

Light Shine Craft Activities: Celebration Stations

This craft may be used as a gathering activity for the Light Shine Rally Day program. It is designed to be one of the seven craft stations or learning centers known as the Light Shine factory, but it may also be used as a separate devotional activity to develop the theme on other occasions. The activities are intended intended to help children three years old through sixth grade and their families conceptualize faith as a flame that glows for all the world to see. The seven faith practices identified in the ELCA Call for Discipleship are highlighted in the craft activities as we “fan the flames of discipleship” and nurture ways people of all ages can shine for Jesus.

The complete instructions for this activity follow, along with needed supplies and specific Bible texts.

*** Note: This craft takes a little longer to accomplish so adjust your time accordingly.*

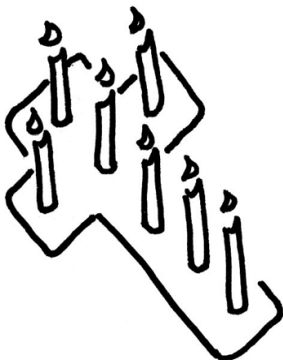
Necessary Supplies:

Candle Thoughts Handout (see pg.2-4), carpenters in your congregation who have table saws, 2 X 4 boards, wood stain or brown shoe polish , rags or paper towels, laytex gloves, wood glue, table coverings and seven candles.

Preparation:

Make copies of the Candle Thoughts Handout (pg.2-4) for each family or participant. Ask carpenters to cut the pieces for one cross candle holder kit per family unit. The kit should consist of two 3" pieces and one 12" piece. Drill seven 3/4" holes to a depth of halfway into the board. Position one hole at the center of each of the smaller pieces and five holes evenly spaced across the 12" piece, to hold a total of seven candles. Make a sample candle holder. Stain the pieces. Then, glue the pieces together to look like a cross. See Example Below.

Display a card with the seven faith practices on it as you invite participants to think of ways they observe or experience them. Introduce the candle holder as a “celebration station,” a place where they can celebrate the activities of discipleship as they follow Jesus at home. Point out that the seven candles represent the seven faith practices and use the Candle Thoughts sheet to illustrate how the celebration station may be used to nurture each practice. Encourage them to purchase candles and utilize the celebration station on a regular basis.



Candle Thoughts



#1 Pray

Think of some of the times and places you talk with God. What do you usually talk to God about? Whether you pray silently or aloud, consider using the following “tips” for including specific prayers to pray.

T = “Thank you” prayers for people, things and experiences we really appreciate.

I = “I’m sorry” prayers for mistakes we’ve made and recognition of God’s love and forgiveness.

P = Praise prayers for God’s awesome love, power and forgiveness in our lives

S = Special requests for help or healing for self or others

“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.” 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18



#2 Study

Scan the articles on the front page of a daily paper. Look at the pictures and take a moment to share your thoughts about what’s happening in the world today. Include comments about God’s presence and activity in each situation. Point out that this is one way we can learn about God. Also include time to read age appropriate devotionals and portions of scripture as individuals, families or special groups to nurture a greater understanding and appreciation for God’s grace throughout history and in the midst of your daily lives.

“Be transformed by the renewing of your minds so that you may discern the will of God, what is good, perfect and acceptable.” Romans 12:2b



#3 Worship

A young child was listening to a simple version of the creation story. When the storyteller finished, he said, “So what do you think?” Without hesitation the little one jumped up with her hands in the air and shouted, “Good job, God!”

There may be many different times and places in which you are given indications of God’s love, power and glory! You may be moved to respond with individual expressions of awe, wonder and thanksgiving or invited to respond in more formal ways with others. Either way, it’s called worship. When and where are you most inspired to worship?

“Let everything that lives and breathes praise the Lord.” Psalm 150:6



#4 Invite

No matter what we do, it always seems like more fun if someone comes along! Inviting people to celebrate special times in our lives is a natural inclination. Reflect on occasions in your lives when you have invited family and friends to join you.

Sharing occasions for celebration in our church home and family can also really be meaningful! Inviting people of all ages to come to worship or to a special program can be an entry point for them to grow in faith as they share these occasions with you.

O come let us worship and bow down, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker! Psalm 95:6.



#5 Encourage

Have you ever tried to tune into a channel on the car radio and found enough static or interference to look for another one instead? Sometimes we may react to people around us in a similar way. We may encounter signs of challenge in their lives that signal feelings of irritation, uneasiness or discomfort within us. From little ones who are in desperate need of a nap or an older children with an attitude to people who in the midst of family transitions or those who endure lives with chronic poverty or unemployment. We might be tempted to look away and let someone else take care for them. Think of people you know who might fit in some of these categories.

As Christians, we are called to be sensitive to the needs and uncertainties of others and to reach out to them through prayer and other activities that would encourage them or speak on their behalf.

“If then, there is any encouragement in Christ, any consolation from love, any sharing in the Spirit, any compassion and sympathy, make my joy complete: be of the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.” Philippians 2:1.



#6 Serve

When you eat at a restaurant or go through a fast food drive-thru, there is always someone there to serve you! They are paid to say “May I take your order? or How can I help you?” What other places provide you with services you desire?

Jesus asks his followers to be on the look-out for people in need. He asks us to voluntarily respond with care and “hands-on” service. What are some of the ways you and your family reach out to friends, family and others in need?

For when I was hungry and you gave me food, thirsty and you gave me something to drink; I was a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you gave me clothing. I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me...Lord when was it that I saw you...Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.”

Matthew 25:42-43, 45



#7 Give

Illustrate the word “give” with a hand gesture. Does it involve reaching outward? Sign language associates the word “give” with both hands out stretched.

Giving involves extending what we have to include others. In 1 John 4 it says, “We love because God first loved us.” In the verse below, it says, “Give as God has first given to you.” It gives God great pleasure to see us share our talents, gifts and resources with one another.

Think of some of the ways you share what you have with others.

God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work.” 2 Corinthians 9:8