

Ask the children to light the candle and then go around the room and ask them to name something they are willing to share with another person. You might want to share examples such as love and happiness, or sharing their snack with a friend at school. Let them be creative. Share with them that what they are offering are actually GIFTS they are giving to others.

After they have a chance to share, ask the children to cover their candle and then ask them what happens to the gift (named above) they were going to share?

Give some time for responses.

Encourage them to keep their candles uncovered and lit while they work on their art project. They can also take the candles home with them as a reminder to “let their light shine.”

ACTIVITY – COLLABORATIVE ART

You will need the following supplies: as many different kinds of art supplies as possible – paper, pipe cleaners, glitter, play-dough, markers, crayons, etc.

Invite the children to create a collaborative art project in which they show how they are connected to others and how they can share light with them.

Do not limit their ideas but encourage them to work together on the project.

After it is created, display the art in a prominent place around the church.

Empowered to Share the Light (Youth Activity)

DISCUSS

Ask youth to share about a time when someone offered them a gift or shared something meaningful with them. If they have trouble with ideas, you might share some ideas: a time when someone shared a compliment, a friend who helped with a difficult assignment, or something more tangible.

Discuss what it is like to receive a gift from another. How does it feel? Is it easy to be gracious and thankful? Or is it difficult? What is it like to give a gift to another?

GIFTED (EMPOWERED) TO SERVE

Each of us has been gifted by God to serve others. We are empowered to share the light. Ask youth either at your session or before to take a spiritual gifts inventory. There are many free surveys online; here is one: www.umcdiscipleship.org/spiritual-gifts-inventory. It is also available in Spanish. Another downloadable and printable version can be found here: www.umcdiscipleship.org/articles/spiritual-gifts-inventory-download.

DISCUSS

When the youth have their results, ask them to discuss:

- Were you surprised by any of your top gifts?
- Thinking about your top two gifts, how can those gifts help you share light with others?
- Jesus says we should not hide our lights from others. When you do not use your gifts, you are hiding your light. Which of your spiritual gifts have you been hiding? How could you begin sharing those with others?

CREATING EMOJIS

Materials: Cardboard cut into circles big enough to cover the face of youth, markers.

Either break the group into smaller groups of identical spiritual gifts or let them work separately. Ask them to create an Emoji which represents their spiritual gift.

Give them time to work on their Emojis and then ask them to share with the group when they are complete.

Ask them to share HOW the Emoji both depicts the spiritual gift and how they could share the light through their gift with others. For example, an Emoji with a speech bubble might depict the spiritual gift of faith sharing. An Emoji with a Band-Aid across it could depict the spiritual gift of healing.

Find a place in the church to display the Emojis and add a sticky note or some other way to explain how the Emoji represents a spiritual gift.

Conclude the session with prayer about encouraging the youth to share the light in as many places with as many people as they can.