



Sharing GOD'S STORY @ home

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THE WEEK

"[God] delivers and rescues, [God] works signs and wonders in heaven and on earth; for [God] has saved Daniel from the power of the lions."

—Daniel 6:16

MEALTIME PRAYER

As we gather around this table, we give thanks for the love you have shown us. As we gather around this meal, we give thanks for food you provide. As we gather around together, we ask you to bless this food to our bodies and us to your work. Amen.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

Something to ask yourself as you read: How does hope in God play a role in each of these stories?

Sunday	Daniel 6:6-27	Hope in the Lions' Den
Monday	Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14	Daniel's Visions of Judgment
Tuesday	Daniel 9:1-6	Daniel's Prayer for the People
Wednesday	2 Timothy 4:16-18	God Protects Paul
Thursday	Psalms 7:1-5	Protection from Enemies
Friday	Joel 1:1-12	Joel's Lament
Saturday	Joel 1:13-14; 2:1-2, 15-16	A Call to Repentance and Prayer
Sunday	Joel 2:12-13, 28-29	Joel's Prophecy of Hope

If your household includes younger children, use a child-friendly Bible. You might find that the children's Bible you are using may not include the very story assigned for the DAILY BIBLE READINGS. Read to your kids anyway. Just pick a story!

SERVICE CHALLENGE

SERVICE is how we enact God's great love for the entire world.

Send a Christmas card to someone who inspired you to have hope even in the midst of loneliness, hard times or a difficult transition.

DEVOTIONS

Think about devotions as a continuation of our community's worship. The following basic pattern could be one way of forming your household's devotions. Adapt as necessary.

GATHERING

✠ Light a candle to help you focus this time as "God time."

✠ **Prayer of the Week**

God, like in the story of Daniel, you are with us. Through the gift of faith, we can trust your promise that no matter what we do, where we go, or who we are with, you will be there. How lucky we are to have your presence with us even in front of the mouths of lions. Amen.

CARING CONVERSATION

Take a moment to check in with each other or to use the questions below.

- ❓ **Highs and Lows:** What is one thing you hoped would happen today? What is one thing that disappointed you?
- ❓ **Thinking About This Week's Story:** Daniel was in scary place. When were you scared or nervous today? When did you feel brave?
- ❓ **Getting Ready for Next Week's Story:** Joel reminds us to turn our hearts to God, who is merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love. When have you shown love today? When have you been angry?

DAILY BIBLE READING

Read aloud from the DAILY BIBLE READING from the front. What do you want to remember from this reading?

PRAY TOGETHER

✠ Starting with the oldest person in group, have each person pray for one thing that they hope for this Advent season.

CLOSING

✠ If you used a candle, extinguish it as a sign of the end of the devotion time.

✠ **Rituals & Traditions: A Blessing to Share**

Mark one another with the sign of the cross on each other's hands or forehead, and say, "Go and share hope with others. Amen."

The "Four Key Faith Practices"—Caring Conversations, Devotions, Service, and Rituals & Traditions—are a framework developed by the Rev. Dr. David Anderson of Milestones Ministry and used by permission from Vibrant Faith Ministries, Bloomington, MN (www.vibrantfaith.org). For more information about the Four Keys, go to <http://milestonesministry.org/>.