

Sun., Nov. 7 -All Saints Sunday, Holy Communion, Stewardship 1

Memory Verse: John 8:12 “Jesus spoke to the people again, saying, ‘I am the light of the world.

Whoever follows me won’t walk in darkness but will have the light of life.’”

Reading of Scripture: Philippians 2:14-16

Message: “Parable of the Candle”

Text: “Those who look to God will shine; their faces are never ashamed.” -Psalm 34:5

Scripture: Ephesians 5:6-14

Blurb: Candles are made with potential. They are lit from a source flame. They shine out in the darkness. This Sunday we learn how we are like candles, burning for Jesus!

Prep: Votive candles for All Saints’

Tea candles for each person

HC elements for people as they come in

Remembrance books in the lobby, with people writing names in

[Recorded Worship Beginning]

WELCOME -Pastor Andrew

MEMORY VERSE: -Pastor Andrew

“Jesus spoke to the people again, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me won’t walk in darkness but will have the light of life.’” -John 8:12

WORSHIP MUSIC SET -Sanctify

Blessed Be Your Name

My Faith Looks Up to Thee

Steven Welsch

Judy Dittberner

Thomas Welsch

Wayne Ersbo

Richard McCargar

Worship prayer -Pastor Andrew

[Live Worship Beginning]

GATHERING SONG: *O Give Thanks!* (Psalm 107) -Sanctify

WELCOME -Pastor David

MEMORY VERSE: -Pastor David

“Jesus spoke to the people again, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me won’t walk in darkness but will have the light of life.’” -John 8:12

WORSHIP MUSIC SET -Sanctify*Blessed Be Your Name**My Faith Looks Up to Thee*

All Saints Remembrance - Reading of the Names of those who have passed on:

Steven Welsch

Judy Dittberner

Thomas Welsch

Wayne Ersbo

Richard McCargar

[Others as written in the memorial books.]

Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies

Worship prayer -Pastor Andrew

GROW MOMENT: Stewardship -Teresa Gruber**[Both Recorded & Live Worship]****READING OF SCRIPTURE: Philippians 2:14-16 -Morgan Lindholm****In Philippians 2 Paul describes just how completely Jesus gave Himself for us. He then makes the connection to how God makes us able to live in the same self-giving way.****When we do, we shine out like stars in a dark world. Philippians 2:14-16,****“12 Therefore, my loved ones, just as you always obey me, not just when I am present but now even more while I am away, carry out your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13 God is the one who enables you both to want and to actually live out His good purposes. 14 Do everything without grumbling and arguing 15 so that you may be blameless and pure, innocent children of God surrounded by people who are crooked and corrupt. Among these people you shine like stars in the world 16 because you hold on to the word of life. This will allow me to say on the day of Christ that I haven’t run for nothing or worked for nothing.”****MESSAGE: The Parable of the Candle****PP#1: The Parable of the Candle**

“Those who look to God will shine; their faces are never ashamed.” -Psalm 34:5

The Parable of the Candle. Psalm 34:5 “Those who look to God will shine; their faces are never ashamed.”

PP#2: Image of a smiling, glowing jack-o’-lantern

Last Sunday was Halloween, and we learned that carving a jack-o’-lantern tells the gospel message: and how Jesus cleans us from our sin, puts a smile of joy on our face, how the light of Jesus then glows within us and out through us, and how we become lanterns, jack-o’-lanterns that shine His light out into our dark world.

PP#3: *Image of candles burning in memory of loved ones who have died*

The day after Halloween is All Saint's Day. It's the day that we remember that the saints who have died here on earth—saints are those who have put their trust in Jesus—that they are not dead, but are alive in Jesus, and are alive with Jesus! The light that Jesus put into their lives does not go out, but continues to shine for eternity.

Today we're celebrating All Saint's Sunday, and this morning we have remembered the saints of our church and in our families that have passed on to glory. We remembered them by lighting a candle for each one, just like the candles in the jack-o'-lanterns. The candles we have here help us remember that their lights continue to shine in glory, and their memories shine in our hearts and out through our lives as we continue to remember how they showed us God's light in real and lasting ways.

PP#4: *Image of a person in darkness carrying a candle that glows brightly*

As we see the candles burning here in worship for the saints who have died, I want you to know that you, too, are a candle burning for Jesus. You are living, burning, saints for Jesus, here in our world shrouded by darkness.

PP#5: Parable of the Candle

1. Candles are potential
2. We are made like candles
3. We burn with the Light of Jesus

“Jesus spoke to the people again, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me won't walk in darkness but will have the light of life.’” -John 8:12

So, today, as you came into worship, there was 1. a bulletin or kids bag for you, 2. a Holy Communion cup and 3. also there was a tea light candle for you. Go ahead and hold your candle and take a good look at it. Notice how the candle is basically wax and a wick. Wax is stored energy, solid potential! And the potential has a purpose: a wick, a way to burn. God made us like candles, made with potential and purpose. But like the candle in your hand, we stay cold and dark when left on our own.

Think about this. You are made good. You are made for a purpose. So is your neighbor. They are solid potential! God made them with a purpose, too! Does this change how you look at that person you don't like? How about that co-worker? Or that boss, or politician, or that black sheep of the family? How can seeing them as God-made candles change how you treat them?

The power of the candle is only accessed when a flame is brought to its wick. You have to light candles from an already-burning flame, an outside source of fire. This summer we learned how our God is an all-consuming fire. He is the one who can light us on fire, to—in the old-fashioned sense of the word—to “quicken” our wicks.

John starts out his Gospel, John 1:1-4, describing how Jesus is the Word, who is the Life of the world, who is the Light of the world. “1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. 2 The Word was with God in the beginning. 3 Everything came into being through the Word, and without the Word nothing came into being. What came into being 4 through the Word was life, and the life *was the light for all people*. 5 The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness doesn't extinguish the light” (italics added).

Our memory verse today—say it with me: “Jesus spoke to the people again, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me won’t walk in darkness but will have the light of life.’” - John 8:12.

Jesus is the Light of the world, the life of the world. Remember at creation? How did God create? Through the spoken Word, who is Jesus. And the very first thing God said was—remember it? “And God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light.” Word...light...life. It’s Jesus!

When we offer our candles to Jesus, who is the Light, He gives us His life, His light, and we become alive—quicken: we begin to glow and burn, with the light that comes from God.

Again, as you consider the other dark candles around you in your life...rather than getting angry with them, avoiding them, writing them off, how about instead you see them as needing the light of Jesus? You were once dark, too, you know. Jesus’ light changed you. It can change them!

PP#6: Parable of the Candle

1. Candles are potential
2. We are made like candles
3. We burn with the Light of Jesus
4. We give ourselves as we burn

“The night is almost gone, and the day is near. Therefore let us lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.” -Romans 13:12

The potential energy of a candle is burned as fuel for the flame. So, the candle *gives itself* as it burns. Candles burn down.

When we give ourselves to Jesus and ask His light in our hearts, we surrender our whole selves to be given—to be used—for the purpose of shining as His light. Jesus gave Himself for us, totally and completely, on the cross. And when we extend our wicks to Him, to set us on fire: He calls us to give our lives for Him and His work. We don’t keep ourselves *for ourselves!* We lay aside the deeds of selfishness and darkness and sin, and instead we put on the light as our armor. John Wesley, the founder of the Methodists, quoted Paul from 2 Corinthians 12:15 and said, “Let us spend and *be spent* for the sake of Jesus.”

So, we are like candles, made with potential. We are lit with the light of Jesus, and we give ourselves to burn for Him. And this is where *our purpose* comes in!

PP#7: Parable of the Candle

3. We burn with the Light of Jesus
4. We give ourselves as we burn
5. We are Jesus’ light in the world

2 Corinthians 4:6 “God said that light should shine out of the darkness. He is the same one who shone in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God’s glory in the face of Jesus Christ.”

Candles are not made for during the light of day. They are not intended to shine in a room already bright. They are made to give light to the darkness. We are intended to shine the light of Jesus out into the darkness of our world. 2 Corinthians 4:6 says, “God said that light should shine out of the darkness. He is the same one who shone in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of God’s glory in the face of Jesus Christ.” We see God doing this at creation. We see God doing this in Jesus. We see God doing this in the saints who have gone on before us. We see God doing

this through us! As we heard from Philippians 2:15, we are to live blameless and pure so we “shine out like stars” in a corrupt and crooked world.

Robert Louis Stevenson, the 19th century author of *Treasure Island*, *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*, and *Kidnapped*, grew up without electricity. As a boy, one of his favorite things to do each evening was to lean on the windowsill of his second story bedroom and watch the lamplighter make his rounds. The lamplighter would raise his long torch to ignite the wick of each lamp, one after another. One night, when he saw the man coming, he is reported to have said to his parents, “Look, outside. Here comes the man who punches holes in the darkness.”

Jesus comes and “punches holes in the darkness” by lighting each of us! Think about that: you are a hole in the darkness, and wherever you go, you push back the night!

PP#8: Ephesians 5:6-14 (CEB)

6 Nobody should deceive you with stupid ideas. God’s anger comes down on those who are disobedient because of this kind of thing. 7 So you shouldn’t have anything to do with them. 8 You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord, so live your life as children of light. 9 Light produces fruit that consists of every sort of goodness, justice, and truth. 10 Therefore, test everything to see what’s pleasing to the Lord, 11 and don’t participate in the unfruitful actions of darkness. Instead, you should reveal the truth about them. 12 It’s embarrassing to even talk about what certain persons do in secret. 13 But everything exposed to the light is revealed by the light. 14 Everything that is revealed by the light is light. Therefore, it says, Wake up, sleeper! Get up from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.

Turn to Ephesians 5. Again Paul is separating life in the light from life in the darkness. We start in verse 6, “Nobody should deceive you with stupid ideas. [This is the darkness way of living.] God’s anger comes down on those who are disobedient because of this kind of thing. 7 So you shouldn’t have anything to do with them. [Don’t live this way! After all,] 8 You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord, so live your life as children of light. [What does that mean? Well...] 9 Light produces fruit that consists of every sort of goodness, justice, and truth. 10 Therefore, test everything to see what’s pleasing to the Lord, 11 and don’t participate in the unfruitful actions of darkness. Instead, you should reveal the truth about them. [Living in the light of Jesus will reveal what is darkness and unfruitful and unhealthy.] 12 It’s embarrassing to even talk about what certain persons do in secret. 13 But everything exposed to the light is revealed by the light. 14 Everything that is revealed by the light is light. Therefore, it says, Wake up, sleeper! Get up from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.” Holes punched in the darkness!

PP#9: Philippians 2:14-16 “Do everything without grumbling and arguing so that you may be blameless and pure, innocent children of God surrounded by people who are crooked and corrupt.”

Matthew 15:16 “Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good deeds and give thanks to your Father in heaven.”

Remember how Paul put it in Philippians 2? “14 Do everything without grumbling and arguing 15 so that you may be blameless and pure, innocent children of God surrounded by people who are crooked and corrupt.” We live in a light-filled way. We don’t grumble and argue. Remember the broad smile of the jack-o’-lantern? We strive to live blamelessly, pure, like innocent children.

Or as Jesus says, as we heard last week, “Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good deeds and give thanks to your Father in heaven” (Matthew 15:16).

Darkness hides. It makes us unable to see. Darkness makes things unknown, and brings fear. Your purpose, as burning candles for Jesus, is to live so that you bring light into the lives of others, pushing back the fear and anxiety that so many others live with.

PP#10: Shining for Jesus:

1. What happens if you don’t shine?
2. How is the consistency of your shining?
3. Negativity blows out others’ lights

A couple of things for you to dig deeper on this: what happens if you don’t shine? There is the cost for you to now show up, to shine up, to shine out. It can be tempting to do the easier thing, or look the other way. But what happens to darkness then?

Or again, how about the consistency in your shining? Do you burn brightly at times, but dimmer at others? A flickering light is hard to read by, right? And we want others to read Jesus by us. We want others to find their way to God. What causes you to flicker? What would you need to do to burn more consistently?

One more: we are becoming a society where we focus on the bad in others, on the negative. It is so hard to shine for good in our world, and often those that do get beaten down. We are tempted to join society in this negativity: to slam others online, to speak badly of people we are angry with, to use social media to vent, to easily get mad at others. But, what good does it do to darken other lights? Blowing out another person’s candle does NOT make the room brighter, does it?

We are made to burn with the light of Jesus, and to share our light with others.

PP#11: “The Candles: The Story of Some Candles that Weren’t Too Bright” by Max Lucado

I want to end this parable of the candle with a short story by Max Lucado. “The Candles: The story of some candles that weren’t too bright.”

“A few nights ago a peculiar thing happened. An electrical storm caused a blackout in our neighborhood. When the lights went out, I felt my way through the darkness into the storage closet where we keep the candles for nights like this. Through the glow of a lit match I looked up on the shelf where the candles were stored. There they were, already positioned in their stands, melted to various degrees by previous missions. I took my match and lit four of them.

“How they illuminated the storage room! What had been a veil of blackness suddenly radiated with soft, golden light! I could see the freezer I had just bumped with my knee. And I could see my tools that needed to be straightened.

“‘How great it is to have light!’ I said out loud, and then spoke to the candles. ‘If you do such a good job here in the storage closet, just wait till I get you out of where you’re really needed! I’ll put one of you on my table so we can eat. I’ll put one of you on my desk so I can read. I’ll give one of you to Denalyn [DEAN-a-lyn] so she can cross-stitch. And I’ll set you’ (I took down the largest one), ‘in the living room where you can light up the whole area.’ (I felt a bit foolish talking to candles - but what do you do when the lights go out?) I was turning to leave with the large candle in my hand when I heard a voice:

“‘Now, hold it right there.’

“I stopped. Somebody’s in here! I thought. Then I relaxed. It’s just Denalyn [DEAN-a-lyn], teasing me for talking to the candles. ‘OK, honey, cut the kidding,’ I said in the semi-darkness. No answer. Hmm, maybe it was the wind. I took another step.

“Hold it, I said!’

“There was that voice again. My hands began to sweat. ‘Who said that?’

“I did.’

“The voice was near my hand. ‘Who are you? What are you?’

“I’m a candle.’

“I looked at the candle I was holding. It was burning a strong, golden flame. It was red and sat on a heavy wooden candle holder that had a firm handle. I looked around once more to see if the voice could be coming from another source.

“There’s no one here but you, me and the rest of the candles,’ the voice informed me.

“I lifted up the candle to take a closer look. You won’t believe what I saw. There was a tiny face in the wax. (I told you, you wouldn’t believe me.) Not just a wax face that someone had carved, but a moving, functioning, flesh-like face full of expression and life.

“Don’t take me out of here!’

“What?’

“I said, don’t take me out of this room.’

“What do you mean? I have to take you out. You’re a candle. Your job is to give light. It’s dark out there. People are stubbing their toes and walking into walls. You have to come out and light up the place!’

“But you can’t take me out. I’m not ready,’ the candle explained with pleading eyes. ‘I need more preparation.’

“I couldn’t believe my ears. ‘More preparation?’

“Yeah, I’ve decided I need to research this job of light-giving so I won’t go out and make a bunch of mistakes. You’d be surprised how distorted the glow of an untrained candle can be. So I’m doing some studying. I just finished a book on wind resistance. I’m in the middle of a great series of [podcasts] tapes on wick build-up and conservation - I’m reading the new best seller on flame display. Have you heard of it?’

“No,’ I answered.

“You might like it. It’s called Waxing Eloquently.’

“That really sounds inter-’ I caught myself. What am I doing? I’m in here conversing with a candle while my wife and daughters are out there in the darkness! ‘All right then,’ I said. ‘You’re not the only candle on the shelf. I’ll blow you out and take the others!’ But just as I got my cheeks full of air, I heard other voices.

“We’re not going either!’

“It was a conspiracy. I turned around and looked at the three other candles, each with flames dancing above a miniature face. I was beyond feeling awkward about talking to candles. I was getting miffed. ‘You are candles and your job is to light dark places!’

“Well, that may be what you think,’ said the candle on the far left - a long thin fellow with a goatee and British accent. ‘You may think we have to go, but I’m busy.’

“Busy?’

“Yes, I’m meditating.’

“What? A candle that meditates?’

“Yes. I’m meditating on the importance of light. It’s really enlightening.’

“I decided to reason with them. ‘Listen, I appreciate what you guys are doing. I’m all for meditation time. And everyone needs to study and research; but for goodness’ sake, you guys have been here for weeks! Haven’t you had enough time to get your wick on straight?’ ‘And you other two,’ I asked, ‘are you going to stay in here as well?’ A short, fat, purple candle with plump cheeks that reminded me of Santa Claus spoke up.

“‘I’m waiting to get my life together. I’m not stable enough. I lose my temper easily. I guess you could say that I’m a hothead.’ The last candle had a female voice, very pleasant to the ear.

“‘I’d like to help,’ she explained, ‘but lighting the darkness is not my gift.’

“All this was sounding too familiar. ‘Not your gift? What do you mean?’

“‘Well, I’m a singer. I sing to other candles to encourage them to burn more brightly.’

“Without asking my permission, she began a rendition of ‘This Little Light of Mine.’ (I have to admit, she had a good voice.) The other three joined in, filling the storage room with singing. ‘Hey,’ I shouted above the music, ‘I don’t mind if you sing while you work! In fact, we could use a little music out there!’ They didn’t hear me. They were singing too loudly. I yelled louder. ‘Come on, you guys. There’s plenty of time for this later. We’ve got a crisis on our hands.’ They wouldn’t stop. I put the big candle on the shelf and took a step back and considered the absurdity of it all. Four perfectly healthy candles singing to each other about light but refusing to come out of the closet. I had all I could take. One by one I blew them out. They kept singing to the end. The last one to flicker was the female. I snuffed her out right in the ‘puff’ part of ‘Won’t let Satan puff me out.’ I stuck my hands in my pockets and walked back out into the darkness. I bumped my knee on the same freezer. Then I bumped into my wife.

“‘Where are the candles?’ she asked.

“‘They don’t...they won’t work. Where did you buy those candles anyway?’

“‘Oh, they’re church candles. Remember the church that *closed down* [emphasis added] across the town? I bought them there.’

“I understood.”

HOLY COMMUNION: -Pastor David

[IN-PERSON WORSHIP ONLY] CLOSING SONG: *Covenant Song* -Sanctify

OFFERING: -Pastor David

-Give of your monies to God’s work through this church. You can give in person, mail it in, drop it off or, most conveniently, you can make an electronic transfer or a debit card payment on the church website or by using the “square” on the bulletin.

ANNOUNCEMENTS -Pastor David

Wednesday night: Meal and Groups

Next Sunday’s message: Parable of the \$20 bill

MEMORY VERSE -Pastor David

“Jesus spoke to the people again, saying, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me won’t walk in darkness but will have the light of life.’” -John 8:12

BENEDICTION -Pastor David