

EDUCATION

SOUTHERN TERRITORY

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AUTUMN GLOW

BY MAJOR LINDA WHITE

Introduction

Luminaries are an interesting way to bring a festive atmosphere and add light to a sidewalk or driveway. They are lit candles placed inside of a bag or container, which allow someone to see their way through the dark and welcome them to the front door of a house.

Origin of Luminaries

Luminaries have long been a tradition in the American Southwest. The first were bonfires of crisscrossed pinõn boughs arranged in three-foot high squares. Ask one of the women to give a report on the history and traditions associated with luminaries. Following are some helpful websites:

<http://tiny.cc/r3qchx>, <http://tiny.cc/w2qchx>,
<http://tiny.cc/h2qchx>

Decorations

Decorate the meeting room using various forms of lights: candles, lamps, lanterns, nightlights and decorated luminary bags using battery operated tea lights.

Craft Ideas

Autumn Luminary Jar

Supplies Needed: Canning jars, black markers, acrylic craft paint, clear glaze

Paint the jars white and let dry. Apply another coat of paint making sure the first coat is dry before applying the second. Use an autumn stencil and a black marker to stencil images onto the jar, or draw the images free hand. Paint the stenciled area with the black acrylic paint and let dry. Paint the rim of the jar with black paint and let dry for about 30 minutes. Spray the jar with the glaze and let dry. Place a votive candle or battery-operated lights inside.

Autumnal Luminaries

Supplies needed: Pumpkins, candles, glass votive holders, knife, stencil, black markers



Cut the top of the pumpkin and scoop out the inside. Use a stencil and marker to trace a face pattern on the outside of the pumpkin. Carefully cut around the stenciled area. Set a candle in a glass holder and place inside the pumpkin.

Bag Luminaries

Supplies Needed: Small brown paper bags, tea candles, sand, stencils, scissors

Using an autumn stencil, trace the design on the upper end of the bag. Cut the stencil out, taking care not to cut the sides of the bag. Fill each bag with 1/2 cup of sand and gently shake the bag to even out the sand. Place a tea candle inside the bag. Place the luminaries in an area where they won't be knocked over. Light them as the sunlight fades into the night. For a video on bag luminaries check the Martha Stewart website at: <http://www.marthastewart.com>, search on "how-make-halloween-luminaries."

Autumn Games Gourd Bowling

Set up bowling pins using empty two-liter soda bottles. These can be weighted with seeds or water. Use a round, bumpy gourd as the ball.

Apple Grab

Hang apples by their stems between a tree or clothesline. The object of the game is for the women to eat the apple without using their hands.

Popcorn Eating Contest

Fill small bowls with popcorn. The contestants must eat the popcorn without using their hands.

Guess the Candy Corn

Fill a container with candy corn. The guess closest to the actual number of candy corn wins. At the conclusion of this program the decorations could be used as door prizes or as prizes for the game.



DARKNESS INTO LIGHT

“You, O Lord, keep my lamp burning; my God turns my darkness into light” (Ps. 18:28).

There is a story of an old country doctor who was trying desperately to reach one of his patients who was having complications giving birth. It was a bitter cold night and the snow was blowing so hard that he could not see to get to the patient’s house. So he asked each of her neighbors to place a lit candle in the window of their homes so that he could follow the lights to his patient’s house. Following those lights, he safely reached his patient.

We have all faced situations in which all we can see is darkness. Our troubles threaten to consume us and we don’t know how to face another day. What a comfort to know that when we seek the Lord He will turn our darkness into light. With God’s help we can face any problem. In Psalms 18 we read, “As for God, His way is perfect . . . He shields all who take refuge in Him” (verse 30). God is our shield, protecting and helping when we find ourselves too weak to face trials by ourselves. We can take refuge in Him for whatever problems come our way.

Jesus is our Light and He will bring us from darkness into the light if we trust and follow Him. As women of God, it is our responsibility to let others see that God can turn their darkness into light, just as He has for us.

GREEN LIGHT

BY TINA ROBINSON

Read Genesis 1:14–19.

From the beginning of creation God gave man the task of caring for the earth. In Genesis 2:15 we are told, “The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.” The definition of conservation is, “The careful utilization of a natural resource in order to prevent depletion.” As God’s children, a part of caring for His creation is being good stewards of the resources He has given us.

Decorations

Decorate using anything that is green. Hang cutouts of the earth, sun, moon and stars from the ceiling. Attach recycling signs to the walls.

Refreshments

Serve Moon Pies, star shaped cookies and cheese snacks cut in the shape of the moon or stars. There is a recipe for homemade Moon Pies at <http://tiny.cc/6erchx>. For the beverage serve Sunny Delight® or orange juice mixed with lemon lime soda.

Speakers

- Invite someone from the local recycling center to speak about the different types of materials that can be recycled.
- Ask a representative from the local Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program to give tips on lowering electric bills and energy conservation.
- Contact the local Sierra Club for a speaker to share with the women about energy conservation and ways the group can become involved with this organization.

Ask one of the women to research how to conserve energy and share what she found. The following websites will be helpful in preparing a report.

- o US Department of Energy— www.eere.energy.gov/
- o How to Conserve Energy at Home— <http://tiny.cc/jhrchxo>
- o Seven Ways to Save Energy— <http://tiny.cc/9jrchx>
- o Twenty Things You Can Do to Conserve Energy— <http://tiny.cc/9mrchx>

Game Ideas Count the Cost

Form teams of 3 to 4 women. Ask them to guess how much it costs to run appliances and electronics in a typical home. The team closest to the correct amount wins. Prizes could be energy efficient light bulbs, fridge thermometers, or solar powered night lights. Some websites to find charts for figuring costs can be found at:

- <http://tiny.cc/csrchx>, <http://tiny.cc/ptrchx>, <http://tiny.cc/gvrchx>

Lady In Green

The woman wearing the most green wins a prize.

Recycling BINGO

Ask the women to bring an item from home that they want to recycle. Play BINGO using the recyclables for prizes.

Recycling Art

Divide the women to form teams of three or four. Ask them to take paper towel tubes, plastic bottles, paper and other recyclable items to create art that depicts the Bible verses from Genesis 1:14–19. Have someone judge the art. Give the winners reusable grocery totes.



Conserving Energy



As a busy wife, Sunday school teacher, worship leader and having a full-time job, I often find myself running here and there, planning and preparing and studying and calling and practicing and reading and meeting and cooking and cleaning and listening and intervening and—and—and. At the end of the day I find that I am completely exhausted and out of energy. However, I still have many things on my to-do list that just didn’t get accomplished. I realize at these times that I have been trying to do everything in my own power and I am not being very energy-efficient. Just as the new energy efficient light bulbs last longer and shine brighter while using less energy, we too can be more energy efficient if we will just “Be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power” (Eph. 6:10).

Paul tells us in Ephesians 3 that God is the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth and as such He has unlimited resources of mighty inner strength through the Holy Spirit and the fullness of life and power that comes from God. If we lean on God and depend on His power and His strength, then, “By His mighty power within us, He is able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope” (Eph. 3:20). What could be a greater source of power than that? When we allow God’s power to work in our lives, look at the impact we can have. Jesus is the sustainable light source.



TWINKLE, TWINKLE, BIG BRIGHT STAR

BY MAJOR SUSIE ERICKSON

Decorations

Use a nativity scene as the focal point of the decorations. Consider creating a living nativity scene and have the wise men travel throughout the room as you re-enact the Christmas story.

Games

Instead of a traditional carol sing, play Christmas Karaoke in an American Idol style. The host will select three judges by randomly drawing names from a basket. Then contestants can be randomly drawn, one at a time. To keep with the theme, all songs must be Christmas songs and contain the word "star." The judges cast their votes and make their comments while the rest of the guests can react when they disagree. If you don't have a karaoke machine, a piano and a Christmas songbook will work just as well. For additional game resources check the website: <http://tiny.cc/rx0nhx>.

Movie Night

Rent and view the movie version of the story, "The Fourth Wiseman." This movie is the story of Arteban, the wise man who was not able to complete his journey to the Christ Child, but who lived the message of the gospel just the same. Serve popcorn and theater style candies for refreshments. The movie can be purchased from Amazon.com for \$10.93.

Three Kings Gift Giving

In some cultures, the day of exchanging gifts in memory of the birth of Christ is a holiday known as Epiphany. This holiday occurs twelve days after Christmas and celebrates the coming of the Magi who brought gifts to the baby Jesus. While some children await the arrival of Santa, other children throughout the world await the arrival of the Three Kings.

Epiphany gifts are an imitation of the gifts the wise men gave and also a symbolic way to give thanks to God for the greatest gift of all, Jesus Christ. So, they should reflect gratitude for the gift that God gave to the world at Christmas. Celebrate the spirit of giving by encouraging the women to bring items for the less fortunate during the Christmas season. Decide within your women's ministries group the type of gifts that you will collect and who will be the recipients. Some suggestions are food, clothing or personal items.

When giving Epiphany gifts, encourage the women to keep it simple. Cultures that celebrate the coming of the Three Kings put small presents in shoes or stockings. Keep in mind that the gifts should have something to do with honoring the Christ child.

The Wise Men

There are only twelve verses in the Bible that allude to the wise men and the star, but the story of the Magi bringing gifts to the Christ Child is one of the most celebrated of Christian images. We sing about it in carols such as "We Three Kings," we see it depicted in art and Nativity scenes, and dramatize it in plays and movies. We even celebrate it in a Christian holiday known as Epiphany. But who were these wise men?

The Magi came from an area that is now either Iraq, Iran, Saudi Arabia or Yemen; then known as Persia, Arabia and Sheba. They were indeed wise men. Today we would call them astrologers. Back then astronomy and astrology were part of the same overall study and went hand in hand with each other. The Magi would have followed the patterns of the stars religiously.

They had seen an unusual new star in the sky, and knew that it told of the birth of a special King in Israel. This unusual new star was so significant in their astrology that they felt that it was worth travelling to find him.

Max Lucada penned the words ... "A woman's heart should be so hidden in God that a man has to seek Him just to find her." As the Magi were so in tune with the stars that they saw the announcement of the Christ Child in the new star, Christian women should be so in tune with Christ that others see Him radiating through their lives.

This Christmas season let your light shine before men as the star did before the wise men. May others seek the Christ Child through your daily living.

For additional resources visit the <http://tiny.cc/gw0nhx>.



MOONLIGHT MADNESS

BY CAPTAIN AMANDA RAYMER

Introduction

This program is about therapy for Seasonal Affectiveness Disorder also known as SAD.

As children, we can remember the excitement of waking up to snow days. I can still remember waiting by the radio for the weatherman to announce the school closings for the day. As soon as it was confirmed, the snow boots went on, the coats were zipped up and out we went for a day of snowmen, forts and sledding.

As adults, winter seems to have quite a different effect on us. With more hours spent inside, plans being cancelled and cloudy overcast days, many of us begin to feel more tired, moody and depressed. We often call this the winter blues or technically Seasonal Affectiveness Disorder or SAD. This real medical disorder can have a serious impact on our lives throughout the winter months. The good news is, it is treatable if we recognize the symptoms and educate ourselves on how to beat it.

Steps to Combat SAD

Here are four basic steps that can keep you feeling the sunshine inside and out during the winter months.

- **Light Therapy Lamps**
There are many light therapy options on the market costing anywhere from \$200 to \$400. However, the best light is natural light. Make it a habit to get out and walk whenever you can. Not only are you getting natural vitamin D, but exercise also produces natural happiness through the production of endorphins. This will help to battle depression.
- **Get Plenty of Vitamin D**
SAD is often caused by the body's lack of vitamin D during the winter. Our bodies are bundled up and we are inside more. So, if you cannot get out and walk, make sure to eat foods that contain this vitamin (milk, fish, oranges, eggs).
- **Talk With Your Doctor**
If you are feeling blue or disinterested in life, keep your doctor informed as you may have vitamin deficiency issues. He can give you the best advice on over the counter supplements to help. He will also discuss if SAD is the reason for your depressed feelings or if other factors may be involved.
- **Plan Events to Look Forward to Each Week**
This will give you a chance to set your mind on the exciting times to come.

Getting Vitamin D

While the best method for getting vitamin D is through sunlight it is also available in an inexpensive capsule. Check with your doctor before starting to take vitamin D in this way. Getting enough vitamin D from your food isn't easy. Studies show that typically only about 20% of our vitamin D comes from the food we eat. Foods high in vitamin D include fatty fish (tuna, mackerel and salmon); food fortified with vitamin D (some dairy products, orange juice, soy milk and cereals); beef liver, cheese and egg yolks. Provide refreshments that are naturally high in vitamin D, which is known as the sunshine vitamin. This could include tuna, egg or cheese sandwiches. Share examples of foods that have been fortified with vitamin D and teach the women how to look for these products when shopping.

Decorations

As this program is about beating the winter blues, use bright colors for decorating. Print the words to "You are My Sunshine" on an 8 x 10 paper, frame it and use as a table decoration. Several online sites offer free printables of this song. Type in the words "you are my sunshine printable" in your search engine.

Activities

It is said that laughter is the best medicine. It is also effective in treating Seasonal Affectiveness Disorder. One of the best ways to beat the winter blues is through social gatherings and having fun. Start the evening off with a few games that are sure to bring a smile and are easy to organize and execute.

Mad Gab

This word game is a series of words that when said together form the answer. For example: "Yore Luke ink hood" when read fast, is "you're looking good." This game can be purchased or an online version is available at: <http://www.freemadgabonline.com>.

Would You Rather

In this game you are asked to choose between two scenarios. For example, would you rather eat gum from under a restaurant table or take a bath in glue. Questions to play this game can be found on the Internet. Enter the words "would you rather" in the search engine.

Best-Dressed Contest

Ahead of time ask the women to come to the meeting dressed in their brightest, loudest, ensemble. Give a prize for the winners.

Light of the World

We read in John 8:12 "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows Me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life." What an amazing promise we have in Jesus Christ. How reassuring it is to know that even in our darkest times, when the light seems too dim to see, His power still shines through. No amount of evil in this world or clouds in the sky can dim this light.

Just as Jesus is the light of the world, He calls us as His children to be a light to others. He states in Matthew 5:14-16, "You are the light of the world, a city on a hill that cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it 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 men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven." If we live for Christ, we will glow showing others what Christ is like.

As you fight the winter blues this season, remember Christ's light still shines. You have a reason to get up and praise Him each and every day. You need to be a light to others so that they will see Christ through you.

FEBRUARY 2015

RISE AND SHINE

BY GLORIA GRAHAM

Attire

Ask the women to come dressed in their pajamas, robe and slippers. Discuss the following questions:

1. As a child did they have a stuffed animal that they always took to bed?
2. Do they have trouble falling asleep?
3. Do they have a ritual they follow that helps them fall asleep?
4. What do they do if they wake up and can't get back to sleep?

What Is Sleep Apnea?

Sleep apnea (AP-ne-ah) is a common disorder in which you have one or more pauses in breathing or shallow breaths while you sleep. Breathing pauses can last from a few seconds to minutes. They may occur 30 times or more an hour.

Typically, normal breathing then starts again, sometimes with a loud snort or choking sound. Sleep apnea usually is a chronic (on going) condition that disrupts your sleep. When your breathing pauses or becomes shallow, you'll often move out of deep sleep and into light sleep. As a result, the quality of your sleep is poor, which makes you tired during the day. Sleep apnea is a leading cause of excessive daytime sleepiness. It is a chronic condition that requires long-term management and is successfully treatable in many people. It affects more than 18 million American adults.

Speaker

Ahead of time check with the women to see if they or anyone in their family has sleep apnea. See if they would be willing to bring their CPAP machine and explain how it works.

Ask one of the women to research information on Sleep Apnea and report their findings to the group. There are many informational sites on the Internet.



The video—"Living with Sleep Apnea" can be downloaded at: <http://tiny.cc/mxuchx>.

Major Signs and Symptoms of Sleep Apnea

- Loud and chronic snoring
- Choking, snorting, or gasping during sleep
- Long pauses in breath
- Daytime sleepiness, no matter how much time you spend in bed
- Waking up with a dry mouth or sore throat
- Morning headaches
- Restless or fitful sleep
- Insomnia or nighttime awakenings
- Going to the bathroom frequently during the night
- Waking up feeling out of breath
- Forgetfulness and difficulty concentrating
- Moodiness, irritability or depression
- Falling asleep sitting, reading, watching TV or driving

Diagnosis

Sleep apnea often goes undiagnosed. Doctors usually can't detect the condition during routine office visits. Also, no blood test can help diagnose the condition. Most people who have sleep apnea don't know they have it because it only occurs during sleep. A family member might be the first to notice signs of sleep apnea.

Sleep apnea is diagnosed by a doctor's referral to a Sleep Study Lab. The patient typically stays overnight and is monitored by a technician via electrodes attached to ascertain respiration, oxygen levels and brain activity. If diagnosed, a common solution is fitting the patient with a CPAP machine and mask, which blows a constant air pressure through the nose to avoid the obstruction that causes breathing to stop.

Getting a Good Night's Sleep

Studies show that the best temperature for sleep (if you're wearing pajamas) is a nippy 60 to 66 degrees Fahrenheit. This helps cool down your core body temperature, which brings on sleep. In fact, people with certain sleep problems tend to have a warmer core body temperature just before bed. If you do, try taking a cold shower before curling up to sleep. Your body rests, but your brain stays active. You drift between two sleep states—REM (rapid eye movement) and non-REM. During deeper REM sleep, your brain activity increases. Researchers believe that both states are needed to reinforce memories and learning.

If you have trouble sleeping, experts advise banning electronics—cell phones, TVs and computers from the bedroom. The idea is to associate your bed with sleeping. If you can't sleep or you wake up and can't go back to sleep, go into another room and do something relaxing, like reading or listening to music until you are sleepy. Go back to bed only when you are tired.

Game

Lullaby contest—Divide the women into teams. Taking turns ask them to name and sing a lullaby. The team who can sing the most songs wins. Or have one team member act out the lullaby, with the rest of the team guessing its name.

Song

Invite the women to sing Frere Jacques in rounds. You will find video clips of this song on YouTube®.

Scripture Reading

Sleeping Pills—Place the following verses in old prescription bottles and select women to read them: Psalm 4:8; Psalm 121:4; Psalm 127:2; Proverbs 3:24; Proverbs 6:20–22. If you have enough bottles, prepare one for each of the women to take home.

Sleep Quiz

Invite the women to take a sleep quiz. There are a number on the Internet. Following are some sites:

<http://www.doctoroz.com/quiz/dr-oz-s-sleep-quiz>

<http://www.webmd.com/sleep-disorders/rm-quiz-sleep>

<http://tiny.cc/6r0nhx>



Sleepless In ????

We've all experienced it. You eagerly wait the chance to get to bed, put on your jammies, get the last drink, turn out the lights and you can't get to sleep! Tossing and turning, your mind won't shut off. Your joints ache, your legs twitch and you look at the clock marking off the hours. Sleep escapes us all at some time or another. If you are worried, it often ends in a sleepless night.

Psalm 3 describes King David in a situation that would make for a sleepless night. David's son, Absalom, had led a rebellion and David had fled Jerusalem while thousands were seeking his life. His kingdom and family were in complete disarray. There were stinging accusations about David's failures with Bathsheba. However, in verses 3 and 4 we see where David confesses his sin and is forgiven. In verse 5 we see he is finally able to rest because he realizes the Lord has delivered him and sustains him.

It is easier to sleep when we have the full assurance that God is in control of the situation. If you find yourself lying awake at night worrying about circumstances you can't control, give them all to the Lord. Trust that He is in control. God responds to us when we urgently pray to Him.

Sleep is a necessity and God made us to need eight hours of sleep, as well as a Sabbath day for rest. Our bodies actually renew themselves during sleep. The best starting place for a good night's rest is a clear conscience and the assurance of God being with you as your guide, strength and comforter.

THE GLARE THAT OBSCURES

BY MAJOR KELLY GOLDFARB



Program Outline

Let's SEE Who Is Here

Welcome and Announcements

You Are the Apple of My EYE

Give each woman an apple with the name of another woman attached to it. They are to share what it is that makes this woman a special individual.

His EYE Is On the Sparrow

(Sing this song congregationally or have a soloist sing it)

Glaucoma Quiz

(See the DVD)

Sunglass Swap

Ask each woman to bring a pair of sunglasses to exchange.

Questions To Ask Your Doctor

(See the DVD)

Devotional

You Are the Apple of His EYE



Introduction

Glaucoma is an eye disease that gradually steals vision. There are typically no early warning signs or painful symptoms. It develops slowly and sometimes without noticeable sight loss for many years. Most people who have glaucoma feel fine and do not notice a change in their vision at first because the initial loss of vision is of side or peripheral vision and the visual acuity or sharpness of vision is maintained until late in the disease. Only about half of the estimated three million Americans who have glaucoma are even aware that they have the condition.

In the healthy eye, a clear fluid called aqueous (pronounced AY-kwee-us) humor circulates inside the front portion of your eye. To maintain a constant healthy eye pressure, your eye continually produces a small amount of aqueous humor while an equal amount of this fluid flows out of your eye. If you have glaucoma, the aqueous humor does not flow out of the eye properly. Fluid pressure in the eye builds up and, over time, causes damage to the optic nerve fibers. The most common type of glaucoma, primary open-angle glaucoma, has no noticeable signs or symptoms except gradual vision loss.

By the time a patient is aware of vision loss, the disease is usually quite advanced. Without proper treatment, glaucoma can lead to blindness. You are at increased risk for glaucoma if your parents or siblings have the disease; if you are African American or Latino, and possibly if you are diabetic or have cardiovascular disease. The risk of glaucoma also increases with age. The good news is that with regular eye exams, early detection and treatment, you can preserve your vision.

It is important to have your eyes examined regularly. Your eyes should be tested:

- before age 40, every two to four years
- from age 40 to age 54, every one to three years
- from age 55 to 64, every one to two years
- after age 65, every six to 12 months



You Are the Apple of His Eye

“The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light” (Matt. 6:22).

I recently went to the optician because I had been having a lot of headaches and my eyes were sore. He put me through the exam and then said, “Well, everything looks good but you need bifocals.” I was upset, to say the least. Bifocals are for old people and contrary to my children’s opinions I am not old!

Fast forward two weeks and my new glasses arrived. I was not what you would call excited but I faithfully went and picked them up. That is when the problems began. I had no idea bifocals would be so hard to adjust to. I was missing steps, walking into things and generally looking silly. My family and friends at the corps had a lot of fun in the time it took me to adjust, while I got bruised shins and increasingly frustrated with my new eyes.

When we come into relationship with Christ we receive new spiritual eyes—a new way of looking at things, both within our own lives and the lives of those around us. Some of us probably need to seek the Lord and ask Him for a spiritual eye exam. Many of us might be shocked with the results.

As the Scripture tells us, “The eye is the lamp of the body.” Think for a moment of all the things your eyes see in one day. Perhaps you read some questionable literature, or play a game on the laptop that is questionable. We may watch a little questionable reality TV or read some gossip on Facebook®. Can we say that our bodies are full of His light when we fill our eyes with such things?

This week seek the Lord every day and ask Him to open your eyes so you can not only see Him, but also reflect Him in all you say and do. Now it may take some adjusting. You may misstep a few times just like I did when I got my bifocals, but with His help you will adjust to this new way of living.

Decorations

Decorate the room with items having to do with the eye—charts, glasses, sun glasses.

Speaker

Arrange for a local eye doctor, nurse or someone from the community (Federation of the Blind) to speak to the group about glaucoma.

Refreshments

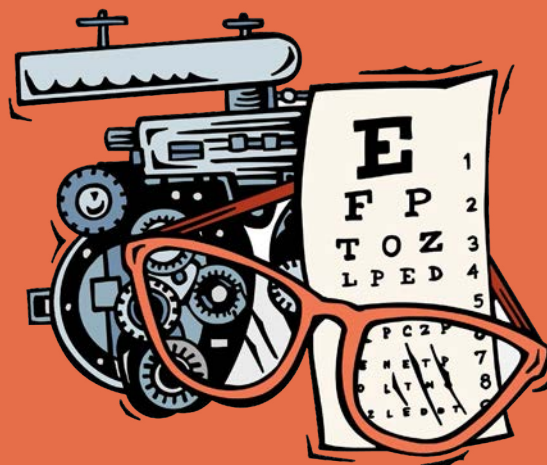
Eyeball Egg Salad Sandwiches

Hard-boil the eggs. Peel off the shell and cut off the tip and set it aside. Cut out eye shapes from a piece of bread. Mix up the eggs and mayonnaise to make egg salad. Place the tip of egg on top of the egg salad sandwich to resemble an eyeball. Take food writers (available in the cake decorating stores and at Walmart®) and use the black to draw circle on center of egg. Draw red lines from center of the egg to represent the veins.

Jello-Jiggler Eyeballs

- Ingredients
- Ice cube trays
- White grape gelatin
- Blueberries or dark grapes

Follow the directions on the gelatin box on how to make jigglers. Fill ice-cube tray containers 3/4 full. Once they begin to set, add the blueberries or grapes. Remove the jigglers from the tray and place in a clear serving bowl or dish.



MARCH 2015

GLAUCOMA QUIZ

1. Glaucoma is a leading cause of blindness.—**TRUE**
Glaucoma can cause blindness if it is left untreated. Unfortunately approximately ten percent of people with glaucoma who receive proper treatment still experience loss of vision.
2. There is a cure for glaucoma.—**FALSE**
Glaucoma is not curable, and vision lost cannot be regained. With medication and/or surgery, it is possible to halt further loss of vision. Since open-angle glaucoma is a chronic condition, it must be monitored for life. Diagnosis is the first step to preserving your vision.
3. Only older people are at risk for glaucoma.—**FALSE**
Everyone is at risk for glaucoma from babies to senior citizens. Older people are at a higher risk for glaucoma but babies can be born with glaucoma (approximately 1 out of every 10,000 babies born in the United States). Young adults can get glaucoma, too. African Americans in particular are susceptible at a younger age.
4. There may be no symptoms to warn you.—**TRUE**
With open-angle glaucoma, the most common form, there are virtually no symptoms. Usually, no pain is associated with increased eye pressure. Vision loss begins with peripheral or side vision. You may compensate for this unconsciously by turning your head to the side, and may not notice anything until significant vision is lost. The best way to protect your sight from glaucoma is to get tested. If you have glaucoma, treatment can begin immediately.
5. Blindness from glaucoma is 6 to 8 times more common in African Americans than Caucasians.—**TRUE.**
6. Estimates put the total number of suspected cases of glaucoma at over 10 million worldwide.—**FALSE**, it is 60 million.
7. Sixty-one percent of people (less than half of all adult Americans) receive dilated eye exams, which is the best and most effective way to detect glaucoma.—**TRUE.**
8. Blindness ranked third (after cancer and heart disease) as people's major fear: —**TRUE.**
9. Fifty percent of people knew that glaucoma was related to elevated pressure within the eye. Most of them mistakenly thought people could tell if they had glaucoma due to symptoms, or that it was easily cured, or that it did not lead to blindness.—**FALSE**, it is only twenty percent.



Questions to Ask If You Receive a Glaucoma Diagnosis

The Basics

- What type of glaucoma do I have?
- How will my vision be affected now and in the future?
- Is it hereditary? What should I tell my family about my condition?
- What is my expected prognosis?

Treatment

- What are my treatment options?
- What are the possible risks and side effects of this treatment?
- What could happen without treatment?
- What medications do you recommend? Will they interact with any other medications or dietary supplements I am taking?
- How long will this treatment last?
- How will I know if the treatment is working?
- How often will I need checkups?

Lifestyle Changes

- Should I follow a special diet?
- What type of exercise could help my condition?
- What special precautions should I take when working or driving?
- Which activities should I avoid?

Support

- Can you recommend any glaucoma support groups?

APRIL 2015

SUNNY SIDE UP

BY CAPTAIN MARY MEREDITH

Introduction

The purpose of this program is to share the history of the Easter egg and to serve as a reminder of the resurrection story.

Decorations

Decorate using anything to do with spring and Easter.

Refreshments

Serve any type of dish using eggs. Some suggestions are: Heavenly eggs (Deviled Eggs without the devil), scrambled eggs, Quiche.

Internet Resources

Ask one of the women to put together a report giving little known facts about the egg. Or use the following websites to create a true and false game regarding eggs.

<http://www.incredibleegg.org>

http://www.moarkllc.com/products_egg-faq.html (LandOLakes)

<http://www.eggnutritioncenter.org>

<http://www.aeb.org> (American Egg Board)

Resurrection Eggs

Resurrection eggs are plastic eggs containing items that illustrate the Easter story. They can be purchased or can be homemade. Demonstrate how the woman can make resurrection eggs to share with their children or grandchildren. Instructions can be found at:

<http://tiny.cc/m8vchx>

Egg Decorating

Take the women back to their childhood by having an egg decorating contest. You will need 2 to 6 hard-boiled eggs per person, egg coloring kits, stickers, yarn, crayons and other items to decorate the eggs.

Games

Pass the Egg—Divide the women into teams. They are to pass a plastic egg from spoon to spoon trying not to drop the egg. If the egg is dropped, they must start again from the first woman in the line.

Egg Hunt—Hide plastic eggs containing Scripture verses that reference God's gift of salvation through Jesus.

Egg Toss—Toss plastic eggs into a large basket or container.



Match the Name with the Egg

Ask the women to match up the type of egg with its description. The correct description appears opposite the type of egg in this chart.

Hard Boiled Egg	Yolk and white cooked through
Soft Boiled Egg	White cooked through
Coddled egg	Pouring boiling water over a shelled egg and letting it stand for 10 minutes.
Over Easy	Yolks are cooked lightly
Over Hard	Eggs are cooked thoroughly
Sunny Side Up	Yolks are left uncooked
Omelet	Mixed eggs with any combination of cheese, vegetables and meat
Poached egg	Egg broken into simmering water to cook
Scrambled eggs	Beaten eggs stirred until cooked
Basted egg	Pouring hot butter or bacon grease over an egg until it is cooked
Shirred eggs	Eggs baked in a flat bottom dish
Onsen tamago	Eggs cooked in the hot springs of Japan



The History of the Easter Egg

Read Luke 24:1–12.

Eggs have always been a symbol of life. An egg can seem so plain, ordinary and lifeless on the outside but beautiful, magnificent and miraculous inside. In ancient times the Egyptians placed decorated eggs at the graves of royalty to represent re-birth into the after-life. In China the parents of a newborn receive gifts of decorated eggs. Eggs are served as part of the Jewish Passover Seder meal. It is likely that eggs were served at our Lord's last supper as the Passover was observed. Following the death and resurrection of Jesus, Christians used the egg to symbolize the empty tomb and Jesus' life. It is said that the early church would dye the eggs red as a reminder of the blood that Jesus shed to wash away our sins. Early European churches consider that the egg represented the empty tomb when it was broken and the egg consumed. They explained that the food inside was nourishment to the body as Christ's broken body was the nourishment to our souls.

As early as the thirteenth Century, European Churches listed eggs among the foods that believers were forbidden to eat during the 40 days prior to Easter, or the Lenten period. Families would continue to gather eggs throughout Lent and save them. On the Thursday before Easter, or Maundy–Thursday (the remembrance of the Lord's Supper and the new command to love one another) the women and children of the house would decorate the eggs. On Easter Sunday morning, everyone would bring baskets filled with beautifully decorated eggs to the church and celebrate the end of fasting by eating eggs. They would share the decorated eggs with their family, friends and neighbors.

Today, the tradition continues all over the world. In Mexico, eggshells (cascarones) are filled with confetti and are cracked on the heads of loved ones. In Germany, decorated eggs are hung from trees and shrubs. In the United Kingdom and other European countries, egg dances or egg hops are held. People dance around eggs without breaking them. In 1878, the first annual egg roll was held at the White House. In Greece, hard-boiled eggs are taped together trying not to crack the eggs in the process. Every year children participate in egg hunts. Eggs have been decorated for many years using wax (beeswax or crayon), onionskins, colored wool yarn, straw, embroidery, food coloring, paint, jewels and silk or fabric dye. Today there are chocolate eggs, jellybeans, gummy eggs, peanut butter eggs and plastic eggs. The egg has become a large part of Easter.

In Luke 24: 1–12, we are reminded of the first Easter story and the empty tomb. The women expected to tend Jesus' dead body with prepared spices. But what they found was an empty tomb and good news spoken by the angel. "He is not here; He has risen! Just as He said" (verse 6). They remembered His words that He "would be crucified and on the third day be raised again" (verse 7). Then they went and spread the good news. Jesus conquered death and enters our lives today.

This year as Easter arrives let the Easter egg be a reminder of what the Lord has done. Nothing can replace the true story of our risen Savior and the empty tomb. May you live in His peace, grace and mercy.



MAY 2015

WITH FACES ALL AGLOW

BY MAJOR MELODY DAVIS

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light” (1 Peter 2:9).

Introduction

The focus of this program is to share the latest in skin care and beauty—both inside and out.

Program Ideas

- Invite a consultant from Clinique, Mary Kay or Avon to share with the women the latest in beauty and skin care. Or contact a dermatologist who could give current information about skin care. Speak with a representative of a beauty salon or spa and ask if someone could share with the women beauty trends, skin care and make up tips. These professionals may also be willing to bring samples for the women to take home.
- Ask a representative from Mary Kay (or other cosmetic company) to do makeovers on a couple of the women. Take before and after glamour shots. If this is not possible, ask one of the women who is good with make-up to show basic make-up techniques.
- Set up spa stations in the meeting room. Have the women rotate to the various beauty services offered. For example: facial masks, hand or foot scrub, express manicure or pedicures, make up tips, paraffin wax treatment, neck and shoulder massage.
- Demonstrate simple facial masks or have the women make a facial scrub. These can be easy and inexpensive to make. They can be placed in a small mason jar for the women to take home.
- Recipes for homemade scrubs, facemasks and other beauty, skin care treatments can be found online. The website <http://beauty.about.com> is a good resource. Here are a couple very simple ones:
 1. Sugar Scrub—¼ cup each of brown sugar and white sugar. Put in a small jar. Cover with olive oil and add 1 to 2 tsp. of vanilla extract.
 2. Facial Mask for all skin types—Egg white and Yogurt mask. Mix in a bowl 2 egg whites and 2 tbsps. of plain yogurt. Apply to the face and leave on for 3 to 5 minutes. Rinse with warm water.



Decorations

Set up the meeting room like a spa. Bring in a comfy couch or chairs with lots of throw pillows. Have fragrant candles and beauty magazines on tables. Place mirrors on tables or on the walls throughout the room.

Quotes and Scripture Verses About Beauty

Frames some of the quotes below and use as table decorations. Make posters to hang on the wall or make cards for the women to take home.

- Some people are so much sunshine to the square inch. Walt Whitman
- We are told to let our light shine, and if it does, we won’t need to tell anybody it does. Lighthouses don’t fire cannons to call attention to their shining—they just shine. Dwight L. Moody
- Though we travel the world over to find the beautiful we must carry it with us, or we find it not. Ralph Waldo Emerson
- For beautiful eyes, look for the good in others; for beautiful lips, speak only words of kindness; for poise, walk with the knowledge that you are never alone.” Audrey Hepburn
- Be-YOU-tiful!
- Be your own kind of beautiful.
- Remember your best accessory is a smile.
- Let your light shine (Matt. 5:16).
- Be joyful always (1 Thess. 5:16).
- Do everything without grumbling or arguing, so that you may become blameless and pure, children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation. Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky (Phil 2:14, 15).
- 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).
- He has made everything beautiful in His time (Eccl. 3:11).

Refreshment Ideas

Serve healthy snacks such as a fresh fruit tray, veggie tray, bottled water and green tea.



Beautiful

All of us could give the names of beautiful women. Some we may know and others we have only seen in movies or on television. I have met some truly gorgeous women. They were actually so stunning that when they walk in the room, you can't help but notice them. Most of them were also very beautiful on the inside. But I have met some very beautiful women who once I spent time with them and got to know them better, I realized something. They weren't so beautiful anymore. Even though they were beautiful on the outside, the inside was not so pretty. They were negative, complaining, whining, gossiping or crude in their speech. It made me understand that true beauty really does come from within.

Some of the prettiest people I have ever known were those who just lit up a room with their inner beauty. Everyone wants to be around them and spend time with them because they are beautiful on the inside. You can probably think of some pretty incredible women that you know, women who inspire and encourage you.

When we think of women in the Bible who were considered beautiful and inspiring, we might think of Queen Esther who was chosen as Queen because of her beauty. But what made her most beautiful was her obedience to God. It was her inner beauty. She was beautiful because she loved others (her people) more than her own life. It is said, "Beauty is being the best possible version of yourself on the inside and out." Queen Esther was created and chosen for a purpose. We are also chosen women. First Peter 2:9 says, "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light." We are chosen. We have a purpose, to let our light shine and bring glory to God.

So, go out and be your own kind of beautiful. Be the very best that God created you to be and shine for Him.

JUNE 2015

SHINE ON, YOU CRAZY DIAMOND

BY MAJOR SHANNON WINTERS

“Gold there is, and rubies in abundance, but lips that speak knowledge are a rare jewel” (Prov. 20:15).

Program Ideas

Ask each woman to bring a piece of jewelry that she holds particularly dear. Perhaps it is a necklace given as a special gift, or a brooch that has been passed down for many generations. Invite the woman to share what they brought, why they love it and why it holds special significance.

Activities All About Gems

Ask a couple of the women to research the gems listed below. During the meeting, invite them to share pictures of the gems as well as a few interesting facts. The basic facts are included below. Additional information can be found on the Internet.

Ruby—This red gem is a variety of the mineral corundum. Rubies get their red color from traces of chromium. All other colors of corundum are called sapphire. Rubies are among the hardest of the gemstones with only the diamond being harder.

Topaz—The topaz of today is a mineral that is composed of aluminum, silicon, oxygen, and fluorine. It occurs in many colors, including deep golden–orange, yellow, brownish–yellow, pink, red and various shades of blue.

Peridot—Peridot is the modern name for chrysolite, which is a lovely, transparent gem from the mineral olivine. Its color, which ranges from yellow–green to a deep bottle green, comes from the presence of iron.

Garnet—The word garnet comes from the Latin “granatum” (the pomegranate) having to do with the red color of the stone. It is a brittle, hard, glassy, mineral silicate.

Jasper—(Known today as fire opal) Jasper is an opaque variety of chalcedony. It is most commonly red due to the presence of iron, but can also be found in yellow, brown and green.

Aquamarine—Aquamarine is a light blue or bluish–green variety of beryl. Historians have likened it to “a thousand leagues of sunlit sea imprisoned in a cup.” Its very name is descriptive of its color: aqua meaning water and marine meaning the sea.

Sapphire—The gemstone sapphire that we know today is the blue, translucent variety of corundum. The sapphire gets its blue color from small amounts of iron and titanium and ranges from a pale, ice blue to deep cobalt blue.

Emerald—Emeralds are the valuable and highly prized



grassy–green variety of beryl.

Amethyst—Amethyst is a variety of quartz that is best known for its rich, violet–purple hue. The color can vary in intensity from a pale, almost pinkish mauve color to a dark purplish violet. It is thought that the color of the stone comes from small amounts of iron in the quartz.

Chrysoprase—Chrysoprase is a translucent, bright apple or grassy green variety of chalcedony. The green color comes from nickel. It is the most valuable variety of chalcedony.

Diamond—Diamonds are the most highly prized gemstones in the world, mostly due to their many qualities and few weaknesses. They are pure elemental carbon and are the hardest of all gemstones.

Sardonyx—(Probably known today as Pink Tourmaline) Sardonyx is a variety of chalcedony that has alternating bands of pinkish–brown and white. Early Roman writers spoke of sardonyx as a “gem of great value.” It made beautiful cameos and was often extravagantly carved.

Something New from Something Old

Teach the women how to bead their own jewelry. Old or broken jewelry found in local thrift stores are great for learning this skill. Repurposed jewelry takes on a whole new life and appreciation in the eyes of the creator. Have each woman create a bead cluster pendant to wear as a reminder of the lessons learned today. There are many great video tutorials available on YouTube.com for this activity.

Refreshments

Serve cookies cut in the shape of diamond rings, cupcakes topped with crystal sprinkles that resemble gemstones, sandwiches cut in the shape of diamonds. Place them on jewel–toned trays.

Decoration

Cover the tables with jewel colored tablecloths. Place jewelry boxes or dress forms with draped jewelry in the centers of the tables.

Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend!

Read Exodus 28:15–21.

Marilyn Monroe made the song “Diamonds Are a Girl’s Best Friend!” popular many years ago. It was used again many years later in the movie “Moulin Rouge.” I know this girl certainly loves diamonds. As a matter of fact, I love just about any sparkly bauble! The bigger and “blingier” the better.

I love the images that we see of bling in God’s Word. The jewels mentioned in Exodus 28 were all a part of what must have been a breathtaking work of art. All of these stones were set into the breastplate worn by the high priest as he represented the Israelites before God. We find the account of the commission of this piece in Exodus 28 read previously. While some of the names of the stones are difficult to translate and Bible scholars have found it difficult to authentically state with absolute certainty what the current equivalent stones may be, there are some facts we know for sure about this extraordinary piece.

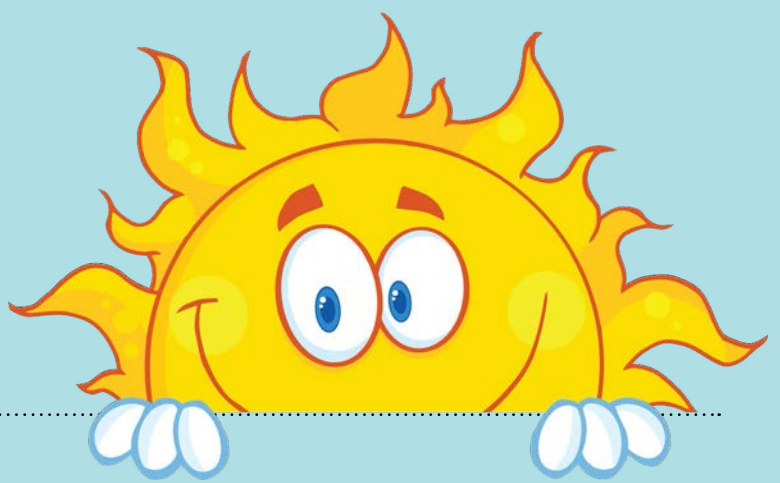
1. The breastplate was large. We learn in verse 16 that, “A span shall be the length thereof, and a span shall be the breadth thereof.” A span is the width of a hand with fingers spread. It would have covered a very large part of the chest.
2. The stones were very large. We learn in verse 21 that the stones were each engraved with names of the children of Israel. Can you imagine how large a stone would have to be to engrave a name into it?
3. Each stone was set in pure gold (verse 20) and treated as equally precious. Each was set into a highly desired, costly metal.
4. This extravagant piece had a very special purpose. In Exodus 28:29 we read that it was to be a memorial before the Lord continually. I also believe that wearing such a fabulous piece of jewelry would have reminded the wearer of the people that he was called to serve. He wore the children of God upon His heart. Undoubtedly, with such a sizable pendant, there would not have been much chance of forgetting why it was being worn.

I am so humbled with the knowledge that today Jesus Christ is our high priest. Hebrews 4:14 tells us, “Therefore, since we have a great high priest who has ascended into heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to the faith we profess.” The image of my High Priest sitting at the right hand of His Father, while pressing upon His heart are the stones of His children leaves me breathless. We are precious stones to Him. He wears us upon His heart. He always remembers us. In His eyes, you shine. Shine on, you crazy diamond! Shine on!

JULY 2015

STEP INTO THE SUNSHINE

BY MAJOR KAREN CARTER



Introduction

The human foot is a marvel of biomechanical engineering, but most of us take our feet for granted. Together, your two feet contain more than 50 bones, accounting for about one-fourth of all the bones in your body. And somehow they also make room for more than 60 joints and 200 muscles, tendons and ligaments that hold them together and help them move. Our feet have a very tough job; simply walking around on an average day pounds them with hundreds of tons of force. Did you know that the average person will walk the equivalent of twice around the world in a lifetime? That's a long time on your feet.

Program Ideas

Discuss ways to take care of your feet. Check the following websites for information.

- Happy Feet: 10 Ways to Maintain Healthy Feet—www.medicalnewstoday.com/releases/67876.php
- Foot Health—<http://tiny.cc/rawchx>
- Exercises for Healthy Feet—<http://tiny.cc/dcwchx>
- 18 Things Your Feet Say About Your Health—<http://tiny.cc/zdwchx>

- How to Prevent Smelly Feet—<http://tiny.cc/dfwchx>
- Teach the women the proper way to give themselves a pedicure—<http://tiny.cc/ghwchx>
- Invite a podiatrist to talk about foot health.
- Invite a massage therapist to discuss foot reflexology.
- Teach the women the proper way to measure their shoe size and discuss the best kinds of shoes to wear—<http://tiny.cc/7hwchx>

Activities

Listed below are two online quizzes that can be used for icebreakers.

Celebrity Shoe Quiz

<http://tiny.cc/1jwchx>

Can You Spot The Designer Shoes

<http://tiny.cc/4kwchx>

Shoe Exchange

All of us have bought shoes that feel comfortable when we try them on in the store. But when we get them home, they just don't fit. Invite the women to bring their "gently used" shoes to exchange with each other.





STEP INTO THE SUNSHINE

There are all sorts of feet. There are large feet, small feet, long feet, short feet, skinny feet and pudgy feet. Some people have strange looking feet, while others have beautiful feet. Take a look at your feet. Do you like your feet? On a scale of one to ten, how would you rate your feet? I don't imagine any of us would rate our feet as a ten.

Think of the how many times you have said, "Oh, my aching feet!" or complained, "I can't take another step." As we get older, our feet are more often than not a source of discomfort. We don't think of our feet as beautiful. However, it is possible for all of us to have beautiful feet, at least in God's eyes. God thinks some feet are very beautiful. In Isaiah we read, "How beautiful on the mountains are the feet of those who bring good news, who proclaim peace, who bring good tidings, who proclaim salvation, who say to Zion, 'Your God reigns!'" (Isa. 52:7).

Isaiah is not talking about feet that look beautiful because of a pedicure, but feet that are beautiful because they bring the message of salvation to others. We are called to walk in this world to the places where the love of God is not shining, where His light and beauty are not evident. We are called to bring the good news to those who need to hear the mes-

sage of His love and grace, to shine the light into darkened hearts and darkened places. Man is sinful, but God sent Jesus to die on the cross and pay the sacrifice for our sin. He rose from the dead and because of that we can live with God in heaven forever. All you have to do is ask Jesus to forgive you. That is the good news.

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life" (John 8:12). When Jesus comes into a life, that life is never the same. His light shines and wipes away any darkness in our hearts. He is light, He shines and shows the way, He gives us life. Does that mean that we will never have problems? Does that mean our lives will always be carefree? No, of course not; however, the good news is that Jesus is our Savior. He will always be with us. We can have eternal life and know that He reigns, now and forever. In Ephesians 5:8 we read, "For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light." Step into the sunshine!

Step into the sunshine, get out of the shade,
This is the one time that you've got it made and you can
Feel yourself smiling way down to your shoes,
Step into the sunshine; find the great good news.

AUGUST 2015

COMFORTING LIGHT

BY MAJOR DONNA JUSTICE



Introduction

For hundreds of years lighthouses have been a source of comfort to ship captains seeking safe passage into a port or harbor. They were used to light up the harbor and sometimes point out a dangerous shoreline. Either way, the purpose of the lighthouse was to bring the ship safely to shore. God's Word has a similar purpose. We read in Psalm 119:105, "Your Word is a lamp for my feet, a light on my path." Just as the light of the lighthouse guides the ship, God's word guides us, protecting us from danger and safely bringing us to heaven's shore.

Decorations

Ahead of time ask if any of the women collect lighthouses and would bring them to use for table decorations. Ask them to share any stories concerning these items. Lighthouse pictures, oil lanterns or other lighthouse items could also be used.

Lighthouse Information

Ask one of the women to share information about lighthouses. Following is some information. Additional information can be found on the Internet.

The top of the lighthouse has a beam of light that flashes and lights up the sky and shoreline. These beams are created to help ships at sea when there is a storm, fog, or other inclement weather; to indicate where the shore is and to help the ships avoid any rocks. Their purpose is to create a beam of light showing the distance from the shoreline.

Most lighthouses were built from concrete, brick or stone. They are designed to handle icy, cold weather and hurricane winds, as well as other severe weather conditions. Originally, most light keepers lived in the lighthouse or in a house next to, or attached to it. Most of the lighthouses still existing today are over one hundred years old and are still in good working condition. The door to the lighthouse faces the opposite of the shoreline to keep the inside of the house warm and dry.

Until the last century shipping was very important. Ships and boats were the major way to transport people and cargo. They relied on sea trade to get many of their

supplies. The shoreline was often dangerous due to rocks, sand bars and shallow water. If a ship's load of cargo were lost, it would cause hardship for the people. Many lives were lost because of shipwrecks. Before lighthouses were built, people often used lanterns or fires to help guide the ships safely to shore.

Famous Lighthouses

Obtain pictures of lighthouse around your state and share information about them.

- The first lighthouse was built in America on Little Brewster Island, near Boston in 1716.
- The Sandy Hook Lighthouse in New Jersey was built in 1764. This lighthouse is still in operation today and is the oldest operating lighthouse in United States.
- The Pharos of Alexandria, in Egypt, was the first known lighthouse. It was completed in 280 B.C. It stood more than 350 feet tall until an earthquake destroyed it in the 1300s.
- La Coruna (Tower of Hercules) is the world's oldest working lighthouse. It stands at the northwest tip of Spain.
- The Statue of Liberty is the world's most famous lighthouse. Almost everyone is familiar with this symbol of freedom, but few are probably aware that, for a few years early in its existence, it was also officially a lighthouse operated under the authority of the Lighthouse Board. It was the first U.S. lighthouse to use electricity. The torch in Lady Liberty's right hand had, and still has, great symbolic significance. But from the beginning, it was also used as a navigational aid for ships entering the New York Harbor.
- Cape Hatteras lighthouse near Buxton on North Carolina's Outer Banks is the tallest masonry U.S. lighthouse. It measures over 207 feet from the foundation to the top of the spire.
- Alcatraz Island Lighthouse in San Francisco Bay was the first lighthouse on the West Coast.
- Charleston Lighthouse on Sullivan's Island, South Carolina, is the newest U.S. lighthouse, completed in 1962. It has a strange triangular structure. It is the only U.S. lighthouse that has an air-conditioned and elevator.



The Lord Is My Light

For many years The Salvation Army ALM division (Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi) held its annual Youth Councils in Biloxi, MS, just a few blocks from the Biloxi Lighthouse. Many of the council participants visited the lighthouse, which was built in 1848 and is the only lighthouse to stand in the middle of a four-lane highway. This lighthouse has endured more than twenty devastating hurricanes, including Camille in 1969 and Katrina in 2005. This lighthouse faced many dangerous storms in its lifetime but through its strong foundation it stood the storms. Through the years many ships and boats approaching Biloxi looked to the lighthouse as a guiding light.

At the base of the Statue of Liberty you will find a poem by Emma Lazarus that includes these words, “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me—I lift my lamp beside the golden door.” Those words brought much comfort to many immigrants coming off a ship at Ellis Island seeking a new life in America. Jesus, The Light of the World, offers all who seek Him new life—life abundant. He is the comforting light.

We read in Psalms 27:1 “The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?” In our lifetime we all face many storms. Sometimes it’s the loss of a family member, divorce or the loss of a job. The storms range from light rain to hurricane force, but with God as our light and salvation, we should not be afraid. He is our refuge and strength, protecting us because He loves us.



A DISTANT GLOW

BY CAPTAIN NICHOLE BELL

What Are the Northern Lights?

The technical name for the northern lights is aurora borealis. They are shafts or curtains of light visible on occasion in the night sky. In the United States they can be seen in Alaska during the winter. Ask one of the women to give a report on this phenomenon. There are a number of sites on the Internet. Some of the sites also contain videos, which show film of the northern lights and could be shared with the women so they could get an idea of their beauty.

<http://tiny.cc/3pwchx>

<http://tiny.cc/rqwchx>

<http://tiny.cc/jrwchx>

<http://tiny.cc/hswchx>

Northern Lights A to Z

The children's book "Northern Lights A to Z" by Mindy Drwyer, Sasquatch Books, is available at Amazon.com for \$9.46. Using this book create a PowerPoint® presentation. Invite the women to discuss their reaction to the pictures. Can they see God in these images? Could descriptive words other than those in the book be given for each letter to reflect God's attributes and our Christian beliefs? For example: A—All-powerful, B—Beautiful, C—Creator.

Going on a Bear Hunt

Divide the women into groups of five to eight. They are to repeat the sentence, "I am going on a bear hunt through Alaska and I am going to take _____." They must fill in the blank using each letter of the alphabet—apples, blanket, cooler. The trick is they must repeat all the items previously mentioned. The last person will end up repeating 26 items taken on their bear hunt.

Games

Myths and Facts about Alaska

Alaska has 29 volcanoes—**Truth**

It is the only state to have coastlines on three different seas—**Truth**

You can see penguins walking down the street—**Myth**

Over half of the world's glaciers are found in Alaska—**Truth**

Alaskan main mode of travel is by dog-teams—**Myth**

The border of Alaska is fifty-five miles east of Russia—**Truth**

Most plants grow well in Alaska's varied climate—**Truth**

Alaskans live in Igloos—**Myth**

Alaska is two times the size of Texas—**Truth**

Alaska is a vast wilderness—**Myth**

Alaskans live in snow year round—**Myth**

For further myths and facts check the following websites:

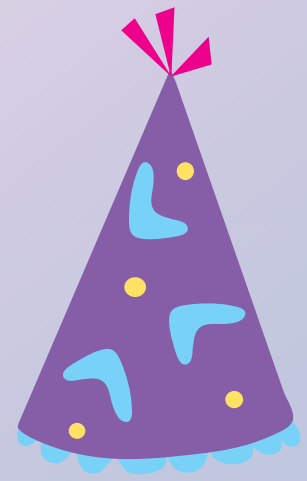
<http://tiny.cc/htwchx>

<http://tiny.cc/auwchx>



The Light Shines in Darkness

A couple of years ago my husband bought me a cake on my birthday. I was so happy because I love cake, especially chocolate. I wanted to dig in as soon as I could. Just as I was ready to cut a piece of that chocolaty goodness, my husband informed me that I must first blow out the candles. Even with all those candles nothing was going to get in my way of having chocolate cake on my birthday. With all the lights turned off and the glow of the candles illuminating the room I took a big deep breath and blew as hard as I could. I'm pleased to inform you that I was able to blow out all of the candles in one breath. With my fork in hand and my stomach growling, I went straight for that cake. But my husband had tricked me by putting trick candles on my cake the kind you blow out but just as you start to pull them out of the cake, they light up again. As my husband sat there laughing, I instinctively started blowing again. I blew and I blew and I blew, but I just couldn't get them out.



As I thought about the candles' power to stay lit, I was reminded of what John's Gospel tells us about Jesus, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and without Him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in Him was life and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it" (*John 1:1-5 NRSV*). Just like the candles on my birthday cake, nothing can put out the light that is Jesus Christ. Isn't that what we celebrate on Easter morning? Don't we celebrate the fact that neither death nor darkness could keep Him down? Just as Satan thought he had blown out the "candle" of the Lord, Jesus came back to life with the fiery sunrise that first Easter morning.

We too can be like those candles when we put our trust in Jesus. Sometimes it seems like life in general wants to blow out our flame. The demands of family are so strong that at times it's hard to keep our candle aflame. The loss of a friend seems like it will instantly squelch our flame. Listen again to the promise found in verse five of John 1, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." Nothing can put out the light of Jesus Christ; and when He is living in you, nothing can put out your light either.



