# **Generous Life Project – Light for the World**

**Session 6**

**Theme**: Sharing the light of Christ with each other around the world

**Hook:** **Oh my! Debbie Boone was right!** **Like a light switch – goes click – turn it**

**ON!**

**Text**: Matthew 5:13-14, Revelation. 7:9-10, Isaiah 66:18-19

**Video**: Congregations Working Globally

**Learning Goal**: To learn from those who share the light of Christ with you

**Learning Activity**: Next steps for your congregation and neighborhood analysis

**Sending:** Revised Affirmation of Baptism

**Preparation/Need:**

1. “Images of the Kingdom of God” newsprint,

2. Congregation and neighborhood analysis newsprint,

3. Markers,

4. Baptismal Font

5. Paschal Candle

6. Baptismal candles or some other candles

## **Welcome**

**Hook: Oh my! Debbie Boone was right! (You light up my life!)**

Or if the group is younger,use “Like a light switch, goes click, Turn it ON!!” (from *The Book of Mormon).*

**Theme:** Exploring how to receive and to share the light of Christ globally will be the focus for this session.

**Prayer:** O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **Video**

Congregations Working Globally

### **Relevant Quotes**

Haley: It showed me that there are different customs and different ways of thinking about things than there are where you grew up.”

Pastor Fuller:…made the people here more aware of at least one other place where there are connections for us where we have other Lutherans.

Josh Davies: That kind of a thing is something that sheds some of the light of Jesus on all of us… it was a common experience we could all share and light was a central theme in a lot of what I did while I was down there.

## **Biblical Foundation**

What Biblical images or passages does this video bring to mind?

Have someone read John 8:12**.**

**12Again Jesus spoke to them, saying, “I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.”**

Have someone read Matthew 5:14-16**.**

**14You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. 15No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16In 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.**

## **Conversation Starter**

**Large Group**

Who is the light of the world?

What does this mean? What does it mean that Jesus and each of us are the light of the world?

## **Commentary**

According to Robert Smith, the vision Jesus casts in these passages in completely inclusive: the world (v.14), all in the house (v.16). The goal is that all may “give glory to your Father who is in Heaven.” Jesus’ vision is realized “when people’s hearts have been captured by the love of God for the will of God, then the kingdom will have come in all its splendid newness” (Smith 1989, 88).

A city on a hill is a big deal – you can see it from a long way off. It cannot be hidden and be a city on a hill. What you are (light) determines what you do (shine) (Smith 1989, 88).

This is another great commission: The world needs light – you *are* the light of Christ in the world: SHINE! (Smith 1989, 88). You are not a lamp. You are the light. It is your nature to shine.

### **Conversation Starter**

**Large Group**

What does this passage tell us about the Kingdom of God?

## **Learning Activity**

**Large Group**

Add relevant ideas to your “Images of the Kingdom of God” newsprint**.**

## **Conversation Starter**

**Small Group**

Virginia and Hayley didn’t speak much Spanish. How did they share the light of Christ with the people they met?

We often think we are the ones going into the “dark” of a poor country to shine our light. Yet, Josh was transformed by the light the Salvadorian Christians shined on him. What did he learn about “the people in some of these third world countries?”

**Elbow Buddies:**

When we experience the light of Christ coming from Christians in a completely different culture, it broadens our understanding of the Body of Christ.

When have you traveled and seen the light of Christ shine from someone you met there?

How does recognizing the divine in others impact how you treat them? Listen to them? Learn from them?

## **Learning Activity**

**Large Group**

Share insights from Small Groups and add to your “Images of the Kingdom of God” newsprint as appropriate.

**Learning Activity**

**Small Group**

Integrate the Images of the Kingdom of God with your analysis work with the following questions**:**

Do the images you have collected of the Kingdom of God provide the Biblical foundation for the use of the *resources* you see in your congregation? Why or why not?

Do these images serve as motivation to pursue the *Opportunities* you see for your congregation to meet the *needs* of your neighborhood? If not, what would your congregation look like if they did?

Do these images create *obstacles* to your congregation? Do they call into question the status quo? Where the answer to this is yes, what might you be able to do to overcome the challenge?

Share Small Group work in Large Group and add to your analysis.

**Small Group**

What shall we do with this analysis? Where shall we go from here? What sort of actions would be required to live this out?

Share small group work in Large Group and make some decisions.

## **Sending**

**Whip Around:** Stand in a circle and have each person offer one learning/take away from this series.

In our Lutheran tradition, when do we believe that light becomes part of us? (If no one said Baptism – remind them.)

### **Affirmation of Baptism**

**At the Font:**

Let us pray.

Merciful God, we thank you for these sisters and brothers, whom you have made your own by water and the Word in baptism. You have called them to yourself,

enlightened them with the gifts of your Spirit, and nourished them in the community of faith. Uphold your servants in the gifts and promises of baptism, and unite the hearts of all whom you have brought to new birth. We ask this in the name of Christ.

**Amen.**

Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism:

to live among God’s faithful people,

to hear the word of God and share in the Lord’s supper,

to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed,

to serve all people, following the example of Jesus,

and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth?

If so, please respond, “I do and I ask God to help and guide me.”

**I do, and I ask God to help and guide me.**

*(Use Baptismal water to mark each one with the sign of the cross as they make affirmation****.****)*

People of God, do you promise to support and pray for one another in your life in Christ?

If so, please respond “we do and we ask God to help and guide us.”

**We do, and we ask God to help and guide us.**

*Distribute candles and light them off of the paschal candle saying:*

**14You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. 15No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16In 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.**

*Have someone read Revelation* ***7:*** *9-10****.***

9**After this I looked, and there was a great multitude that no one could count, *from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages,* standing before the throne and before the Lamb, robed in white, with palm branches in their hands. 10They cried out in a loud voice, saying,**

**“Salvation belongs to our God who is seated on the throne, and to the Lamb!”**

*Have someone offer this prayer:*

Let us pray.

We give you thanks, O God, that through water and the Holy Spirit you give us new birth, cleanse us from sin, and raise us to eternal life. Stir up in your people the gift of your Holy Spirit: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord, the spirit of joy in your presence both now and forever.

**Amen.**

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### **Dismissal**

**Leader: Go in Peace, for the sake of the world.**

People: Thanks be to God.

[[1]](#endnote-1)

1. Rober Smith. 1989. “Matthew” Augsburg Commentary on the New Testament. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)