



GOBIN CHURCH
A United Methodist Community for All

Act with Friends or Family

Children (and adults) need to know how to become helpers for others in bad times. Many of you have done acts of kindness during this isolation and pandemic time. Here is a resource for helping children be the pillar of fire on a dark journey with others. <https://tinyurl.com/y7wnolyk>

Saturday, May 16, 2020

Genesis 8:13-19 <https://tinyurl.com/y9r844a2>

Ponder

Can you imagine that day, when Noah and his family were allowed to emerge from the ark that had saved their lives? (Can you imagine the state of the ark they left behind????) Have you ever lived through a time like that, when you didn't know how you would survive? The darkness and deprivation. The fear of the unknown. The eventual discovery of a new world, a new life? What if today you were the one landing? I would want to check my location and that of my friends and family. But all we know is who we are and that God is with us.

Pray

Dear God in heaven and on earth, and in and over the ocean. Is today the day we land? Shall we finally share the bread like Paul did? And what do we do about the folks and places, and beloved animals and things we left behind or threw overboard? Amen.

Act with Family or Friends

Children (and others) sometimes "miss the boat."

<https://tinyurl.com/yalkp7cy> but don't show that if it is too scary.

Fortunately, in our lives, we often have second and third and forty-fifth chances to get on board or stay on board, or even get off the boat according to plan. Name some things you could leave behind as you begin a new life this week. Ponder with your others how to do so.

Monday, May 11, 2020

Exodus 13:17-22 <https://tinyurl.com/yd8gwg47>

Ponder

God is taking the Israelites the long way home. When we had five children at home and I was preaching at Bridgeton UMC, my husband often took the long way back to Greencastle. This could be excruciating, especially if the drive over had seen evidence of blood drawn in the third seat back. But gradually our children started looking out the windows. Eventually they recognized roads, and at some really daring point in their upbringing they sometimes drove for the first time on those back country roads. I think the whole point was for us to arrive home different than we had started out.

Pray

Dear God, why is this taking so long? When will we be settled? We don't recognize these roads yet. And behind us there is an army. "Eyes forward, and keep your hands to yourself." You say. "Look, is that a pillar of fire in this darkness?" Amen.

Act with Family or Friends

Children often feel powerless, feeling they are being taken or guided or forced into something they don't like. Yet when adults love them, they can offer structure which eases anxiety and hope that outlasts bitter disappointment and rage. Listen to Carrie Underwood sing, "Jesus, Take the Wheel." Cry if you want to. <https://tinyurl.com/o32e8s2>. Let God change one thing for you.

Tuesday, May 12, 2020

Proverbs 3:5-12 <https://tinyurl.com/y6uu4r5q>

Ponder

What would it mean in my life if I trusted God with all my heart? I do like the part about not trying to figure everything out all on my own. That means to me that when I have figured as long as I can, and can get no further, it is time for me to turn it over to God. I do like the part about listening for God's voice wherever I go and whatever I am doing. I am an introvert, but can enjoy a whole day in conversation with God.

It usually goes something like this, “So, what’s next? Oh that? Really? Ok. I guess. Wait, that might be too hard. What, try harder? Ok, I have and now what? Yes, I did my best. Your heart is glad? Thanks be to God! Now over to you!”

Pray

Dear God, this is surely the hardest thing you have ever asked of me in the darkest times, to trust you. Especially when I need correction. Especially when I must learn and change. I think though that trusting is one of those things only I can do. You can’t trust for me. I am on the road to you, though, with trust in my heart. Amen.

Act with or without Friends and Family

Children (and adults) sometimes experience severe anxiety about things they cannot control. There was a time when I trusted God to do what I wanted, and was broken hearted when things went another way. Now I am making a list in my journal of ways I can trust God to BE, instead of things I want God to DO. This could be a list for your fridge!

Wednesday, May 13, 2020

John 8:31-38 <https://tinyurl.com/y7jwuuph>

Ponder

Jesus is trying to teach his hearers what it means to be free from slavery. He knows they are trapped, even in their hatred of him. They are ashamed and afraid and want to punish the one who says “let’s change this.” Have you ever been attacked by a friend when all you said was “Please, please, come this way!”? Jesus says we can be slaves to sin, or act as beloved children. A friend of ours met my husband when they were both grocery shopping late one evening. He said something my husband came home to tell me. “It’s easy to be good.” What a transformative realization. It is indeed, much easier that way. And it is very good when there are willing dads are the ones who go do the late grocery shopping. (Understanding that is not every family or situation).

Pray

Dear God, we grapple sometimes with temptations, and can resent those who try to show us the easier way. We might prefer to face into the dead ends of our lives, feeling enslaved to what is, instead of freed for what could be. Help us see the easy joy of goodness, as you turn us around. Amen.

Act with Family or Friends

Children and adults sometimes enjoy acting out different scenarios. Let everyone take turns pretending to be bad in a scene, and then turning around to be good. Sorry, this may be antique for some of you. It’s good for dancing and getting dizzy though. <https://tinyurl.com/jdn3kjq>

Thursday, May 14, 2020

Psalm 66:8-20 <https://tinyurl.com/jdn3kjq>

Ponder

What a passage! Picture this God, who takes us to hell and back, and pushes us to our very limit as a test. I for one, have not believed in this God, who would cause suffering to teach me a lesson. Instead, I have believed that God was with me through it all, with that pillar of fire and pillar of smoke saying “this way lies meaning. Over here is Love.” But some folks have understood their sufferings in life as more a part of God’s plan for them, and found that somehow a comfort.

Pray

Dear God, sometimes I don’t know how to understand the difficulties and suffering in my life. I might even be tempted to blame them on You. I know you can take my anger, but help me move to understanding how you are in the midst of it all, redeeming the suffering for me. Amen.

Act with Family and Friends

Children (and adults) sometimes do not understand the relationship between their actions and their suffering. I will always remember when my son was very small, we went out on our porch to discover that dogs had gotten into the trash, and it was strewn everywhere. Robert said to me uncertainly, “I did that?” I hurried to reassure him, and could also have told him with certainty that God didn’t do it either. But God was surely with us as we made a happy disgusted time out of a yucky process of clean up. Where can you clean something up together, and acknowledge God is in the mess with you?

<https://tinyurl.com/y7be8j4y>

Friday, May 15, 2020

Acts 27:13-38 <https://tinyurl.com/ycalejrp>

Ponder

This continues the harrowing story of Paul’s 14 days at sea on his way to Rome. The sailors fear for their lives, ration their provisions, throw their cargo overboard and search desperately for a place to land the boat. At times they despair, but Paul, with a rebuke he can’t resist and deserves to make, tells them not to despair. He is the one who loans them hope in the dark times. He is their pillar of fire.

Pray

Dear God, when we are tempest tossed, we sometimes fail to listen to the warnings you put all around us. When we cannot see a happy ending, help us still to hope in you. Amen.