

FIRST (SCOTS) SERMONS

YOUTH SUNDAY: THE DAY'S THEME WAS LIGHT

“GOD’S LIGHT INSIDE YOU”

Scripture Lesson: Matthew 5: 14-16

*This sermon was preached by Adair Smith on Sunday, February 11, 2024
at First (Scots) Presbyterian Church in Charleston, South Carolina.*

Matthew 5: 14-16

14 *“You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. 15 No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. 16 In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.*

God’s Light Inside You

I have been a member of the First Scots Youth Group for a solid seven years and never been brave enough to do a sermon on Youth Sunday. So please bear with me as I painfully make my way through this.

In the summer of 2021, I accompanied other First Scots high school youth to the Montreat Youth conference in Montreat, North Carolina. This one week in this specific summer changed me and my relationships in ways I have never experienced before. I found myself making new friends that I still talk to today, some who came from Charleston all the way to Iowa. I learned to laugh, my friends/roommates Susanna and Abby taught me to appreciate the little things, as this trip brought me closer to them than I had ever been before.

I remember us performing “Country Roads” by John Denver in the variety show, Susanna playing the guitar and kazoo in the background. I remember our Assistant Pastor James Rogers eating a cake we made just for him with mayo instead of icing. He didn’t even start to question the taste until he was halfway done with his slice. I remember being ten feet away from a black bear. THAT was a moment. I have memories from that trip that will last a lifetime, such as the permanent gap in my toes that happened after I broke one of them while playing small group games. Truly a priceless souvenir. But the single moment that I remember most is the moment I felt so unified with every other person at that conference, this moment being the candlelight service. This is a treasured memory I have, every one of the hundreds of people at the conference holding a small, lit candle, and gathering around the camp’s giant lake. Together we stand, sing, and appreciate our presence under God. In the darkness of the night, you look around to see all those small dots of light, knowing each one represents a person who is there for the same reason as you, to worship God.

Matthew chapter five verses 15 and 16 say, “No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket but on the lampstand, and gives light to all the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven”.

In the same way that you should share your lamp light with others, you should share the word and love of God with others. God is the light in our lives, he is the good. The candlelight service at Montreat showed me the light, the good, it showed me God in everyone around me. I felt a special

tie to everyone there as we worshiped our God together. In the same way that I got to see God's light with my fellow conference goers, I am now able to recognize it everywhere I go. By someone's emotions, their talents, their expressions, I have learned to look at someone and identify the beautiful things that God put inside of them to share with the world. This summer I will return to Montreat one more time, one more time where I can look around the candlelight service at God's light shining from everyone. And when starting college this upcoming fall I will be able to show the world what God placed inside of me that he wants me to share with the world. Someone very special never forgets to tell me, "You make the world a better place." And I have never felt this is more true than when I can see God's light shine through in others. You all make this world a better place. Let God's light shine through you and show the world what you're made of.