

Share Your Faith with Your Child.

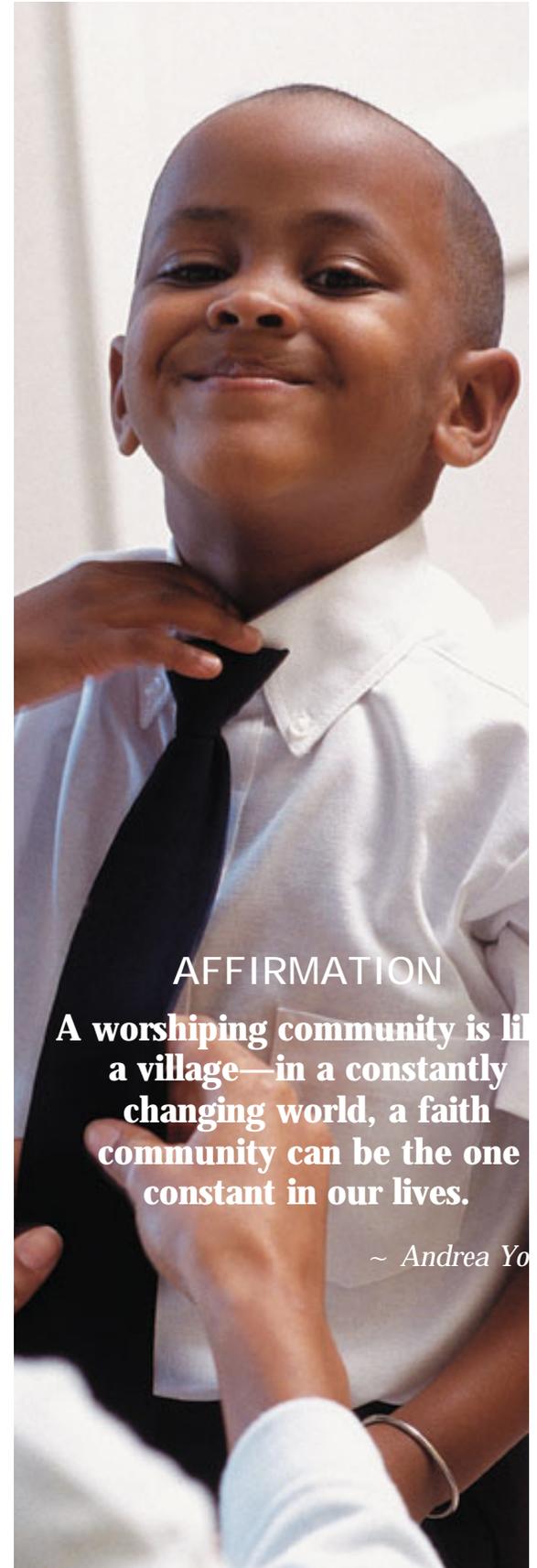
Share a prayer, a hymn, a saying, or a verse from Scripture or sacred writings with your child. Tell your child what you think it means and how it makes you feel when you hear it. Ask your child what he thinks the prayer means.

Living your faith everyday lets your child know it's something he can count on.

Why are these activities important?

Your child needs to know how your faith makes a difference in your life. These activities will allow your child to:

- ✓ Find comfort and strength in your faith
- ✓ Celebrate faith in different ways
- ✓ Learn how your faith helps you get through hard times
- ✓ Find ways to help others through faith
- ✓ Build faith and faith practices into his everyday life



AFFIRMATION

A worshiping community is like a village—in a constantly changing world, a faith community can be the one constant in our lives.

~ Andrea Yo

What you need

- ✓ Spiritual on page 77



NOTE TO PARENTS

As you do these activities, you'll see the words "prayer," "faith," and "religion" used a lot. But these words can mean different things to different people. You can talk about any kind of belief or value in these activities, even if you don't think of it as religious. You can share sayings, beliefs, traditions, and spirituality of any kind with your child. It doesn't matter what you call it, it's the sharing that's the important part.

Activity 1: This little light of mine

Spirituals are an important part of African American heritage. These songs helped African captives live through and escape slavery. Some songs had messages that told slaves how to use the Underground Railroad to get to freedom. Later, the songs were used during the Civil Rights Movement to inspire demonstrators at events like the 1963 March on Washington.

Spirituals and gospel music express emotions that people had in times of crisis and their faith that they could overcome the crisis. Share this song or a favorite song or poem or scripture that gives you strength in times of trouble.

1. Sing or read the spiritual on page 77 with your child.

OR

If you have a prayer, saying, song, poem, or passage that gives you strength in times of trouble, write it down and read it with your child.

2. Ask your child what he thinks about the spiritual, and how it makes him feel.
3. Tell your child where you heard the song for the first time, or what the situation was when you first heard the song. Explain how it makes you feel when you hear it. Tell your child about times when hearing the song made you feel strong or calm or better when you needed it.
4. Teach your child the words to the song and practice singing it together.
5. Ask your child if there is a song, saying, or poem that helps him to feel stronger. Ask him to tell you why it helps him.
6. Practice saying or singing that song together.

THIS LITTLE LIGHT OF MINE

*African American Spiritual**

*This little light of mine
I'm gonna let it shine
This little light of mine
I'm gonna let it shine
This little light of mine
I'm gonna let it shine
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.*

*Everywhere I go
I'm gonna let it shine
Everywhere I go
I'm gonna let it shine
Everywhere I go
I'm gonna let it shine
Let it shine, let it shine, let it shine.*

**The spirituals originated during the time of slavery.
This Little Light of Mine became one of the themes
of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s.*



What you need

- ✓ Empty tissue box
- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ Glue
- ✓ Paper
- ✓ Colored pens or crayons
- ✓ Fabric scraps
- ✓ Fabric tape
- ✓ Ribbon

Activity 2:

I say a little prayer for you

Prayer and faith give many families strength and security. This activity will help make prayers real for your child by turning them into something he can see and touch.

- 1.** Cover an empty box with paper, fabric, or newspaper. Glue or tape the covering to the box.
- 2.** Using the worksheet on page 79, cut paper into long strips about an inch wide.
- 3.** Give your child a few strips of paper and something to write with.
- 4.** Ask your child to write the name of someone or something he would like to pray for, or something he would like to give thanks for. If your child is younger, have him tell you so you can write it down, or have him draw a picture instead.
- 5.** Roll up or fold each strip of paper and let your child drop it into the box.
- 6.** At prayer time, let your child pick out a paper strip and read it as part of your prayers. Or set aside a special time each day to pick out a paper strip from the box and use it as a prayer.
- 7.** Keep adding prayer strips to the box whenever you need to, like when someone is sick, when someone is away from home, or when something good happens.

Activity 2:
I say a little prayer for you

A large rectangular area consisting of eight horizontal dashed lines, providing space for writing a prayer.

Activity 3: Felt wall hanging

Many faiths have symbols that stand for important beliefs and religious practices. These symbols can give you and your child peace and comfort because they show an important part of your faith. In this activity, your child can learn about these symbols and what they mean. It also makes these faith symbols real by turning them into something to touch and see.

1. Cut out the shapes of important symbols from your faith in different colors of fabric or paper. You may want to make crosses, stars, praying hands, crescents, tablets, and/or holy books.
2. Talk with your child about why each symbol is important in your faith. Tell your child what each symbol means to you.
3. Ask your child what he thinks the symbols are and what they mean to him.
4. Ask your child how the symbols make him feel and which ones make him feel safe or calm.
5. Get a large piece of black felt or poster board and lay it down.
6. Ask your child to pick the symbols that make him feel good, safe, and happy. Glue or tape the symbols onto the felt or paper.
7. Let your child draw or cut out other things to include on the wall hanging. Let him be creative. Help him cut out things, if needed.

What you need

- ✓ Scissors
- ✓ Glue
- ✓ Colored pens
- ✓ Fabric or paper scraps
- ✓ Fabric tape



8. Hang the banner in a special place where everyone can see it.

IF YOUR CHILD IS OLDER, HE MIGHT LIKE TO:

- ✓ Draw and color fabric squares
- ✓ Sew the fabric together before or instead of using glue
- ✓ String shapes along pieces of string, twine, or ribbon
- ✓ Make shapes on the computer and print them out
- ✓ Make electronic greeting cards, screen savers, or other electronic files with symbols and shapes on the computer