

## Is your light growing dim?



Albert Schweitzer, the gifted physician, scientist, musician and missionary, said that at times our own light seems to go out. Sometimes we feel rather dim or washed out. Know the experience?

Schweitzer suggested that our light can be rekindled by another person whose light is still strong and whose presence can increase the power of our own light.

Our light can be increased as we live in relationship with the “light of the world.”

In John 8:12, Jesus says: “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness” (NRSV). In Jesus’ light, we find that the light in our own life is increased.

St. Paul told how Christ’s light should affect us: “In the Lord you are light. Live as children of light ...” (Ephesians 5:8, NRSV).

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## Bible basics

All Christians must take seriously our responsibility to “learn the ABCs” — learn “About the Bible in Church.” Unless we read it, study it, learn what’s in it and feel comfortable with it in our hands and on our tongues, we cannot truly love the Word of God. Instead, we’re intimidated by it, afraid of it, shocked by it or simply remain ignorant of it.

Let us all be renewed in a faith that has been enriched by the gift of Scripture so we may end our worship by saying: “We were well-pleased to impart to you not only the gospel of God but also our own lives” (1 Thessalonians 2:8, NASB).

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## Special dates

- All Saints’ Day, November 1, 2007
- World Community Day, November 2, 2007
- Annual Bazaar, November 3, 2007
- Confirmation, November 4, 2007
- Daylight-Saving Time Ends, November 4, 2007
- Veterans Day, November 11, 2007
- Bible Sunday, November 18, 2007
- National Bible Week, November 18-25, 2007
- Thanksgiving Day, November 22, 2007
- Christ the King Sunday, November 25, 2007
- “An Evening of Christian Music”, December 2, 2007

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## Preparation for worship

With contrite hearts and humble spirits, we seek your presence, Lord. May all spiritual possibilities be ours today.

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All glory be to God, the loving Creator of us all. We bend our heads in reverence and open our hearts gladly so that God might fill us with love and mercy. Amen.

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May we enter the Lord’s presence with joy and gratitude, for it is God who has made us and will sustain us forever. All praise be yours, O Lord.

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Our strength comes from God’s glorious power. May we know, dear Lord, that your everlasting love undergirds us today.

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## Words of welcome

The Lord is in the holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him! Welcome to all who have come to praise Almighty God. May you be enriched by this worship service.

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## + Christian Symbols +

Remembering that we are brothers and sisters in the Lord, we welcome each of you. May this worship service fill us all with confidence and hope as we prepare for the week ahead.

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We welcome all who have come to worship on this glorious Sunday. May we all be open to the benefits of God's grace. Let us worship him in spirit and in truth.

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We're happy to welcome each worshiper here. May we all be open to the Lord's presence, and may we worship with zeal.

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• If the only prayer you said in your entire life was "thank you," that would suffice.

—Meister Eckhardt

• Let there be for every pulse a thanksgiving, and for every breath a song.

—Konrad von Gesner

• Fight truth decay; study the Bible daily.

—Anonymous

• Never give the devil a ride. He will always want to drive.

—Bumper sticker

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## Searching for saints

God is on a saint search, and it's not only perfect people who are going to be found. Sure, there may be some who are born with the natural ability to love the Lord with the totality of heart, soul, mind and strength, nonstop. But for most of us, this passion and power come only after we discover that God has always loved us, and that his love precedes our own.

Fact is, most of us find the Lord only after we have been found by him.

And all God asks is that we respond with that same level of passion ... loving him with all our heart, soul, mind and strength ... and showing a willingness to love our neighbors as ourselves.

If we do, we'll be God's holy ones, set apart for his service.

—Homiletics



## Cornerstone

The cornerstone is a symbol for Christ. It has Old Testament roots in Isaiah's prophecy (Isaiah 28:16). In the New Testament, Christ is called the cornerstone in Ephesians 2:20. The IHC and XP on the stone's sides are abbreviations for "Jesus" and "Christ" in Greek.

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## Who am I?

The poet Sandra McPherson wrote a poem entitled, "Helen Todd, My Birth Name."

In her poem, McPherson writes about being adopted. Her biological mother wrote the name "Helen Todd" on her birth certificate; then two days later, her adoptive parents renamed her "Sandra McPherson."

McPherson wonders how life might have been different if she'd lived it as Helen Todd. Perhaps having a different name might have completely changed who she was. If Sandra McPherson had gone through life as Helen Todd, maybe she would've turned out to be someone quite different. Instead of being the poet Sandra McPherson, perhaps she might have turned out to be the math teacher Helen Todd.

Names are powerful in shaping who we understand ourselves to be. Names tell us something about who we are and where we come from. Names tell us who claims us.

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## Routinely grateful

When a national day of thanksgiving was established on the fourth Thursday in November, it was not because that was a particularly thankful day. It was intentionally chosen precisely because of its arbitrariness to remind us to say “thanks” on a daily basis for the bounties God has heaped upon our lives.

For Christians, every Sunday is a Thanksgiving feast day. Every Sunday at worship, we give thanks for the greatest event ever to hit planet Earth, the greatest “opening” in human history — the open tomb, testifying to Jesus’ resurrection. Every Sunday is Thanksgiving Sunday. Every Sunday dinner is Thanksgiving dinner.

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## An offertory prayer for Thanksgiving

Merciful and generous Lord, you open your loving hands and bless us abundantly every day of our lives. Even when we go through dark times — suffering, sorrow, pain, desperation — you assure us that your loving, everlasting arms will not let us go. How generous are all your benefits, how supportive, how comforting to experience.

Today we join with “the great cloud of witnesses” who once praised you on Earth and now glorify you in heaven, offering our deepest gratitude for all the gifts you so generously give.

Accept then our thanksgiving for your love, your grace and all the blessings you bestow on us daily. Through Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

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## Thank God for good music

“Beautiful music is the art of the prophets that can calm the agitations of the soul,” said Martin Luther. Of course, he never heard intense rap or loud rock ‘n’ roll!

Still, the great reformer of the faith was correct. What other art can so quickly soothe us and bring us inner peace?

Bernard Berenson put it this way: “On the wings of music we soar above and beyond nature, farther than any other vehicle can carry us.”

King Saul often became depressed and inwardly tormented. Some of his servants thought he could find relief by listening to music. The king heard about Jesse’s son David, who

skillfully played a lyre (some translations read “harp”). Saul sent for David and heard him play. Saul was so helped by the music that he asked David to join his court.

Thus we read in 1 Samuel 16:23, “Whenever the evil spirit ... came upon Saul, David took the lyre and played it with his hand, and Saul would ... feel better” (NRSV).

What songs and hymns have that same effect on you?

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Come join us 6:00PM Sunday, December 2, 2007, at Cecile D. Hylton Memorial Chapel. The church is hosting “An Evening of Christian Music”.

This community event is honoring Tom Ambrose’s love of music and giving back to the community. The event will raise funds for the community and Church ministries.

After expenses, the net proceeds will be evenly divided between ACTS (Emergency assistance in Eastern Prince William); Project Mend A House (Housing repairs for disabled and elderly local residents); Didlake Foundation (aid disabled and their families); Evangelical Outreach International Mission (Bibles in French for area Haitians and others); Bethel’s Youth Ministry (Summer mission work); and Bethel’s Local Mission (Christmas assistance).

Participating in “an Evening of Christian Music” will be “Forgiven by Grace”, “Ransom”; Rebekah McCloud; Paul Martin; “MJ and the Rus Tones”; and more. These individuals and bands are from Northern Virginia.

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## A glorious discovery

New Zealander Russ Woolcock was an atheist who thought he had all the answers. “We don’t know why we’re here,” he said. “All we can do is try to make life palatable.”

Well, Woolcock was in for a surprise. First came the chest pains, then an authentic heart attack, then physical death — temporarily.

But Woolcock’s spirit was far from dead. He was in a whole new environment, with intense light and love. He became

aware of an “overwhelming, overpowering, colossal, extravagant, amazing, radiating love.” It was God’s presence.

“This ran counter to everything I had believed,” Woolcock says. “It was all novel to me. I was flabbergasted.”

The experience was peaceful, not frightening, and he wanted to stay. But Woolcock was brought back to life, a totally changed man.

Now the former skeptic testifies: “In the presence of that love, you would never want to be out of that again. I wanted God in my life every day. What I learned was this: Far from being a random organism swimming through an ocean of blind chance, it turned out I am the beloved child of the creator God who made me for his purpose.”

—Reported by John McNeil.

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## Bible

## Quiz



Do you believe that Christians who have died and inherited eternal life can know what’s happening on Earth? The following text indicates that these saints can indeed observe earthly events and see how we’re living the Christian life.

A New Testament letter contains this passage: “Since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely, and let

us run with perseverance the race that is set before us” (NRSV).

Which letter from the New Testament contains the passage above?

- A. Romans 11:1
- B. Hebrews 12:1
- C. Ephesians 3:1

Answer: B

## Thoughts for Veterans Day



Abraham Lincoln gave his second Inaugural Address on March 4, 1865, as the Civil War was raging. He said, “Fondly do we hope — fervently do we pray — that this mighty scourge of war may speedily pass away.”


Lincoln’s next paragraph is especially appropriate for Veterans Day:

“With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in; to bind up the nation’s wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle, and for his widow and his orphan — to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations.”

When President Lincoln finished his classic oration, he reportedly kissed the Bible and left the platform. He was assassinated the next month.

### **Deadline for next issue:**

*Information should be in the Church office by noon the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. No additional notices will be given. Publication is the first week of each month.*



## Just for KIDS

### Counting Our Blessings

THANKSGIVING IS A GREAT OPPORTUNITY TO "COUNT OUR BLESSINGS."  
GOD BLESSES EACH OF US DAILY IN SO MANY WAYS. SOLVE THE  
FOLLOWING MATH PROBLEMS. THEN WRITE THE WORDS ON THE  
NUMBERED LINES BELOW TO COMPLETE EPHESIANS 1:3, NIV.

14 - 7 = ___ Father	10 + 15 = ___ in
10 + 9 = ___ heavenly	6 - 3 = ___ to
10 + 5 = ___ blessed	12 - 6 = ___ and
2 - 1 = ___ Praise	6 + 6 = ___ Christ
7 + 7 = ___ has	18 - 9 = ___ our
11 + 11 = ___ every	22 - 11 = ___ Jesus
12 + 12 = ___ blessing	1 + 1 = ___ be
10 + 10 = ___ realms	7 + 6 = ___ who
13 + 13 = ___ Christ	2 + 2 = ___ the
8 + 8 = ___ us	10 - 5 = ___ God
8 + 9 = ___ in	4 + 4 = ___ of
5 + 5 = ___ Lord	9 + 9 = ___ the
10 + 11 = ___ with	10 + 13 = ___ spiritual

“ \_\_\_\_\_  
1      2      3      4      5      6  
\_\_\_\_\_  
7      8      9      10      11      12  
\_\_\_\_\_  
13      14      15      16      17      18  
\_\_\_\_\_  
19      20      21      22  
\_\_\_\_\_  
23      24      25      26  
\_\_\_\_\_”

EPHESIANS 1:3, NIV

Answer: "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ."

## Holiday Candle

On Thanksgiving, we share a special meal with family and friends. Make this holiday candle as a festive centerpiece for your table.

### What you need:

- Paper towel
- One 8-oz. clear plastic cup
- Petroleum jelly (Vaseline)
- Paper or plastic disposable bowl
- About 8 oz. of a variety of dried beans, peas, corn, etc.
- Bottle of white glue
- Plastic spoon
- An 8- to 10-inch taper or dinner candle
- Adult to help



### What you do:

1. Using the paper towel, rub a generous amount of petroleum jelly on the inside of the cup (bottom and sides).
2. In a bowl, pour the dried-bean mixture.
3. Squeeze enough glue into the bean mixture to generously coat it. Stir the mixture with the spoon.
4. Spoon about half of the bean mixture into the greased cup. Then place the candle, with any plastic wrapping removed, into the center of the mixture. Next, fill the cup with the rest of the mixture. Smooth the top to make it flat, making sure the candle stays straight.
5. Squeeze extra glue around the hole made by the candle. Let the bean mixture dry completely, which could take a day or longer.
6. When the bean mixture is dry, gently pull the candle. Both the candle and beans should come out as one. (If they don't, pour more glue and wait another day.)
7. Place your candle on a small plate for a festive Thanksgiving centerpiece.

