

# FAITH @ HOME

Week of April 7, 2019

Fifth Sunday in Lent

## ADULT AND SMALL CHILD

**READ:** John 12:1-8

**REFLECT:** Six days before the Passover (a day of remembrance when the Jews honor God protecting them while in Egypt), Jesus went to a town named Bethany to visit the home of His friend Lazarus. This is the same Lazarus who Jesus raised from the dead. Dinner was made for Jesus. Martha served and Lazarus sat with Him at the table, but their sister Mary took a bottle of expensive perfume and put it on Jesus' feet. She wiped the perfume away with her hair. Everyone could smell the perfume. Judas, the disciple that would later betray Jesus, was upset by what Mary did and said that the money she spent should have been given to the poor. Judas wasn't really concerned about the poor but about himself as he would steal the money that people would give to them. Jesus spoke up and said that Mary was preparing His body for when He would be buried. He reminded them that they would always have the poor, but that He would not always be with them.

**RESPOND:** What are your favorite smells? What do you think about when you smell those scents? Ask a trusted grownup to help plan a visit to a place that has your favorite smell. Then, draw a picture of your outing!

## ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTOR: QUANTRILLA ARD



Quantrilla (Quanny) Ard is a faith-based personal and spiritual development writer who lives in the DC Metro area with her husband Donny and three littles (Quentin, Dylan, and Logan). In addition to being a dedicated wife and mother, she is an entrepreneur, doctoral student, and curator of all things lovely. As a woman on her own quest of shining a light on the shadowy, hidden places in her life, she writes as the PhDMamma about things she knows to be true in hopes to encourage others to do the same. Her spiritual goals and her love for Christ propel her quest to share the spiritual journey with other women- to walk alongside them and encourage them with words, deeds, and wisdom. Quanny believes in the power in collective strength, community and fellowship. You will find her wherever people are sharing stories of triumph.

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## ADULT AND ELEMENTARY

**READ:** Isaiah 43:16-21; Philippians 3:4b-14

**REFLECT:** “I am about to do a new thing;” says God in the words of the prophet Isaiah. In his letter to the Philippians, Paul also sees his life in a new way. He explains that he used to think of himself as better than everyone else, because he followed all the rules. Now, he realizes that God loves him not because he followed the rules; Paul realizes that he and all people are beloved of God because of the grace shown in Jesus. Paul has a new way of looking at his life.

**RESPOND:** Talk about this question: **why do we have rules?** Rules can help us live safely. Drivers follow rules so they don’t crash. Teachers have rules so that students can learn. Playgrounds have rules so no one gets hurt. Parents have rules for children about what to eat and when to go to bed so that children will be healthy. But if a child goes to bed late, or doesn’t eat broccoli, that doesn’t make them a bad person. Like parents who always love their children – even when children don’t follow the rules – God always loves us. We are God’s beloved not because we follow the rules, but because of the grace of Jesus.

## 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:** Philippians 3:4b-11

**REFLECT:** Paul begins this part of his letter by describing his history as a Hebrew, a Pharisee, and righteous under the laws of Moses. After his conversion to follow Jesus, he looks back at his past and pushes it away. It does not matter to him anymore because Paul's one goal is building upon his relationship with Christ. He is "forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead."

**RESPOND:** Have you ever done anything that you regret? Rude to a friend? Purposely ignored a classmate? Yelled at your parents even when you know they didn't mean to annoy you? Paul encourages us to take those things that separate us from God, in his case, his lineage and actions as a Pharisee, and put them behind us. Instead of reminiscing on our bad acts or our past, we should constantly look forward to building upon our relationship with God. What are things you need to put behind you?

## 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:** Isaiah 43:16-21

**REFLECT:** Sometimes we need to sit back in awe of who God is. The all-powerful, sovereign, King of the universe, God. The God who knows every hair on your head. The God who has appointed all of your days here on earth. The God who is holding all of life in the palm of His hands. This is the God in whom we have placed our trust and hope. Isaiah 43 is a reminder that we have nothing to fear or worry about in God. God makes a way out of no way. God provides water in the desert. God is constantly working all things together for our good. Our response to all of this? Verse 21 says it, we declare God's praise. We don't just praise God for all that has been done for us, but simply because of who God is. God is worthy of our praise because God is God. Praise is the expression of our admiration. God is mighty, and all powerful, and God has made us into God's people. God rescued us from sin when we had no way, simply because, God loves us. May we praise God today.

**RESPOND:** A big aspect of praising God is thankfulness. Try to make a list of 100 things you're thankful for.

## 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](https://twitter.com/CJ_Quartlbaum) or at [CJQuartlbaum.com](http://CJQuartlbaum.com).

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