

Dear Parents:

Wow! What uncharted waters we find ourselves in these days. I and my colleagues are thinking about ways we can stay connected as a church community during this time and I am thinking particularly about ways to resource you as parents to answer hard questions, turn to scripture for support and continue the covenant you made at your child's baptism to help them grow in their faith. I am grateful that I already had the pattern of writing to you each week. I will be expanding this devotion to include other resources and activities you can do at home, if you choose, while we can't gather for Sunday school. I am also working with Leanne Olinger to offer some online options for classes to connect with each other. I am very interested in what you find helpful, what you need and are looking for while at home with your children, and any ideas you have for ways I can support you. Please feel free to reach out to me by email at KMcGregor@UnityFortMill.org or call or text me at 803-417-2962. I am here for you and your families.

Devotion for Sunday, March 22, 2020

Getting Ready: We are in the season of Lent. The color for Lent is purple, the getting ready color. We are getting ready for the mystery of Easter. (You might choose to light a candle and place it near you as you do this devotion together to remind you that God is always with us and that right now, you are moving close to God in a special way.)

Opening Prayer: "Thank you, God, for bringing us together today. During Lent, help us learn to follow your Son, Jesus, more closely. Amen."

Read Bible Story:

This week's devotion uses [1 Samuel 16:1-13](#), the anointing of David as King of Israel. Our story comes from the Old Testament, the part of the Bible that tells us stories before Jesus was born. (The link to the scripture is the CEV translation of the Bible that we use in our children's Sunday school classes. If you have that translation or any other at home, see if your child can find the scripture passage or look together to find it. You may also read this story from a children's Bible you have at home.) The first king of Israel was Saul, but Saul made some bad choices and stopped listening to God. Today's story begins as God makes plans to choose a new king.

Questions for Reflection:

1. How does someone come to have the important job of president? (People vote.)

2. How does someone usually come to have the important job of king or queen? (The job is passed down through the family.)
3. Which son did Samuel think God would tell him to anoint as the next king? Why?
4. How did Samuel know that David was supposed to be the new king?
5. Why do you think God chose David to be the new king? What about this choice might have surprised God's people?
6. What do you think God could see in David that Samuel could not?
5. What do you learn from this story about how God chooses people for important jobs?
6. How might remembering this Bible story help you when you are asked to do an important job?*

Activities:

1. Find sunglasses, binoculars, magnifying glasses, or any other items you have at home that let you see things differently. Look at things inside your house and outside your window using these items. Talk about how looking through these items changed the way you saw things. Then, talk about how this relates to this Bible story and what it tells us about how God sees things.
2. Give each family member white paper and markers to draw self-portraits. Include words or symbols of things you enjoy (sports, music, writing, art) and gifts you have (being a good listener, having a generous heart, being a fair leader). Share your drawings with your family. Talk about the fact that God looks on our hearts and all the gifts and talents we have and calls us to use those gifts to make the world a better place. Discuss ways that God might be calling each person in your family to use their gifts and talents during this time of social distancing. How might your family serve those in need right now using the particular gifts God has given your family members? Make a plan to do one of your ideas this week.

Closing Prayer: "Loving God, sometimes we feel that our gifts are overlooked. Help us to hear the ways you call us and to see each others' talents and abilities with eyes of love and care. Amen."

Peace,

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*Questions, activities and prayers from *Feasting on the Word* curriculum for children on this text.