



LIGHT

Small Group Facilitator Guide

Set up:

- Ensure that all technology is in place and ready to view the video. If your church does not have adequate WiFi, this may mean that the facilitator will need to download the video before arriving for the session. Facilitators will also need to ensure that everyone will be able to hear and see the video as it is being played. Facilitators may wish to turn on closed captioning.
- Create a welcoming space to have a conversation.
- Place a table in the center or near the conversation space to create an “altarscape” of items that will help set the tone and keep the conversation focused on each Sign of Life.

What you need:

- *Video viewing capabilities*
- *Small Group Facilitator Guide for the facilitator*
- *Signs of Life Practice Sheet and worship handouts for each participant*
- *A table for the altarscape*
- *Specific items to create altarscape. For light, you will need a votive candle for each participant.*

Learning Outcomes

- *For participants to be able to link light to liturgy, their own life, and experience of God.*
- *For participants to gain a better awareness of the presence of the holy in everyday life.*
- *For participants to deepen relationships through spiritual conversation.*

Small Group Session for Light

Gathering Prayer/Setting the Altarscape: (5 minutes)

Gather participants into the conversation circle. Invite a few moments of stillness, and then pray this collect:

Christ our True Light: when the lights of this world blind and bewilder and its darkness brings us no peace, train our eyes to behold your brightness and enfold us in the healing shadow of your wings, that we may love you by night as by day; who with the Father of lights and the Spirit of truth shine upon us, one God, through endless ages. Amen.

After the prayer, the facilitator or worship leader should give each participant a candle, and light the first candle. Each person lights their candle from someone else and then places their lit candle on the altarscape. Sit together in silence for a few moments with this scene as your focal point.

Setting Group Norms (15 minutes):

Because this is only a five-session small group experience, we recommended the following norms. Your small group will know what's best for itself and may wish to change these norms, but these are well-established practices for fruitful small group discussion.

Read each norm and have a discussion about whether these are reasonable for the life of your small group. If they are not, adjust the norm as necessary. Ensure that these norms are visible each time you gather.

- Arrive on time.
- Turn mobile phones on silent.

- Respect the other small group participants. Don't interrupt or talk over another participant. Don't dominate the conversation.
- Keep confidence: Don't share a story or other personal information from another group member unless you've specifically asked that person for permission.

Facilitators should feel empowered to reference the group's norms if a behavior is becoming a distraction.

After you set your group's norms, orient your participants to the session. Let them know that you will watch the video together, and then have a small group discussion, followed by worship.

Watch Video (15 minutes):

Before you start the video, read this script:

“As you watch this video, pay attention to the various ways light is explored, and think about how light is present in the life and liturgies of your worshiping community.”

Play video to the end. Invite the group to come back together for conversation.

Small Group Conversation (40 minutes):

Open the small group conversation with the following question:

“Where is light present in the life and liturgies of your own worshiping community? How are these symbols and practices similar or dissimilar to what you heard and saw in the video?”

After the opening question has been discussed, choose any of the following questions to discuss with your small group. The facilitator should use their best judgment to select the questions that they believe will elicit meaningful conversation for your context. The small group may spend the entire time on one question, or do several. How many questions the group moves through is less important than fruitful conversation for the group.

- How has light inspired you? How has light been a part of your spiritual journey?
- Brother Curtis talks about meeting God in the darkness instead of the light. Where have you met God in the darkness? What did you learn there?
- What do you think it means that God created light before God created the sun and the stars?
- Jesus not only brings light, but Jesus is the light. How does Jesus enlighten your life?
- We are called to be the light of the world. What can you illuminate?

When there are about five minutes left for conversation, ask the following question:

“What do you understand differently about light because of this conversation?”

Wrap Up/Weekly Practice (5 minutes):

Remind the participants of the weekly practice. Distribute the Signs of Life Practice Sheet for Light. Reiterate the instructions from the video:

“Here is a reminder of the practice for this Sign of Life. This week pay attention to light as you move through your day. Remember that Jesus is the light of the world.”

This is also the time when the facilitator should remind participants of housekeeping details for the next session.

Worship (10 minutes):

Pass out the worship handouts to each participant. The facilitator may wish to lead worship, or may invite another participant to lead worship. Groups may wish to use the altarscape as a focal point during their worship time.

After worship, the small group session has ended.



LIGHT

Small Group Worship

Leader prays the collect: Christ our True Light: when the lights of this world blind and bewilder and its darkness brings us no peace, train our eyes to behold your brightness and enfold us in the healing shadow of your wings, that we may love you by night as by day; who with the Father of lights and the Spirit of truth shine upon us, one God, through endless ages. **Amen.**

Third Song of Isaiah

Read antiphonally by half verse.

Arise, shine, for your light has come, *

and the glory of the Lord has dawned upon you.

For behold, darkness covers the land; *

deep gloom enshrouds the peoples.

But over you the Lord will rise, *

and his glory will appear upon you.

Nations will stream to your light, *

and kings to the brightness of your dawning.

Your gates will always be open; *

by day or night they will never be shut.

They will call you, The City of the Lord, *

The Zion of the Holy One of Israel.

Violence will no more be heard in your land, *

ruin or destruction within your borders.

You will call your walls, Salvation, *

and all your portals, Praise.

The sun will no more be your light by day; *

by night you will not need the brightness of the moon.

The Lord will be your everlasting light, *

and your God will be your glory.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: *

as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

Leader: Without silence, words have no meaning. Listen to this poem about light and darkness. [*Here we suggest reading the last stanza from "Choruses from the Rock," by T.S. Eliot.*]

In the silence that follows, rest in its afterglow. [*Silence for two minutes.*]

Prayers of the Gathered Community:

Leader: Even as we bask in the light of God, we pray for those who are in need of God's light. Pray for those on your hearts either silently or aloud.

We give God thanks for the ways God has been a light unto our path. Give thanks silently or aloud.

Almighty God, to whom our needs are known before we ask: Help us to ask only what accords with your will; and those good things which we dare not, or in our blindness cannot ask, grant us for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Now let us pray the words that Jesus taught us:

Our Father in heaven,

hallowed be your Name,

your kingdom come,

your will be done,

on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins

as we forgive those

who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial,

and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,

and the glory are yours,

now and for ever. Amen.

Leader: Let us bless the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Leader: Glory to God whose power, working in us, can do infinitely more than we can ask or imagine. Glory to God from generation to generation in the Church, and in Christ Jesus for ever and ever. **Amen.**



This week we invite you to reflect on the sign of Light

Question:
Where is the light in your life?

Scripture:
In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.
John 1:1-5

Collect:
Christ our True Light: when the lights of this world blind and bewilder and its darkness brings us no peace, train our eyes to behold your brightness and enfold us in the healing shadow of your wings, that we may love you by night as by day; who with the Father of lights and the Spirit of truth shine upon us, one God, through endless ages. Amen.

Practice:
Pay attention to light as you move through your day.



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Pay attention to light as you move through your day.