

To Us & Through Us

8th Grade (“Missionaries”) Final Project – Midweek Lent Mini-Sermons

Explanation of Project

A huge part of being a Christ follower is the understanding that Christ uses us to be his love in the world. The ELCA (the denomination St. Luke is a part of) has a tag line: “God’s Work. Our Hands.” That sums it up. God makes this world a better place THROUGH people like us. God uses your unique gifts, talents, and passions in ways that can be a blessing to others.

For your final project as “Missionaries” in our Discipleship Academy program, we want you to share with the congregation the ways you might be called to be a part of how God makes the world a better place. Each 8th grade “Missionary” will be expected to write a 3-paragraph mini-sermon to be read at one of the Midweek Lent services. *Don’t worry if you are a little nervous about public speaking! We want you to write out your thoughts ahead of time, so then you can simply read from the paper if you are nervous about being up front!*

Even if your small group hasn’t done their \$100 project yet – we’ll explain that in class – you can begin getting ready by reading the scriptures on page two and choosing one that is your favorite. You aren’t limited to just those scriptures listed, though; talk with your parents, and if you come up with a different story or passage from the Bible that summarizes how we are called to be a blessing to others, you can use that too! Even before your group finishes their project, you can have paragraphs 2 & 3 mostly done!

Here is a suggested outline for your 3 paragraphs:

Paragraph #1: Tell us about *your* experience of your group’s \$100 project. You don’t have to spend much time on explaining what your group did – that will be done by other members of your group. Tell us how it felt...what you liked about the experience. Was it surprising to see how people react to unexpected kindness from a stranger? Was it hard to choose a worthy cause? Tell us one thing you learned from taking the time (and money!) to bless someone else.

Paragraph #2: Tell us a little about what you are good at, or what makes you unique. Then, think about, and share with us, a little about how those unique characteristics could be used to make the world a better place. Do you already think you know what job you might want as an adult? Tell us about that and how that job can be a blessing to others. If you don’t have any strong preferences about jobs yet (*Don’t worry! Most people don’t in 8th grade!*) then just tell us what needs you see in the world that you think are most important for Christians to address.

Paragraph #3: Tell us why you chose the verse(s) you did, and what you think they say to all of us about being a blessing to others. Try hard to be specific here; don’t just say we should “help” people, but name some ways you think we all could be a part of the changes we wish to see in the world.

Please have a draft of your 3 paragraphs to Marie at least 1 week before your assigned Wednesday! *You can e-mail her at marieleafblad@gmail.com, find her on Facebook, or bring a paper copy of your draft to the Wednesday night service a week before your assigned day.*

See the next page for Scripture Suggestions

Scriptures about blessing, gratitude & paying it forward

I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you, and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and the one who curses you I will curse; and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. (*Genesis 12:2-3*)

Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. (*Galatians 6:2*)

From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us. So we are ambassadors for Christ, since God is making his appeal through us; we entreat you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God. (*2 Corinthians 5:16-21*)

Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. God's love was revealed among us in this way: God sent his only Son into the world so that we might live through him. In this is love, not that we loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the atoning sacrifice for our sins. Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us. (*1 John 4:7-12*)

You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hidden. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven. (*Matthew 5:14-16*)

Yes, everything is for your sake, so that grace, as it extends to more and more people, may increase thanksgiving, to the glory of God. (*2 Corinthians 4:15*)

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.' (*John 13:12-15*)

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, 'Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my lambs.' A second time he said to him, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' He said to him, 'Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Tend my sheep.' He said to him the third time, 'Simon son of John, do you love me?' Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, 'Do you love me?' And he said to him, 'Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.' Jesus said to him, 'Feed my sheep.' (*John 21:15-17*)