.

Encourage them to keep their candles uncovered and lit while they work on their art project. They can also take the candles home with them as a reminder to "let their light shine."

Activity – Collaborative Art

You will need the following art supplies—as many different kinds as possible:

Posterboard

Paper

Markers

Crayons

Colored Pencils

Pipe cleaners

Glitter

Playdough

Invite the children to create a collaborative art project in which they show how they are connected to others and how they can **share light** with them. Do not limit their ideas but encourage them to work together on the project.

After it is created, display the art in a prominent place around the church.

