

## DEVOTIONS

*Think about devotions is 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

Dear God—You alone are the source of all things wonderful. Your love fills our hearts. Your joy plays with our spirits. Your hope calms our anger, and your Son saves us all. Amen.

### CARING CONVERSATION

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

- ? **Highs & Lows:** What is something that made you happy today? What is something that made you angry?
- ? **Thinking About This Week's Story:** The prophet, Joel, reminds the people to repent, to say "sorry" for the mistakes they have made. God, in turn, promises to pour out God's spirit on the people, to react with love and mercy. Apologizing for wrong-doings takes courage. Who do you need to seek forgiveness from? When people apologize to you, how do you react?
- ? **Getting Ready for Next Week's Story:** Isaiah's words bring hope and comfort to a people who were in captivity, and now resettling in their homeland. When was the last time you took a trip? How long were you gone? What did it feel like to come home?

### DAILY BIBLE READING

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

### PRAY TOGETHER

✠ Go in a circle and pray for the person on your left. Think of their need for forgiveness from you.

### 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 the sign of the cross on the back of each other's heads, saying, "You have a hope-filled heart. As you sleep tonight, have hope-filled dreams. 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](http://www.vibrantfaith.org)). For more information about the Four Keys, go to <http://milestonesministry.org/>.

DECEMBER 4, 2016

Joel 2:12-13, 28-29



# Sharing GOD'S STORY @ home

### SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THE WEEK

Return to the LORD, your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love, and relents from punishing. —Joel 2:13b

### MEALTIME PRAYE

Fill our bodies with your good food, O God. Fill our hearts with your love, O God. Fill our minds with your grace and mercy, O God. Let us come together hungry for it all. Amen.

### DAILY BIBLE READINGS

*A question to ponder as you read: How is God's word a source of hope in each of these stories?*

Sunday	Joel 2:12-13, 28-29	Joel's Prophecy of Hope
Monday	Psalms 51:1-12	Prayer for Cleansing
Tuesday	Acts 2:14:21	Peter Addresses the Crowd
Wednesday	Joel 3:1-2a, 17-18	God Will Restore Judah
Thursday	Amos 9:11-15	Restoration of David's Kingdom
Friday	Micah 5:2-4	The Ruler of Bethlehem
Saturday	Isaiah 40:1-5	God's People are Comforted
Sunday	Isaiah 61:1-11	Isaiah's Prophecy of Hope and Deliverance

*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.*

On a piece of paper, write a quick message of hope and love to each person in your family this week. Hide it in their lunch box, on their pillow before going to sleep, or in their wallet.