

FAITH @ HOME

Week of March 24

Third Sunday in Lent

ADULT AND SMALL CHILD

READ: Psalm 63:1-8

REFLECT: This is a song full of praise, a song that uses parts of the body to proclaim one's love for God. We hear how one can use their lips, hands and mouth to praise God. Notice all of these body parts with your child. Toddlers love to recite the names of their bodies over and over again. Here is a chance to embrace this interest in prayer. Explore together how each body part could be used to show love for friends, family and God. Think about other body parts that might be used to show love and what those body parts might be doing to best show love. Consider what might be your favorite way to show love and praise with your body. It may be different for you and your child.

RESPOND: Choose someone that you or your child thinks might not feel so loved. Maybe this is someone who doesn't get much praise. Maybe this is someone who is just thirsty or hungry for a rich feast. Or, maybe it's someone who doesn't have a comfy bed. Decide together how you could use your bodies to show love to this person. It may not involve kissing or hugging, especially if you don't know this person well, but it could include preparing a meal or even joining in walk to end hunger.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: ELSA ANDERS COOK



Elsa Anders Cook is an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ who has served churches in New York, Maine, Washington and Pennsylvania. She volunteers at church now while supporting her husband in his service as a Major in the United States Army. Together, they have a toddler and a baby on the way. She blogs at cookingwithelsa.org.

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ADULT AND ELEMENTARY

READ: Exodus 3:1-15

REFLECT: “God said to Moses, ‘I am who I am.’... This is my name forever, and this my title for all generations. **I am who I am.**” What’s in a name? Poets ask this question, and so do parents-to-be! Names are important. Someone’s name is often one of the first things we learn about them. In this reading, Moses experiences God as a voice from within a burning bush. Moses does not learn God’s name, but rather God says “I am who I am,” and God reminds Moses that God is the God of all of Moses’ ancestors, back through all generations. The enormity of God – or even a name for God - is too much for Moses or anyone else to comprehend, and yet God reassures Moses that God always was and always will be present for Moses and for everyone.

RESPOND: Talk about names! Share stories of how you and your family members were named. How did it become a name for you? Talk about other things we might name – such as pets, dolls or stuffed animals. Some people name their houses or vehicles. How does it feel to give a name to something? Does it make that pet or that thing feel more important or more personally connected to you? Are people, places or experiences more than just their name? We might know someone’s name, but can we fully understand all there is to know about them? God says to Moses “I am who I am.” God is beyond anything we can understand or name, yet God is with us always.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: LISA BROWN



A native of Pittsburgh, Lisa is passionate about creatively enriching the spiritual lives of people of all ages. She is the author of *The Best VBS Workbook Ever!* She is also a contributor to: *Faith Formation with a New Generation*, 2020 InsideOut camp curriculum, The Anglican Communion’s Thy Kingdom Come global prayer initiative, and the 2018 Lenten Kyrie Project. She is also a frequent writer for Building Faith, a workshop leader, and an active member of Forma and the eFormation communities. Lisa was previously the Director of Children’s Ministry at St. Paul’s Episcopal Church in Mt. Lebanon, Pennsylvania. She is currently the Director of Digital Ministry for Membership Vision. She is intrigued by the idea of helping people find God in the digital space and writes about it on her digital ministry blog at <https://www.membershipvision.com/latest-posts/>.

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ADULT AND YOUTH

READ: Exodus 3:1-15

REFLECT: Moses had been raised as the son of an Egyptian pharaoh, but had fled Egypt after committing murder. Eventually, he married into a family of nomads and lived as a shepherd. Like your average moth or middle schooler, Moses becomes distracted by a bush that seems to be burning, but not consumed. Moses then has a challenging conversation with the God of his ancestors, and God directs Moses to lead the Israelites from slavery in Egypt to a land of milk and honey. Even though Moses seems unsure of the mission, God reassures him that God will be with Moses.

RESPOND: God tells Moses to take off his sandals as Moses approaches the burning bush because it is “holy ground.” We have opportunities to treat the places we go as “holy” spaces. What makes your church, school, front lawn, bedroom, or other places “holy?” How do you treat those “holy” places? Take some time to approach those “holy” places, take your shoes off, and sit in silence. After some time, say a prayer to God to help you maintain this place’s “holiness.”

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: WALLACE BENTON



Wallace Benton serves as the Assistant to the Rector for Youth Ministries at St. David's Episcopal Church in Roswell, GA. He's been fortunate to have grown up in the Episcopal Church and became interested in youth ministry after volunteering with his former youth program after college. Wallace has worked diocesan retreats and activities such as New Beginnings and Happening. Currently, he is the lay director for New Beginnings in the Diocese of Atlanta. He is also a member of the Episcopal Youth Ministry in ATL podcast (which you should check out immediately!)

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ADULT AND ADULT

READ: Exodus 3:1-15

REFLECT: When faced with oppression, it is easy to feel like we are alone. It is easy to feel as though God does not hear our cries or see our pain. The truth is, God does see and God does hear. God says to Moses from the burning bush that God has seen the affliction of his people and heard their cry. God sends Moses to Pharaoh to command him to let the people go. When Moses asks, who shall I say sent me? God responds simply with I AM. There is power in God's name. I AM means that God is the highest authority, everything and everyone will ultimately answer to God alone. So while you are struggling at work, or with an abusive relationship, or being treated unjustly in this world, you can rest assured that this is not the end. The afflictions of the wicked will not go unpunished. I am reminded of the words of the old song *In Christ Alone*: "No guilt in life, no fear in death, Jesus commands my destiny. No power of Hell, no scheme of man, can ever pluck me from His hand." We live with the un-breaking, never failing, all powerful love of God on our sides. May we know the comfort of God's mighty hand over our lives today.

RESPOND: Jesus calls us to love our enemies, something that is not particularly easy to do. Pray for those with whom you have conflict and if possible, seek reconciliation.

ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: CJ QUARTLBAUM



CJ is a writer and speaker from Brooklyn, NY. He spends most of his time hanging with his family, playing with his daughter, playing basketball, and reading. He's passionate about seeing the gospel spread in his city, in Brooklyn as it is in heaven. You can catch up with him on Twitter @CJ_Quartlbaum or at CJQuartlbaum.com.

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