

United Methodist Volunteers in Mission Awareness Sunday

Sermon Starter, quotations and Scriptures

Shining our light to the glory of God

Matthew 5:16 "... Let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven."

This passage of Scripture helps us open a wealth of reasons for walking in our passion to serve others. It does not pose a question about whether we have something to offer. Nor does Matthew give us an option, as in a multiple-choice test. There are no scenarios from which we can choose what to do with what God has divinely woven in our being. Instead, Matthew is clear that each one of us has a light to shine, not for our own edification, but to the glory of God.

Matthew continues to make it evident that this light is public. It is part of our personal witness to the world. It is the message of every disciple who understands the ministry of Jesus Christ, and the examples he left as the good news of the gospel. Sharing the light of volunteerism is an active, doing, moving ministry. It transforms us from one point to another. It is truly love in action.

What a clever way to issue a command! Matthew does not give us a way to question the "light" we have. Instead, he immediately tells us to do something. When Jesus called the disciples, he simply said, "Follow me." He is a sideline cheerleader urging us to get out into the world, serve the people of God and use everything within us to show others, so that when they see the praiseworthy, noble and good deeds, they will give glory to God.

Just as Christ called the disciples, volunteers demonstrate the call to walk humbly in their passion to serve. This grassroots movement within The United Methodist Church consist of Christians, both lay and clergy, who let their light shine in Christian service at home and around the world.

More than 125,000 lights shine in service around the world through United Methodist Volunteers in Mission (UMVIM). This is one way that we volunteer to change the world.

Countless United Methodists volunteers have given of themselves from inception of the church until now. Each week, someone creates the bulletins, posts social media updates, visits the sick, makes phone calls to the sick and shut-in, teaches Sunday school classes, feeds the poor, advocates for justice, makes the coffee, greets visitors and so much more.

We appreciate, honor and congratulate these stalwarts of the faith who serve day in and day out (sometimes without recognition). A simple childhood song says it all, in one line, "This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine, let it shine, let it shine, let it shine."

Our volunteers are shining their lights. We are reminded of the Scripture in Matthew 25:40, "And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.'"

Let's celebrate our volunteers today.

Additional Sermon Starter Quotations and Scriptures

Scriptures:

“Declare [God’s] glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples.” (Psalms 96: 3)

“It’s quite simple: Do what is fair and just to your neighbor, be compassionate and loyal in your love, And don’t take yourself too seriously — take God seriously.” (Micah 6:8, The Message)

“But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.” (Acts 1:8)

Quotations

“Darkness cannot drive out light; only light can do that.” — Martin Luther King

“Light tomorrow with today.” — Elizabeth Barrett Browning

“Words which do not give the light of Christ increase darkness.” — Mother Theresa

“Do something wonderful, people may imitate it.” — Albert Schweitzer

“Do you want to know who you are? Don’t ask. Act! Action will delineate and define you.” — Thomas Jefferson

“We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit.” — Aristotle

“Start where you are. Use what you have. Do what you can.” — Arthur Ashe

“Your talent is God’s gift to you. What you do with it is your gift back to God.” — Leo Buscaglia

“The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing.” — Walt Disney

