DEVOTIONS

SHARING GOD'S STORY @ HOME

SCRIPTURE OF THE WEEK – Love doesn't do anything wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is what fulfills the Law. ~ Romans 13:10

PRAYER OF THE WEEK - Loving God, thank You for moving into our neighborhood through Jesus. Open our eyes to see others as You see them. Help us to love our neighbors with kindness, courage, and compassion. Teach us to be the kind of neighbors who make this world more like Your kingdom. Amen.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

As you read the stories for the week, ask yourself: **What do you think is the point of** each story?

SUNDAY	Romans 13:8-10	THURSDAY	Luke 10:25-37
MONDAY	Matthew 22:36–40	FRIDAY	Micah 6:1-8
TUESDAY	John 1:1-14	SATURDAY	Mark 12:28-34
WEDNESDAY	Galatians 5:13-14	SUNDAY	Luke 15:11-32

*If your household includes younger children, use a child-friendly Bible. You might find that the children's Bible you use may not include the story assigned for the DAILY BIBLE READINGS. **Read to your kids anyway. Just pick a story!**

SERVICE CHALLENGE

SERVICE is how we enact God's great love for the entire world.

This week, take one intentional step to show love beyond your usual circle. Choose one of the following—or come up with your own:

- Welcome someone new: Introduce yourself to a neighbor you haven't met or speak to someone at church or school you don't usually talk to. Listen to their story.
- **Cross a boundary**: Reach out to someone who is different from you—by background, language, culture, or perspective—and offer a simple act of kindness.
- **Support global love**: Donate gently used clothes or household items to a local ministry or thrift store that supports missions or refugee families.

Bonus Reflection:

At the end of the week, ask: *How did this help me better understand God's love for all people?*

Think about devotions as a continuation of our worship. The following basic pattern could be one way of forming your household's devotions. Adapt as necessary!

GATHERING

- Light a candle to help you focus this time as "God time."
- Prayer of the Week

CARING CONVERSATION

Take a moment to check in with each other or to use the questions below.

- Highs & Lows: Name one thing you saw today that made you happy. Name one thing you saw today that made you sad.
- Thinking about This Week's Story: we'll explore what it means to feel deeply and express our emotions in healthy, faithful ways. But first, this week's story reminds us that loving our neighbor begins with seeing them—and ourselves— as beloved by God. Jesus calls us to embody mercy, not just feel it, as we build a neighborhood shaped by compassion.
- Getting Ready for Next Week's Story: Next week, we'll talk about how speaking the hard things—our grief, regrets, and pain—can lead to healing. This week, we saw how God's love meets us with open arms, even when we feel unworthy or far from home. Forgiveness begins with grace, but healing deepens when we find the courage to speak.

DAILY BIBLE READING

Read aloud from the DAILY BIBLE READING from the front. What do you want to remember from this reading?

PRAY TOGETHER

• Hold each other's hands. Pray together, either silently or aloud, and end with "Amen!"

CLOSING

- If you used a candle, extinguish it as a sign of the end of the devotion time.
- Rituals & Traditions: A Blessing to Share

With permission, mark one another with the sign of the cross on each other's hands or forehead, and say, **"May you go through this day with eyes open to God's love around you, a heart ready to welcome others, and hands eager to serve. May you know you are deeply loved—and called to love your neighbor in return. Amen.**"

The "Four Key Faith Practices"—Caring Conversations, Devotions, Service, and Rituals & Traditions—are a framework developed by the Rev. Dr. David Anderson of Milestones Ministry and used with permission from Vibrant Faith Ministries, Bloomington, MN (<u>www.vibrantfaith.org</u>).

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