

Love Lights

Children's Story

Cycle C, Proper 7

Title: Love Lights
Author: Karen Suderman
Church: St. Jacobs Mennonite Church, St. Jacobs, ON, now serving as a Witness worker in South Africa
Text: Luke 8: 26-39
Theme: Jesus' healing love is stronger than the things that scare us.

Gathering Activity:

Invite and welcome the children warmly. Help them settle into comfortable positions so they can listen well and settle into a spirit of holy expectancy for this special part of worship. Open your Bible to Luke 8 and show them where the ideas for today's story came from before you begin the children's story.

Wondering Questions:

- I wonder if any of us are scared in the dark.
- I wonder what we 'see' in the dark.
- I wonder what we can do to not be scared.
- I wonder how Jesus' love is like a light.

This Children's Story is part of a larger story archive available as a resource to teachers, ministers, and others of Mennonite Church Canada ©2010. Posted by permission of the author. Edited by Elsie Rempel, director of Christian Nurture for Mennonite Church Canada

Story:

Sally did not like to go to bed. She liked it when Mommy and Daddy tucked her in. She liked it when they read her stories. She liked it when they kissed her good night. Sally did NOT like it when they turned out the lights.

Things in her room looked different and scary in the dark. There were monsters in the corners and snakes on the floor of her room when the lights were out. Sally was scared in the dark.

One night Sally's daddy read her a story. Then her mommy tucked her in. They kissed her good night, turned out the lights, and left Sally to have a good night's sleep. Sally started to cry. The monsters were sitting in the corner of her room again and there were snakes on the floor. She called out for mommy and daddy.

"What is wrong?" asked Daddy. "There are snakes on the floor and monsters in the corners when the lights are out. I am scared!" Mommy gave Sally a big hug. "You know, when I was your age I used to be scared of the dark, too," said Mommy. "Really?" Sally was surprised. "Yes," replied Mommy, "I used to think the bogeyman lived under my bed. I was very scared." Daddy said, "When I was a boy I used to think a big mean dog lived in my closet at night. I was scared, too." Sally was even more surprised. Even Daddy had been scared of the dark!

Mommy looked at Sally and said, "When you feel scared at night try saying to yourself: Mommy loves me, Daddy loves me, and Jesus loves me. That love will protect me when I sleep." Sally repeated to herself, "Mommy loves me, Daddy loves me, and Jesus loves me. That love will protect me when I sleep." She felt better already.

Daddy smiled a great big smile. He quickly walked out of the room and came back a few seconds later holding something. Daddy handed Sally a flashlight. "This light," explained Daddy, "is like the love that protects you, Sally. It will show things for what they really are." With that Daddy turned out the light and sat on Sally's bed. "Shine the light on the snakes, Sally," Daddy said. Sally turned on the flashlight and shone it on the snake. It was only her skipping rope! Daddy asked her to shine the light on the monster in the corner. Sally gulped and shone the light in the corner. It was her big teddy bear wearing a silly hat!

Daddy looked at Sally and said, "This flashlight is your love light. When you are scared, say the words that Mommy taught you and use this light to brighten the scary corners. Then you will be comforted and protected. Do you feel better?" Sally smiled, "Yes, I do feel better, because I can see that the corners aren't really scary, and Mommy loves me, Daddy loves me and Jesus loves me. That love will protect me when I sleep."

Mommy and Daddy kissed Sally good night and turned out the lights. This time she was not scared. She curled up and fell asleep with the love light by her pillow.

Prayer:

Thank you, Jesus, for the light of your love.
Thank you for protecting us when we sleep
and for helping us when we are scared. Amen.