

## **Nurturing Faith Ideas**

### **April – August 2016**

April 3: In John 20 we read the story of Thomas, who doubted. What causes you to doubt? Acknowledge your doubts before Christ and ask him to give you the gift of faith.

April 10: In John 21 Jesus asks Peter three times, “Do you love me?” Imagine Jesus asking the question to you. How do you respond to Jesus? Pray your affirmation of love to Jesus.

April 17: Both John 10 and Psalm 23 speak about Jesus as our shepherd and we as his sheep. Read through Psalm 23 several times, and then write it in your own words.

April 24: From John 13:31-35, list five ways that Jesus has loved you. Based on ways Jesus has loved you, list five ways you could love people in your family, church, workplace or school. Make the effort to do one of things you listed this week.

May 1: Jesus describes the promised Holy Spirit as “The Advocate” (John 14:26, NRSV). Other translations use “The Companion” (CEB), “The Friend” (The Message), or “The Helper (TEV). How have you experienced the presence of the Holy Spirit in your life? What other word might you use to describe this gift from God?

May 8: As we celebrate Mother’s Day, who has been a woman in your life who has helped shape who you are today? If this woman is still living, let her know what she has meant to you. Give thanks to God for the gift of her presence in your life .

May 15: Today is Pentecost Sunday when we celebrate the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on waiting disciples. Where do you see God’s Spirit poured out in your church, your community, your life these days? Share with a friend.

May 22: On clear nights, the moon and stars shine bright in the darkness of the night sky; sometimes we, like the Psalmist, feel small in comparison. Yet, we have been given a special place in creation; God has created us a little lower than God to take care of God’s creation. Look around for a place you can help take care of God’s creation this week, and invite a friend or family member to help you with it.

May 29: In Luke 7:1-10 Jesus met a centurion who asked Jesus to heal his servant. Jesus was amazed at the centurion’s trust that Jesus could and would do so. How would someone know that you trust Jesus? Share this with a friend or family member.

June 5: In Psalm 146 the Psalmist begins by saying, “Praise the Lord! Let my whole being praise the Lord!” How would you use your whole being to praise God? What is the most important thing about who you are and how might you use it to praise the Lord? Praise the Lord!

June 12: Spring will soon make way for the long, hot days of summer. This week go out and find evidence of new life in God's creation. Discover that new life may come from God even when it isn't expected.

June 19: Our calendar says this is the twelfth Sunday in "Ordinary Time" Do something extraordinary this week. Help someone else know that they are "extra-ordinary" in the eyes of God.

June 26: Luke 9: 57 says that "as Jesus and his disciples traveled along the road, someone said to him, 'I will follow you wherever you go.'" Think about where Jesus might be leading you to go.

July 3: In Luke 10: 1-11 we find the story of Jesus sending people out to travel around and tell people about God. Where are you traveling to this summer and how can you tell people about God?

July 10: Luke 10:25-37 is the story where a man is very hurt and needs help. Make some cards today for shut-ins in the church or a member who is in the hospital.

July 17: Read Luke 10:38-42. Are you more like Mary or Martha? Take some Sabbath time today to take a walk, to read a book or just relax. Take some time to focus on Jesus and your faith.

July 24: How do you talk to your friends and family? Is it always easy to reach them. God always is easy to reach and hears us. Take time today to talk and pray with God.

July 31: Luke 12:13-21 tells the story about some people who really, really like things. Think back to different ages of your life, what were the "gotta haves" for you. How can you fill your life with God's love instead of things?

August 7: Hebrew 11:1 defines faith as the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. Nurture your faith today by giving the assurance of hope to someone who is homeless. Volunteer this week at the homeless shelter in your area. Donate supplies or reading materials. Nurture your faith by nurturing the faith of those who have no hope.

August 14: "Restore us, O LORD God of hosts; let your face shine, that we may be saved." Psalm 80:3. Smiling comes easy to some of us. Try walking around this week with a big smile. If you smile on the outside, you will begin to smile on the inside. When you smile, others will see the face of God shining.

August 21: The West Virginia State Fair ends today. The community of West Virginia came together to enjoy rides, food, exhibits and concerts. Organize a mini fair day at your church. Invite your local community to come and enjoy rides and food and hospitality. Bring the fair to those who could not travel to the fair.

August 28: Give the gift of your heart today. Ask: “how are you?” and then be willing to listen, truly listen, with your heart. Then pray for this person(s) during the week. Follow up with a phone call to ask again “how are you?” Nurture your faith by showing compassion.