

Hello King's Families,

I wanted to send a few resources to your family as we journey through this unique season. In the midst of many very real concerns, sorrows and challenges, we are also finding gifts in the slower pace and close quarters. We are experiencing spiritual renewal and connection with friends and family in new and meaningful ways. We are remembering things that were always true, like the words of Psalm 46, that "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble", and yet experiencing them now more deeply.

Here are three ideas for times of spiritual connection as a family.

1. **Practicing Gratitude** – Gratitude is an antidote to fear. It can change our attitude, get our eyes off ourselves and encourage us to take notice of what is around us. Giving thanks is an expression of trust in God and reminds us of God's goodness and presence even in the midst of hard times.
 - *Giving thanks at meal times:* Ask each person to share 1, 2 or even 3 things they are grateful for.
 - Start a *Gratitude Journal* as a family.
 - Talk about Psalm 136, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-18 & Philippians 4:4-7
2. **Reading the Psalms** – the Psalms are an amazing resource during this time. The prayers and songs of the Psalms capture all of our human emotion and experience and remind us the truth about our living God who is present in all the seasons, moments, struggles and ups and downs of life.
 - *In community:* Our neighborhood has been doing a short Zoom call in the morning. We are reading through a Psalm, then using the Psalm as a guide to give thanks to God and then to express our requests to God.
 - *As a family:* Read through a Psalm and again, allow the Psalm to guide giving thanks to God and then asking for help.
 - As an example, this morning we read Psalm 16. Verse 11 says, "You make known to me the path of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence, with eternal pleasures at your right hand."
 - We gave thanks that there is joy in the presence of God and that He is the path of life.
 - We prayed that we would be aware of God's presence with us and that He would show us all the path to life, especially for wisdom for our leaders.

Some good Psalms to start would be: 16, 23, 46, 91, 120-134 (The Psalms of Ascent)

3. **Lectio Divina for Kids** – Lectio Divina is a way of reading the Bible that can help kids imagine themselves in the story and connect more personally with the message. For kids, I would recommend 2 readings with some short times of listening.
 - Pick a short Bible story or verse (ideas below). Picture Bibles work great too.
 - Get comfy!

- Read through the passage once – invite kids to listen with their hearts. “*What do I hear, what do I notice?*”
- Share what you noticed or heard. *What word or idea stood out?*
- Read through again – invite kids to wonder *what God might be saying to them?*
- Share: “*What does this tell you about God?*” “*What does it tell you about yourself?*” “*What should you do?*”
- End in prayer. And hopefully this experience will encourage questions, curiosity, and connection!

Some good passages of Scripture would be: Luke 3:22, Matt 17:20, Phil 4:4-7, Is.43:1, Heb. 12:1-2, Matt 6:25-34, parts or all of the Psalms mentioned above.

Good stories would be: Luke 5:1-11 (Calling disciples), Luke 10:25-37 (Good Samaritan), Luke 10:38-42 (Martha & Mary), Luke 8:22-25 (Calming the sea), Matt 14:14-21 (Feeding 5,000)

I hope these ideas and resources are helpful to your family. Feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions. We are praying for you, your family and your kids. And, please feel free to share any specific requests for prayer.

May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and your minds today in Christ Jesus.

Blessings,

Susanna Hoke
King’s Elementary Student Ministries Coordinator