

WORSHIP

EASTERN TERRITORY

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OCTOBER 2014

GET YOUR GLOW ON

BY MAJOR KIM D'AMARO

Concept

“Get Your Glow On” refers to a fresh encounter with the Lord by drawing from Saul’s example. This is an opportunity to gather to pray individually and corporately through the use of prayer stations.

Program Outline

Welcome

Scripture Reading: Acts 9:1–19
 Instructions Regarding Prayer Stations
 Devotional “A Glowing Encounter”
 Chorus: “Open the Eyes of My Heart Lord”
 Closing Prayer

Set Up

- Set up three prayer areas in a large room or in the chapel. Where possible use candles and soft lighting to prepare the women for worship. The following supplies are needed at each area: paper, pens, candles, Bibles, copies of the Scripture printed out with instructions for the prayer focus and reflection.

Prayer Station One

A Glowing Encounter

- Scripture: Acts 9:1–6
 - Prayer Focus
 - o This Scripture passage talks about a man who was “breathing out murderous threats against the Lord’s disciples.” Saul was known as a man who wanted to imprison anyone following Jesus. He even went the extra mile by getting it in writing. He wanted people to know that he had the approval of the leaders to follow through on his evil schemes and plans. However, something happened that he didn’t plan on. He had an unexpected encounter with the very one he was persecuting. On the road to Damascus he came face to face with Jesus.
- Prayer: Lord, I confess that there have been times when I have had my own agenda and plans. Just now I would ask for a fresh encounter with You.
- Reflection:
 - o Take time to pray and to write down how you have encountered the Lord this week.
 - o Provide small tea light candles or flashlights for the women to take as a reminder of Saul’s encounter with the Light of Jesus.

Prayer Station Two

Glowing With Obedience

- Scripture: Acts 9:6–9
 - Prayer Focus
 - o This Scripture passage talks about the responses of Saul and the men with him. They were given clear instruction about where to go and what to do. Saul and his men obeyed the Lord.
- Prayer: Lord, I confess that there have been times when I have not always obeyed You. Help me to make wise choices and to do the things You ask me to do—even if I am afraid or worried.
- Reflection:
 - o Take time to pray and to write down some things the Lord may be asking you to do. Choose to move forward and obey Him regardless of your feelings.
 - o *Give the women small wooden crosses glued to bookmarks printed with a verse about obedience. (Example: Joshua 1:7, Luke 11:28)

Prayer Station Three

Glowing With Healing

- Scripture: Acts 9:10–19
 - Prayer Focus:
 - o This Scripture passage describes how God told Ananias to go to Saul. Even though Ananias feared Saul because of his reputation he was obedient (Acts 9:1–14). Ananias laid his hands on Saul, who had been unable to see for three days. Immediately he was healed and scales fell from Saul’s eyes. This led to Saul’s baptism and the Lord’s amazing use of his life to bring many to Him.
- Prayer: Lord, I confess that there are areas of my life where I need healing. Help me to come to You and trust You to bring the healing that I need.
- Reflection:
 - o Take time to write a prayer to the Lord asking Him to heal you.
 - o *Give the women small silver sequins as reminders of the scales that fell from Saul’s eyes when he was healed and filled with the Holy Spirit.

A Glowing Encounter

An Encounter

Acts 9:1-6 records an encounter on the road to Damascus that Saul had with Jesus—the very persons he was persecuting.

This Scripture talks about a man who was “breathing out murderous threats against the Lord’s disciples” (verse 1). Saul was known as a man who wanted to imprison anyone following Jesus. He went to the high priest to ask for a letter to the synagogues so that he might take any followers of Christ as prisoners to Jerusalem. However, something happened that he didn’t plan on. He had an encounter with Jesus.

Obedience—Acts 9:3-9

As Saul neared Damascus, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” (verse 3) The men with him were speechless. They heard the sound but did not see anyone (verse 7). When Saul got up from the ground he was blind. He and the men with him were given instructions from the Lord that they obeyed. They were told to go to Damascus to await further instructions.

Have you had an encounter with Jesus? Are there times when you chose to obey the Lord—even when you were afraid? (*Ahead of time ask a couple of the women to be prepared to share a time in their life when they chose obedience over fear.*)

Healing—Acts 9:10-19

God used Ananias to bring healing to Paul. Although Ananias had heard reports about Saul and his persecution of the Christians, he was obedient to God who told him, “This man is my chosen instrument to carry My name before the Gentiles.” As Ananias prayed over Saul, immediately the scales fell from Saul’s eyes and he could see. Saul was then baptized and healed physically and spiritually. Then he began to tell people about Jesus. What a transformation.

Is the Lord leading you to speak to someone about Him? Maybe it is someone who seems like the last person on earth open to the gospel. Will you, like Ananias be obedient to the Lords leading?



CERTAIN AS THE DAWN

BY LT. OLIVIA MUNN

(Psalm 130:5-6, Hosea 6:3)

Decorations

In this program we will focus on the idea of waiting, with the mental picture of the sunrise. If you can dim the lights, do so. The goal is to make the room look like nighttime right before the coming of the dawn—dark, but with a slight glow of warm light. Take all clocks out of the room. Invite people to take off their watches and cell phones and put them with the clocks in a basket outside the room.

Refreshments

Serve Sun chips and sun-tea, or breakfast food as a reminder of waiting for the morning.

Worship—Lectio Divina

Invite the women to engage in the spiritual discipline of Lectio Divina. This Italian phrase refers to divine or inspirational literature.

- Ask the women to sit silently with their eyes closed and their bodies completely still. Allow a few moments of complete silence and stillness.
- Read Isaiah 40 or Psalm 130 out loud, slowly and intentionally. There is no need to rush.
- Repeat this process 4 times, with a different woman reading the Scripture each time. It might feel uncomfortable at first, but that is how all disciplines feel when we first try them.
- Encourage the women to listen carefully and to let the Holy Spirit point out one word or phrase that He wants to emphasize to them today. It may be one word, or it may be an entire verse.
- After listening to the Scripture portion four times, invite the women to open their eyes.

Ask them to share what word or phrase struck them. They do not necessarily need to explain why that phrase stood out; they just need to say it out loud.

Waiting on the Lord

Have you ever worked an overnight shift? When I was younger, I worked at a homeless shelter from midnight until 7:00 am. If you have ever had this experience, then you would know that the last hour of work feels like an eternity.

In Psalm 130:5, 6 the Psalmist writes that he waits for the Lord more than the watchman waits for the dawn. He is describing a similar phenomenon as an employee working overnight might feel. At the shelter at 6:30 in the morning, my entire body and soul and mind would just yearn for the sun to rise and work to be over. The job of a watchman was to stay up all night, standing on the city wall, keeping guard to make sure that the citizens were safe. I am sure that the watchman would just hope and pray every night that the sun would rise quickly, and that he could go home to rest in peace and safety. This feeling is what the Psalmist compares to his longing for the Lord.

Hosea 6:3 encourages us that the Lord's coming is as certain as the dawn, as surely as the sun will rise. How encouraging to know that just like the watchman longing for the dawn, the Lord will come to us. We can be confident in this. And because we know that He will come to us, "let us press on to know Him." As we seek to know God, we seek Him with the confidence that one day we will see Him face to face. Listen to the song "Hosea" by Shane and Shane taking time to reflect on the words and quietly sit in prayer. You can find a video and the words on YouTube®.

Lord, we long for You. We are as desperate for You as a watchman is for the sunrise. Thank You that Your return is certain—as certain as the dawn.

Sing song #66, "The Power of Your Love," *Hallelujah Choruses*, HC5-T16, emphasizing the words "And as I wait I'll rise up like the eagle." Then sing the song or play the video of "Everlasting God," (You can find a video and the words on YouTube®) emphasizing the words, "Strength will rise as we wait upon the Lord."



ANTICIPATING THE BIRTH OF THE LIGHT OF THE WORLD

BY CAPTAIN KRISTEN MEANS

Set-Up

Set chairs in a circle around a small table covered with a cloth. On the table, place the Advent wreath and the candles (3 purple, 1 pink, with the white candle in the center).

Program Outline

Welcome

Scripture Isaiah 7:14

Light the Christ Candle in the Center of the Advent wreath.

Opening Prayer

*Song "You Are Holy," by Michael W. Smith
(There are a number of videos of this song on YouTube®.)*

Lighting of the Candle of Hope

Reader One: The first candle we light is the candle of hope. Hope promotes the belief in an outcome related to events and circumstances in one's life, or is the state in which a person cherishes a desire with anticipation. We enter this Christmas season with hope in the One who came to fulfill all prophecies of the long awaited Messiah. We often get wrapped up in our own lives and circumstances and find ourselves asking the question, "What kind of hope does Christ offer me this Christmas?" The answer is, Christ wants to fulfill every desire and void in our hearts. He wants to be the fulfillment in our lives. We need not put our hope in the things of this world. We just have to put our hope in the One who came to save the world. (Light the purple candle of hope.)

Focused Meditation: At this time, reflect inwardly on the deepest needs and desires of your heart. Are you trying to fulfill those desires with the things the world offers? Allow the hope and light of Jesus to fill your heart. Turn over those needs and desires to the Lord right now in this moment of personal prayer. (After a few moments continue on with the second reading.)

Lighting of the Candle of Preparation

Reader Two: The second candle we light is the candle of preparation. Often in preparation for the Christmas season we do many things to ready our homes and churches for the holiday. What fun it can be to put up the decorations, bake cookies and send Christmas cards. But often we forget to take the time to prepare our hearts to receive the Christ child. We get busy with festive engagements. Our schedules fill up and we neglect time in the Word of God. We must be sure to prepare our hearts, our spiritual homes, with just as much care as we prepare our physical homes and church homes in preparation for the Lord. We read in Romans 12:11, 12, "Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor serving the Lord. Be joyful in affliction, faithful in prayer." Be sure to be faithful even during these busy days. Prepare for the arrival of Christmas in every sense and be careful not to become distracted. Allow God to bless you through your communion with Him even during what can sometimes be the busiest times of the year. (Light the purple candle of preparation.)

Focused Meditation: During this time of mediation take a moment and reflect on how you can keep yourself from getting so caught up in the festivities of the season that you forget to commune with God. Do you have a time set aside in your schedule to rest and receive from the Lord? (After a few moments, ask a few women to share how they keep the emphasis on the Christ child throughout the rush of the Christmas season.)

Song, "Jesus Messiah" by Chris Tomlin
(There are a number of videos of this song on YouTube®)



Lighting of the Candle of Joy

Reader Three: The angels proclaimed Christ's birth with joy. (Read Luke 2:14.) The birth of the long-awaited Savior compelled the song of praise from the lips of the angels. This joyous occasion should continue to stir joy in our hearts today. Without Jesus we would have no hope, no joy, nothing to celebrate. But praise God for the gift of His Son. We should be proclaiming His name throughout the world. Unfortunately, we are often timid and keep the news of our Savior Jesus as a secret. Our challenge this Christmas should be to spread the Word of our Savior's birth and the joy we have found in Him. (Light the pink candle of joy.)

Focused Meditation: Ask the Lord to reveal to you how you can be a witness throughout this Christmas season. Maybe you feel led to share Christ with a co-worker, or to reach out to a neighbor. Open your heart to the leading of the Holy Spirit. God may use you to bring someone into a relationship with Him this Christmas. Pray for Him to show you who that could be and how He wants you to witness.

Reader Four: Read John 3:16. God's love was fulfilled in giving us Jesus. God knew that His creation was in desperate need of a Savior from sin. Ever since the first sin in the Garden of Eden when His relationship with Adam and Eve had been blemished, God had a plan for redemption. He loves us. Even though we became a sinful, wretched creation, He loved us enough to send his only Son to redeem us all. Not just those who were alive to experience His life, but all who would need that redemption in the future. The blood of Jesus covers even sinful generations to come. Only a God who loves unconditionally could have planned for His only Son to endure such humiliation, pain, and death in order to show His love for His creation. We could never thank Him enough for this gift, but we can give testimony to His saving grace in our own lives. Jesus our Messiah, we celebrate You this Christmas; we adore You tonight. (Light the purple candle of love.)

Focused Meditation: We each have come into relationship with Christ from different walks of life. Still His blood covers us each in the same way. His grace is extended to us. He saved us from the sin that entangled us. (During this time, share the love of God and His grace in your own life with the women. Then invite the women to share.)

Closing Prayer

Close in prayer by thanking God for His amazing grace. Thank Him for Jesus and His blood that has covered our sins.



JANUARY 2015

LIGHT YOUR WORLD

BY LT. ESTHER WILSON

Preparation

Use a small table, or if meeting in the chapel, the holiness table as a focal point. Decorate it with a large white hurricane candle and seasonal flowers. Have the candles that will be used as part of the candlelight service in a basket to be handed to the women as they arrive for the worship service.

Craft—Candle Holders

Materials Needed

A small clear glass candleholder

Multi-color aquarium gravel

Clear silicone

Votive candle

Directions

Apply a layer of silicone to the outside of the candleholder in whatever design desired. Pour aquarium gravel over the silicone and firmly press it into the silicone. Allow it to dry. Place a votive candle into the holder.

Program Outline

Opening Prayer

Call to Worship

“There’s No Other Name”

*Read the first verse and chorus to Song #71**

Praise and Worship

Suggested songs, “Shine, Jesus, Shine,”

“Open the Eyes of My Heart”

Scripture Reading

Romans 2:17–24 and 15:1–7; 13

(Ask two women to read a portion)

Devotional—The Light of the World

Candlelight Service

(See bottom of opposite column)

Closing Prayers

(Petitions for strength to carry

His light into our dark world.)

*Closing chorus #527**

“Except I am Moved With Compassion”

**The Salvation Army Song Book*

The Light of the World

When Moses received the Ten Commandments from God he asked Him, “Let me see Your glory . . . But He [God] said, ‘You cannot see My face, for no one may see me and live’” (Exod. 33:20–23). Then the Lord told Moses to stand in the cleft of a rock and He would cover him with His hand until He had passed by. The glory and light emanating from God was so pure and bright that Moses could not survive in its presence. We go on to read in Exodus 34:29, “When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the Lord.” Just by being in God’s presence, Moses reflected the light from Him. No light source available to us is as pure as the light that reflects from the Lord. The sun has dark spots as do other light sources. There is no other source of light as pure as what is found in God’s glory.

The text read earlier from Romans may seem rather bleak. One thing I have learned about Paul’s writings is that he will give us the bad news first. What Paul is describing to the Romans isn’t that much different from the current affairs in our present-day society. The Romans were struggling with evil and ungodly desires just as we do. In both urban and suburban societies today, we “go with the flow” or “do what feels good.” What this produces is a life of guilt, shame, and hopelessness—in other words darkness.

Do we exist to be guided by our evil desires or do we live to be illuminators of God’s light to a fallen world? We have two choices when we fall into a dark abyss. 1) We can allow ourselves to go deeper into that abyss or, 2) We can allow God to shed light on our sinful nature and reveal what must change in order for us to be the women of light He created us to be. It is because of Jesus’ redemptive work on the cross we can be freed from the evil that poisons every part of who we are supposed to be in Christ. The hope we find in Christ is transforming if we allow it to be.

Jesus said, “I am the Light of the world and whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of the life” (John 8:12). In Matthew 5 He calls us the light of the world. Look at Matthew 5:14-16, “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people put a light under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.”

Therefore, it is possible to light our world with the radiance of Christ Jesus. You see, we are called into fellowship with Christ Jesus, and are the Father’s beloved. It is only through Him that we are able to shine for the whole world to see Jesus glorified.

Albert Orsborn wrote “O is not the Christ ‘midst the crowd of today whose questioning cries do not cease? And will He not show to the hearts that would know the things that belong to their peace? But how shall they hear if the preacher forbear or lack in compassionate zeal? Or how shall hearts move with the Master’s own love, without His anointing and seal? (*The Salvation Army Song Book*, #527, v. 2).

In other words, Jesus is our example of the light of love we are to show to others. “The King will reply, ‘I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for Me’” (Matt. 25:40). Jesus came to be the light of our dark world, but He couldn’t stay in human form. He gave us the Holy Spirit to dwell in our lives and illuminates our world in love and truth. But the Holy Spirit does not dwell in darkness. We must give up our ungodly desires in order to reflect the light of Jesus to our world.

If you are ready to do that, if you want to be transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit and be a radiant daughter of God in a lost world come pick up a candle, light it, and make this your promise to carry the light of Christ into our dark world.

Candlelight Service

Play the song “People Need the Lord” by Steve Green. A sacred dance solo or group could interpret the song. Remind the women that there are many hurting people in the world who need to know the love of Jesus. Challenge them as they light their candles from the large candle on the holiness table to remember that they can be a part of Christ’s great commission to bring His light into a suffering world.

EMBRACING THE SPIRIT OF EXCELLENCE

BY MS. TRESSA BURKE

Introduction

Embracing the spirit of excellence may seem like a lofty endeavor. It is however a very attainable goal. Understanding that we determine our own destiny in regards to our level of excellence will make the task much easier. The ultimate goal is to honor God with our lives.

Decorations

Set the tables using tablecloths, either linen or plastic; use what you have. Do the same for dinnerware: china or paper plates, stainless steel flatware or plastic. Use centerpieces for the tables that can double as door prizes.

Games

Two Truths and a Lie

Introduce the activity by saying that this is a way for people to learn some fun things about each other that don't come up in everyday conversation. Each person should write down three statements about themselves that no one else in the room already knows. Two statements must be true and one should be a lie. The more subtle or believable the statements are, the better. Take turns having each person share their three statements. The group must guess which statement is the lie. For example: 1) I broke my leg snowboarding in high school. 2) I speak three languages. 3) I shaved my head after losing a bet.

Common Threads

Divide the group into smaller groups of four or five. Instruct each group to find five to ten (the number would depend on the time frame) things they all have in common. Challenge them to think creatively— places they have traveled, TV shows they've watched, places of birth, number of children or grandchildren. The first group to come up with the designated number of things wins. Award additional points for creativity.



Be the Best You Can

As I sat at my mother's post-surgical bedside in the hospital, I began to reflect on the mediocrity of the treatment and care she was receiving from the medical staff. Where was their spirit of excellence? It dawned on me that the hospital staff, from the doctors all the way down to housekeeping, had indeed been trained for mediocrity. Everyone was doing just enough to get by; just enough to say they had done the job. The half-hearted approach of every movement and task left me cold and frustrated. What if this was their mother lying in this bed? Would they be happy with the level of treatment and care she was receiving? Or would they be just as disappointed, frustrated and disgusted as I was?

As children of the King, how often do we operate in this same fashion? I pray not often, for God calls us to be excellent. We represent our Father to all those we come in contact with at work, church, home, or play. People may never read the Bible, but they are reading our lives. So be excellent in everything you do. We need to set the highest standard possible. Be the example that everyone else follows. Be the one that the boss tells everyone to watch in order to know how something is to be done. Be on time. Be productive. Go out looking your best for you represent God.

When you have an excellent spirit, you honor God. We think we honor God by going to church, reading our Bibles and praying and we do. But do you realize that it honors God when you are on time, when you look your best, when you keep your yard mowed, when you clean your house, or when you wash your car? If you need to be somewhere by 8 o'clock, be there 10 minutes early.

When you have the spirit of excellence you do more than you have to. You don't do just the minimum amount required. You go the extra mile. We read in Matthew 5:41, "If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles." This Scripture verse addresses the issue that the Roman soldiers by law could force a person to carry the soldier's gear for one mile. After a mile, the soldier would have to find another person to continue the task. But Jesus says, go beyond the call of duty, go the extra mile.

A former pastor of mine used to say, "There's no song in duty." If you think about it, when you are forced to do something against your will there is no joy in the task or song in your heart. However, if you choose to do more than is required, the joy in a task well done returns as well as the song in your heart. Doing more than is required because you choose to releases you from a spirit of bitterness.

Are you a better person this year than you were last year? Are you growing? Have you learned any new skills? Whatever it is you do, get better at it. Take steps to grow. Take classes. Find a mentor. Study ways to become more productive, more efficient and more organized. Become more valuable in the workplace, at church and among friends or other social groups. A person of excellence keeps growing. Strive to become more effective, more anointed and more skilled. Look for ways to be better.

Promotion and excellence go hand-in-hand. We read in Daniel 6:3, "Now Daniel so distinguished himself among the administrators and the satraps by his exceptional qualities that the king planned to set him over the whole kingdom." God did not distinguish Daniel. The Word says Daniel distinguished himself. Daniel worked at being the best he could possibly be for God. As a result of his efforts, Daniel was blessed with a promotion. God is not sloppy, run down or second class. He is a God of excellence.

Everything we are represents the Almighty God. It doesn't mean you have to possess the best of everything to be effective ambassadors for God. It means you take care of whatever you have to the very best of your ability. If you don't take care of the little that God has given you, how do you expect Him to give you more?

Be the best you can possibly be. Take care of what God has given you. Stir up the spirit of excellence within you. Then practice that spirit of excellence and God will be honored.

MARCH 2015

WORSHIP

EASTERN TERRITORY

TAKE YOUR CANDLE — GO LIGHT YOUR WORLD

BY LT. HELEN JOHNSON

Scripture: Matthew 4:13–16

Candles Ideas

- Invite the women to make candles that they can give as gifts or display in their homes. There are directions on the Internet giving a variety of ways to do so.
- Visit a candle shop
- Ask someone who makes candles to demonstrate this skill for the women.
- Create a decorated candle gift for someone who needs some encouragement. Using inexpensive candles, decorate with craft supplies (ribbon, cut paper pattern, stickers) and printouts of encouraging verses from the Bible.
- Use decorative glass beads or mosaic pieces to make fancy candle holders to use as gifts.

Games

- Assemble a variety of scented candles. Ask the women to guess the scent.
- Ask the women to exhaust the flame on a candle using water from a spray bottle. Start a long way from the candle and gradually decrease the distance. The winner is the woman who exhausted the candle from the furthest distance.
- Wrap a candle in many layers of gift-wrap and as music plays, women pass it around. When music stops, women start to unwrap it but continue passing when the music plays again. The last one to open the entire

present wins it.

- Play “Wick-tionary,” which is a candle themed version of Pictionary®. Use words that have to do with candles—light, wick, centerpiece, various scents, nose, lighter, matches, Divide the women into teams and have them take turns drawing the words, with their teammates guessing what was drawn.

Candle Experiment

Place a 1 1/2-inch diameter candle, pointing upward in a bowl. The candle should be as tall as the bowl. Carefully fill the bowl with water right up to the top of the candle. Be careful not to get the wick wet. Light the candle and observe. In time, the candlewick will burn down, even below the water level, and melt a wax funnel around itself. The flame, protected by the funnel, will continue to burn for some time below water level. For a demonstration of this experiment check the website: <http://tiny.cc/aacehx>.

While waiting for the flame to burn down, spiritualize this experiment by talking about the pressures of life that feel like they are going to extinguish our spirit as water can extinguish the candle’s flame. However, we can be assured that when we have the Holy Spirit in our heart, He provides us with the assurance that no matter what we face, He will be with us and protect us.

You Are the Light of the World

Matthew 5:14 and 16 tells us “You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden . . . in the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.” Christian singer, Kathy Troccoli has paraphrased this portion of Scripture in one of her songs saying, “Take your candle, go light your world.” However, what do we do when we, as the light of the world, do not have enough wax to keep our flame burning and we find ourselves empty and weary?

Sing or read the words to Kathy Troccoli’s song “Go Light Your World.” There are a number of videos on YouTube®, which could be played.

There are times when our spirit (or wax) is low and we find ourselves spiritually dry. We may be going through trials, facing health problems or plagued with temptation. It is during these times that we feel depressed, empty and dark like an unlit candle. We could be busy doing the work of the Lord yet have not taken enough time to with the Him and we feel like a candle that has been burned on both ends. The Lord wants to be our refiner’s fire. He is our refuge in the storms and He is our strength when we are weak. If we are not taking time daily to be with Him, then we will be weak. We need to remember to daily go to Him to renew our strength. Through prayer, Bible reading and meditation allow God to continually fill you.

Another element of being a shining light is to keep our bodies strong physically. We read in 1 Corinthians 6:10, “Do you not know that your bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own.” We need to take care of our body—God’s temple—by eating well, getting enough exercise and rest, and refraining from anything that will harm our body such as alcohol, tobacco and harmful drugs. When others look at our physical bodies, do we reflect the beauty of Christ?

As Christians, we are instructed to encourage and pray for each other to stay strong in the Lord. “Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing” (1 Thess. 5:11). We will also find that the more we encourage others the less difficult our own concerns and problems will seem.

Conclude the devotional by handing out candles to the women. The leader lights her candle and passes the flame to the next women. As she does so, she gives a word of encouragement, a blessing, a compliment or a hug. Continue until each woman has received a blessing and her candle is lit. At the conclusion, pray together:

An alternative worship activity would be a commitment ceremony. Give everyone a photocopy of a candle, with a pledge that reads:

I _____ (Name) pledge on _____ (Date) to keep my candle burning strong by reading the Bible daily and spending time in prayer. I also pledge to keep the unity within our group strong by being an active member of this women’s group, showing love to my fellow sisters in Christ and working out conflict with Christian compassion.



APRIL 2015

TWINKLE, TWINKLE, LITTLE STAR

BY CAPTAIN VALIERIE HAZELDINE



Altar Table

Cover the altar table with a dark blue tablecloth. If one is not available, any suitable table in the meeting room will suffice. Place a large white candle in the middle of the cloth and sprinkle silver stars around it. Wrap 'twinkling' white Christmas lights around the table

Decorations

Set a quiet, calm mood by keeping the lights of the room low; or use candles or lamps rather than overhead lights. There are many star decorations available from the Oriental Trading Company® that can be used as desired.

Refreshments

Serve star shaped cookies and sandwiches. The bread for the sandwiches can be cut before filling using a star shaped cookie cutter shaped. Star shaped ice cubes can be made using a silicon tray. These are available at www.Amazon.com or can be found at many stores. Serve them in a blue drink: blue Kool-Aid® or Sprite® with food coloring added.

Activity

Make enough large paper stars to give each woman one. During the program, ask the women to sit quietly and consider how her personal "star light" could twinkle more brightly in her relationship with the Lord and with others. Encourage them to write their thoughts on the star. These can be collected and hung on a leafless tree branch held upright in a vase. Pray for the women and for what they wrote on their stars.

Songs

1. "Come Let Us Worship and Bow Down," 1980 Maranatha Praise, Dave Doherty
2. "The Candle of the Lord," Joy Webb, *Hallelujah Choruses*. HC2-T16
3. "Wanted, Hearts Baptized With Fire," #704 (Verse 4), *The Salvation Army Song Book*

Responsive Scripture Reading

(Based on Genesis 1:1,16; John 1:5,9; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Matthew 5:14,16 and "The Star" (Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star) by Jane Taylor)

Leader : The Lord our God made heaven and earth.

Response : Who is it that created light?

Leader: In the beginning God ...

Response : Made two great lights, the greater light to govern the day and the lesser light to govern the night.

Leader: He also made the stars. The stars come out at night for us to see, although they are there by day as well.

Response: Twinkle, twinkle, little star, how I wonder what you are. Up above the world so high, like a diamond in the sky.

Leader: About 2000 years ago another light shone on the earth.

Response: The Light that shines in the darkness.

Leader: The true Light that gives light to every man.

Response: God made His light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God's glory.

Leader: Jesus said "I am the Light of the world."

Response: In following Him we too become lights reflecting that Light in the world.

Leader: Let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in Heaven.

Response: When the blazing sun is gone, when he nothing shines upon, Then you show your little light, twinkle, twinkle, all the night.

Leader: Show your little light. Let your light shine.

Choral Reading

Divide the group into fours. Each group reads one line together, emphasizing the words in capital letters in each sentence.

1. **LET** your light shine—allow, don't hinder—make it so.
2. Let **YOUR** light shine—focus on getting your light bright—First take the plank out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to remove the speck from your brother's eye" (Matt. 7:5).
3. Let your **LIGHT** shine—you must have it to use it. Do you have the light of Christ in you?
4. Let your light **SHINE**—if you've got it, use it.

Scripture Readings

Psalms 95:1-7; Matthew 5:14-16; Colossians 3:15-16, Isaiah 60:1b, (Amplified Bible), Philippians 2:15 and 14:16.

Become the Star God Means You To Be

Then the traveler in the dark,
thanks you for your tiny spark.
He could not see which way to go,
if you did not twinkle so.
As your bright and tiny spark
lights the traveler in the dark.
Though I know not what you are,
twinkle, twinkle, little star.
("The Star" by Jane Taylor, Verses 3 and 5)

You may have heard the old philosophy question often asked in school to prompt thought: "If a tree falls in the forest and no one hears it, does it still make a sound?" Let's think of a new version of that old question: "If a light shines but no one sees it, is it really lighting anything?"

There are stars in the vastness of space that we cannot see without a very strong telescope. There may be some that we have not seen yet or may never see, but we do know that God created all the stars, as we are reminded in Psalm 8:3, 4, "When I consider Your heavens, the work of Your fingers, the moon and the stars, which You have set in place ... What is man that You are mindful of him?"

The light of the stars shines just as brightly in the daylight as they do in the night. It's just that no one notices them. Before God said, "Let there be light," there was nothing but darkness over the planet. After the first day of creation there was still darkness, but now there was light as well.

Why do we need light? What does light do to darkness? Light is best seen against darkness. Light chases darkness away. God's children are to reflect His light in the world. Not just any light, but the light of the world, just as Christ was and is the Light of the World (John 8:12, Matt. 5:14)

In Ephesians 5:8–11 we are reminded that we are light in the Lord and are to "live as children of light ... and find out what pleases the Lord." By shining we expose

the darkness, but a light that is hidden away, or that only shines when it is in other light, does not do that one thing it is supposed to do. It does not expose the darkness. We are not supposed to keep our God-given light in the Lord hidden. We are to "let (our) light shine" and let it shine "before men." If we only shine when we are with other Christians—at the corps, at camp, in meetings—our light will not accomplish the full purpose for which it is intended. We are meant to shine in the dark places of the world; in the places where there is little or no light as well as at home and in our neighborhood.

God has set each one of us in a particular part of this world. Sometimes He calls us to another place and leaves us there for a time. Sometimes we stay in the same place all our lives. We must see which way He wants us to go (or stay) and how best to shine our light there. Just like the stars, we have been set in place (Psalm 8:3) and that place is where we are to shine. Think about where God has set you. Not just geographically, but personally, spiritually, and relationally. Why are you in that particular place? What can you do to shine as a star for Him?

Why did God make the stars? "He ... made the stars (and) set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth" (Gen 1:17). Why did God make you? One answer is "So that you may become blameless and pure children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation" (Phil 2: 15). He created you to give light in the darkness of a sinful earth, to separate light from darkness, to be a star for God. You have a bright and tiny spark and God wants you to twinkle as brightly as any star in the heavens.

Every Christian is a shining star for Christ, formed in the image of God (Genesis 1:26), but each one of us is only a spark. We must each do our best to shine in the best way we can for our brief time in this world. Don't waste a minute of it. Everyone is precious and you are called to shine like stars in the universe.



MAY 2015

IS YOUR LAMP READY?

BY MAJOR ERMA CAMUTI

Program Outline

Call To Worship —Psalm 18:28

Opening Prayer

Sword Drill

*Song #206 “Burning, Burning, Brightly Burning”**

Scripture Reading—Matthew 25: 1–13

Discussion Questions

Praise and Worship

“The Light Has Come,”

10, Hallelujah Choruses, HC1–T10

“Give Me Oil in My Lamp”

*Song #189, “Breathe On Me”**

“While We Are Waiting, Come,”

#45, Hallelujah Choruses, HC3–T15

Devotional—Is Your Lamp Ready?

*Vocal Solo, “The Candle of the Lord,” #36
(HC2–16)*

Closing Song #96, “Carry the Flame” (HC8–T16)

Benediction

**The Salvation Army
Song Book*



Decorations

Place a linen tablecloth and a hurricane lamp next to an open Bible on the holiness or other suitable table.

Program Ideas Sword Drill

Use the following verses to conduct a sword drill. Ask the women to keep in mind which verse they found the most meaningful or helpful for them today.

Psalm 27:1	Leviticus 6:12	Psalm 36:9
Psalm 97:11	Psalm 18:28-30	Psalm 119:105
Matthew 5:14–16	John 9:5	John 8:12

Favorite Verse

Ask the women to share which verse they chose as their favorite and why. Provide cut-out construction paper lamps for the women to write this verse on, which can be placed in their Bibles.

Discussion

1. What events make prior preparations advisable? (*Weather related events—tornados, hurricanes, earthquakes; weddings, funerals, vacations.*)
2. Can you share a time when you wished you had been better prepared?
3. We usually prepare for the events previously mentioned, but are we as well prepared for where we will spend eternity? What steps can we take to be more prepared?
4. In the parable of the ten virgins, we understand that the bridegroom represents Jesus and the maidens Christians waiting for His second coming. Did you feel sorry for the five virgins that were not ready when the bridegroom arrived? Why or why not?
5. What could the five wise virgins have done to help the foolish virgins other than sharing their oil? (*Warned them ahead of time that they should be prepared. Helped them get the oil that they would need.*)
6. Can you draw any parallels to what we should be doing? (*Be prepared ourselves for Jesus' second coming. Warn others of the future and point them to the source of salvation.*)

WORSHIP

EASTERN TERRITORY

Is Your Lamp Ready?

We live in a day when it is important to be prepared for anything. We hire coordinators for weddings and financial planners to handle our portfolios. We receive early warnings and communication regarding weather conditions and emergencies, all in the effort to be prepared.

In Matthew 25:1–13, we see Jesus sharing a parable about a wedding and comparing it to the kingdom of heaven. A wedding in Jesus' day was a time of great celebration. The whole village was involved. The bride would await her future husband in the confines of her home surrounded by family and friends. She had to patiently wait for the arrival of her groom, for she never knew when he would arrive.

The bride in this parable had ten virgins who assisted her in wedding preparations. After the bride was prepared, the ten virgins' job was to light the way for the bridegroom with their lamps. The lamps were torches on a long pole with oil-drenched rags at the top. It was important that they had enough oil to last for an undetermined amount of time because they never knew when the bridegroom would arrive.

We can separate the ten virgins into two groups. The first group of five wise virgins had planned ahead and had enough oil to last until the bridegroom arrived. The second group of five foolish virgins hadn't and ran out of oil. Imagine the scene. All ten virgins were tired and fell asleep while waiting for the arrival of the bridegroom. Suddenly around midnight they hear someone announcing, "Here's the bridegroom. Come out to meet him!" The young women are startled by the cry and realize they have fallen asleep. The five wise virgins were prepared because of the extra oil they brought and started to trim their torches in order to meet the bridegroom; but the five foolish virgins were not prepared and begged for some oil from those women who were prepared.

The foolish young women who were not prepared did not enter into the wedding celebration. Once the bridegroom arrived, the door to the wedding banquet was shut and they were not allowed to enter. The five foolish young women missed out because they were not prepared.

What does this story have to do with us? Can we divide ourselves spiritually into these groups? Are we like the wise or the foolish women? If we believe that Jesus will return once again to earth, we need to be prepared for His coming. We read in 1 Thessalonians 5:1–2, "Now, brothers, about times and dates we do not need to write to you, for you know very well that the day of the Lord will come like a thief in the night." Because we don't know when the Lord will return, we need to be prepared at all times for His coming.

How do we prepare ourselves for this glorious event? By confessing the sin in our lives and accepting the salvation available through Jesus. We need to allow God's Spirit to work in and through us. We need to read His Word daily and do what it tells us; then His light will shine through us. All of these things are essential if we are to be prepared for His return.

The question for us today is, are we like the five wise young women or the five foolish women? Are you keeping our light burning for the Lord? Can you say with full assurance that you are prepared and awaiting the arrival of our Bridegroom, the Lord Jesus Christ Himself? May it be so. Come quickly, Lord Jesus.



JUNE 2015

SHINING LIKE STARS

BY MAJOR SUSAN STINSON

Decorations

Make the meeting room reflect the look of being outside on a starry night. Attach glow-in-the-dark stars to the ceiling. Use regular or battery operated luminaries to light the way as the women arrive.

Give the women glow-in-the-dark bracelets to remind them that they are shining stars. These are available from the Oriental Trading Company®: Tri-Color Glow-In-The-Dark Bracelets #IN-24/1229, @ \$4.25 per dozen.

Program Suggestions

The Night Sky

If the program meets in the evening, go outside to look at the night sky and enjoy what God has created.

Field Trip

Visit a planetarium or an observatory to see a presentation on stars. Some college campuses have astronomy programs or resources about astronomy. Check to see if they have a space where you can discuss what you have seen, share devotions and enjoy refreshments.

Report on Stars

Ask one of the women to give a brief report on stars. There is a lot of information available on the Internet. Following are a couple of sites:

<http://tiny.cc/5dcehx>

<http://tiny.cc/0ecehx>

<http://tiny.cc/xfcehx>

Refreshments

Serve assorted sandwiches and sugar cookies cut in the shape of stars and half-moons. Have on hand a bowl of bite-sized Milky Way® bars and Starburst® candies as a special treat. Give away Starbucks® cards as door prizes.



Star Songs Shine For Him

(Sing to the tune "This Little Light of Mine")

I'll be a shining star, shining brightly for my Lord.
I'll be a shining star, shining brightly for my Lord.
I'll be a shining star, shining brightly for my Lord.
Shine for Him, Shine for Him, Shine for Him.

Shine that all the world might see. Yes! I'll be a shining star.
Shine that all the world might see. Yes! I'll be a shining star.
Shine that all the world might see. Yes! I'll be a shining star.
Shine for Him, Shine for Him, Shine for Him.
S. Stinson

Other songs with reference to stars:

- #983, Great is Thy Faithfulness (verse 2)•
- #826, The Wonder of His Grace (chorus)•
- #10, Joyful, Joyful (verse 2)•
- #28, For the Beauty of the Earth (verse 2)•

**The Salvation Army Song Book*

SHINING OUT WITH THE LOVE OF GOD

“Then you will be pure and without blame. You will be children of God without fault in a sinful and evil world. Among the people of the world you shine like stars in the heavens. You shine as you hold out to them the word of life” (Phil. 2:15).

“Twinkle, Twinkle little star, how I wonder what you are?” Most of you have probably sung this as a child. Perhaps now you sing it to your children or grandchildren. The dictionary tells us that, “a star is a massive, luminous sphere of plasma held together by gravity.” This does seem to answer the question asked in that children’s song. As a child, did you look up at the stars and say, “Star bright, star light, first star I’ve seen tonight, I wish I may, I wish I might, have the wish I wish tonight?” Even as children, stars hold a fascination for us.

Stars are visible to us at night when clouds or other atmospheric phenomena do not obscure them. Sometimes like these stars we let our light become dimmed or hidden by the “atmospheric phenomena” of daily living. Our lights become dimmed, not visible or difficult for others to see. But God is calling us to shine for Him. We are to reflect His glory, His grace and more

importantly, His light. In the darkness of our world, God has called us to shine like stars and to point the way to Jesus.

The International Star Registry is a company that advertises that, “When you buy a star from us, you will be purchasing an unforgettable gift that you can share forever.” The cost: a mere \$48.95. However, The International Astronomical Union, which is the internationally recognized authority, and designates stars, planets, asteroids, comets, and other heavenly bodies, cautions consumers that products and services marketed by ISR and other companies have no formal or official validity. In fact with a few exceptions of ancient or Arabic names, nearly all stars are designated by catalog numbers rather than names. We don’t need to spend money to have a star named after us, because God knows us by name and as Paul told the Philippians, “You are to shine like the stars in the heavens” (Phil. 2:16). We are to be His shining stars in a dark and sinful world, holding out that light so others might see Jesus in us.

“Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars forever and ever” (Dan. 12:3).



JULY 2015

LET THE SON SHINE IN

BY MAJOR BARBARA A. GEORGE

Room Décor

This program is centered on a beach theme. Cover the tables with bright, citrus colored tablecloths to create a warm, sunny room. Use plastic beach pails and shovels filled half way with sand as centerpieces. Place new flip-flops in each bucket, along with other summer or beach items. If the women are able, invite them to sit on towels or blankets on the floor or provide beach chairs. Consider having this worship service outdoors if the weather permits.

Ice Breaker Buried Treasure

Wrap small items and bury them in a small child's pool filled with sand. Sunglasses and trial size bottles of sunscreen would work well. As the women arrive invite them to dig for a treasure.

Prayer Stations

Set up prayer stations throughout the room as below:

Adoration—Names of God Acrostics

Print out various names of God so that the letters run down the left hand side of the paper. Invite the women to create a praise sentence where each letter of God's name begins a different word in the sentence. This could be done individually or in small groups.

For example:

- A Amazing
- L Loving
- M Mighty
- I Immanuel
- G Giving
- H Holy
- T Trustworthy
- Y Yhwh

Invite the women to pray their praise sentences with each other before moving to the next station.

Confession Sandy Prayers—Forgiveness

Partially fill an assortment of flat-bottomed containers with sand. Invite the women to use their finger to write a word or draw a symbol in the sand that represents an area of their life they need to confess. Scripture tells us,

“For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God” (Rom. 3:23). As they pray for forgiveness, ask them to pick up the dish and shake it very gently. Remind them that just as what they wrote in the sand has vanished forever and left no trace, so will God forgive our sins when we confess and ask for His forgiveness. “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

Thanksgiving Thank You Cards

Provide a variety of thank you cards and pens in various colors for the women to use to write thank you cards to God for the things He has done for them, or provided for them, during the past week. These cards can be taken home and kept in a prayer file or between the pages of a Bible as a reminder of God's love.

Supplication

Place unlit battery operated tea lights arranged in the shape of a cross on a table. At this station invite the women to pray for someone in their life who is in the need of prayer. This could be a sick relative or friend, someone who needs salvation, or someone facing a difficult situation. “Pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective” (James 5:16). As they pray for that person, have them light one of the tea lights.



Program Outline

Welcome

Chorus Sing

*“It’s a Great Day to Praise the Lord
(Walking in the Light of God)”
“Here I am To Worship”*

Prayer Stations

*Adoration—Confession—Thanksgiving—Supplication
(See Directions Above)*

Scripture Reading 1 John 1:5–7

*Song #400 “Jesus Is My Light”
The Salvation Army Song Book*

Devotional, God Is Light!

Period of Prayer

Share Prayer Concerns

*Closing Song #99, “Shine, Jesus Shine!”
Hallelujah Choruses, HC8–T19*

Benediction





God Is Light

Our lights went out the afternoon of Monday, October 29, 2012. It wasn't a surprise as we had been advised over the weekend to be prepared for the effects of Hurricane Sandy. With the arrival of Sandy, we were in for eight days of life without electricity—no lights, no heat, no blow dryers.

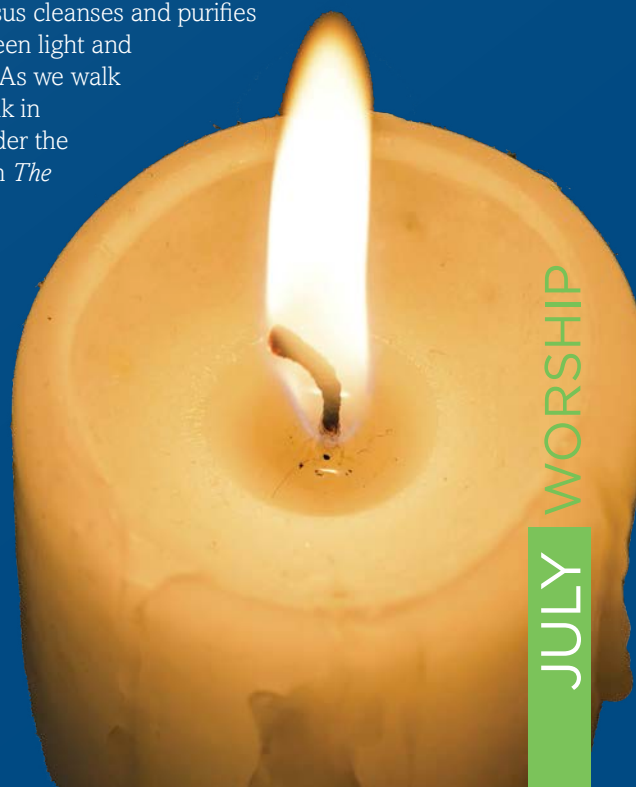
It's interesting to live without light. Our family gathered candles, flashlights, batteries and lots of wood for our fireplace. Because we had limited light in the evenings from these sources, the images seen through the dim light were just not the same. Furniture became unseen obstacles and for my children there was a sense of fear of darkened hallways and rooms. Oh what great rejoicing there was in our home when the lights finally came back on. The sense of relief that washed over each of us was indescribable. Along with relief came the sense of security and peace.

In the Scripture read previously, John states, "God is Light, in Him there is no darkness at all" (1 John 1:5). As Christ followers, this light is imparted to us through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross and the promised indwelling of the Holy Spirit. How wonderful to know that we never need to fear the darkness of this world or trip over the obstacle of sin in our life. Christ's light illuminates our path and guides us into all righteousness.

However, John gives us a warning Verse 6 states, "If we claim to have fellowship with Him yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live by the truth." It is impossible for light and darkness to co-exist. If you step into a dark room with no source of light at all and strike a match, you will see that even that small flame will light up a large part of the room. Darkness departs in the presence of light. So it is with Christ. He cannot reside where darkness has taken up residence. Therefore, we must be certain that we are not fooling ourselves or trying to fool others with our living. God sees through our actions to our hearts. In darkness we have no fellowship with Him.

The good news that John brings is that God has made it possible for us to walk in the light with Him. "But if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from all sin" (1 John: 1:7). When we confess our sins, Jesus cleanses and purifies us so that there is no conflict between light and darkness. The Light walks with us. As we walk in fellowship with Him, we also walk in fellowship with one another. Consider the words written by Bernard Barton in *The Salvation Army Song Book*, #465. (Read the words.)

The lights at our house have gone out multiple times since Hurricane Sandy. However, each time they do, I'm reminded that I do not have to walk in darkness. I have let the "Sonshine" in and in Him I walk every day in the Light.



GONNA' LET MY LITTLE LIGHT SHINE

BY MAJOR MARGARET GODING

Program Outline

Call to Worship,

Song #838, vs. 1, "God Make My Life a Little Light"*

Song #841, "Jesus Bids Us Shine"*

Prayer

Sword Drill

<i>Psalm 4: 6</i>	<i>Matthew 4: 16</i>	<i>John 12: 35, 36</i>
<i>Psalm 18: 28</i>	<i>Luke 11: 33</i>	<i>John 12: 46</i>
<i>Psalm 27: 1</i>	<i>John 1: 5</i>	<i>Acts 13: 47</i>
<i>Psalm 89: 15</i>	<i>John 3: 19–21</i>	<i>Romans 13: 12</i>
<i>Psalm 119: 105</i>	<i>John 8: 122</i>	<i>Corinthians 4: 6</i>
<i>Isaiah 60: 19</i>	<i>John 9: 52</i>	<i>Corinthians 11: 14</i>

Chorus, "This Little Light of Mine"

Scripture Reading,

Matthew 5: 14-16, Ephesians 5: 8, Luke 11: 36

Devotional, "Being Like A Pumpkin"

Song, "The Candle of the Lord,"
Hallelujah Choruses, #36, HC2–T16

Benediction

*The Salvation Army Song Book

Being Like a Pumpkin

(You will need a pumpkin to wash and utensils to carve it. If desired, provide a pumpkin for each woman to work on as the devotional is given.)

From childhood through my adult years, one thing I still enjoy is looking for the right pumpkin, taking it home to carve (with a happy face, of course) so that I can put it on the porch on trick-or-treat night, inviting children to stop by our house for treats. However, it wasn't until recently that I make the connection that growing as a Christian can be compared to curving a pumpkin.

Choosing a Pumpkin

My family and I have sometimes gone to a pumpkin patch and picked a pumpkin off the vine, being careful to choose just the right one. We had to be cautious how we handled

it because it had been lying on the ground and was obviously quite dirty. No matter where you get a pumpkin, it will no doubt, have some dirt on it and will need to be washed.

This makes me think that Jesus, who sees us in the world getting dirty with sin, wants to pick us up and wash us, because He sees beneath the dirt and knows there is value and worth in us. (*Wash off the pumpkin.*)

Cut Off the Top—Clean Out the Inside

Cutting off the top and cleaning out the inside is the hard part of preparing our pumpkin for display. Cutting off the top is one thing, but getting inside to clean out the seeds and pulp is messy and time consuming. Not a very desirable job.

It's not like that with Jesus. He has the power to, in a moment, cleanse our hearts and take all the bad stuff away. The things that we've said or done, we can't do anything about, but He can. His sacrifice on the cross paid the debt for us, so we don't have to carry that burden anymore. (*Clean out the pumpkin.*)

Carve a Face

Giving the pumpkin a face is where creativity comes into play. Now that the pumpkin is washed and cleaned out, how should the face be carved? My son has come up with some unusual creations, but I think the tendency for most is to be as straightforward as possible—two eyes, a nose and a mouth. The pumpkin carved in this way is rather commonplace, and is easy to accomplish.

The Master Carver never creates anything commonplace. When He picks us up, washes us off and cleans out our hearts, He knows just what we need and crafts us after His likeness. There are smiles on our faces and His light in our hearts that lets others see the difference Christ makes when He's allowed to change us. (*Carve a face on the pumpkin.*)

Add Candle

Just like the jack-o'-lanterns we create with our pumpkins, God calls Christians to be lights in this dark world. We might not be able to light a whole city, but we can be a light to those around us. (*Put a candle inside the pumpkin.*)

The Statute of Liberty stands in New York harbor. She has always been a beacon of light to all people who were looking for a new life, in a new world. That's what we need to be so that the light of Jesus shines brightly in our life, acting as a beacon of light to a world that is in darkness.

So this week go ahead and, "let your little light shine!"

Close by singing the chorus, "This Little Light of Mine."





ARISE SHINE

BY MAJOR JOYCE HARTSHORN

Decorations

Use orange, yellow and red tablecloths (the colors of flame). Using paper placemats over the cloths will protect the table and make for easy cleanup following the candle craft.

Program Idea Beeswax Candles

Invite the women to make rolled beeswax candles. There are a number of instructional videos on YouTube®. One site is: <http://tiny.cc/5jcehx>. There are also simple instructions for these candles at: <http://tiny.cc/qkcehx>. The supplies needed are: beeswax sheets, primed wick, razor blade or a small kitchen knife. These supplies are available at: Jo-Ann Fabrics®, Oriental Trading Company® or Michaels®.

While placing the wick on the beeswax sheets, point out the connection between our needs and God's heart. Instruct the women to hold the wick in their hand and name a concern or a person she would like to commit to prayer. As the wick is being wrapped in the wax encourage the women to allow the presence of God to wrap Himself around that person or concern.

Refreshments Campfire Cookies

These fun cookies are made using a sugar cookie covered with chocolate frosting, crushed Oreo® cookies (charcoal or fuel), candy rocks (ring around the fire) and colored coconut (the fire). Provide the ingredients and let the women put together their own cookie. Instructions and photos of the finished cookies can be found at: <http://tiny.cc/zlcehx>.

Additional ideas are S'Mores trail mix and S'More ice cream cake. There are many recipes on the Internet for these items.

Send the Fire

How many of you have sat around a campfire? How old were you and where was the campfire? Share a story about this experience. *(Allow the women to respond to these questions. Following their sharing, comment on the positive experience and pleasant memories they have associated with being around a campfire.)*

While some of us may not have sat around a campfire, we have all enjoyed the atmosphere created by the use of candles. Can you share a time when you used candles to mark a special occasion? What was the occasion? Who was present? What made the occasion memorable? Why do we light candles? *(Ask the women to respond. Some thoughts: Their light chases away the darkness. They can be used to light our home when the power goes out. They can help to create a romantic atmosphere. We use them to celebrate a special event—birthday, wedding, advent.)*

We've shared our experiences of campfires and candles but have we discussed the source of warmth and comfort that they can also provide. Imagine how silly it would be if we sat around an unlit campfire, didn't light the candles on a birthday cake, or if at their wedding the couple never added a flame to their unity candle. We'd be left saying, "What's the point?" The answer is, the fire is the point.

In what ways does the fire add to the campfire? It can provide heat, ambience, keep away unwanted animals and the smoke could be used to signal danger. A lit candle gives light to a room, creates an atmosphere and in the instance of fragrant candles creates a pleasant aroma. The fire added to these items makes them useful.

As we look at the flame on a candle we are reminded of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 2:2-4 we are told that at Pentecost "A sound like the blowing of a violent wind came from heaven ... they saw what seemed to be tongues of fire that separated and came to rest of each of them. All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit." This was the fulfillment of John the Baptist's words about the Holy Spirit's baptizing with fire (Luke 3:16). Tongues symbolize speech and the communication of the gospel. Fire can symbolize God's purifying presence, which burns away the undesirable elements of our lives and sets our hearts aflame to ignite the lives of others.

When we are filled with the Holy Spirit our lives should give off a pleasant aroma. "For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing" (2 Cor. 2:15). Do we put out a warmth that draws others nearer to God? Do they want to be with us because we reflect the light of Christ in our life? The fire of the Holy Spirit living in us becomes a source of warmth to those who have been left out in the cold. Is there someone you need to speak to this week to reassure them of God's love for them? Do you need to say to the Lord, "Send the fire and may others see that fire in me."

Close by singing song #203 in *The Salvation Army Song Book*, "Send the Fire."

