



CONFERENCE SUNDAY

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Practicing God's Presence

*"God's kingdom is already
among you." Luke 17:21 (CEB)*

Recognizing God's presence all around us takes *Practice!*

Practicing God's presence forms us to become more like God. Just like we practice soccer, riding a bike, spelling a word, and playing piano, we practice watching for God! Every day! Many times a day! Practice! Home is the primary place to practice growing our faith because we meet God in ordinary routines and relationships. Adults develop their faith as they practice faith with kids!

1. Sing: "God is With Us Everywhere"
(to the tune of "London Bridges")

God is with us everywhere,
Everywhere, everywhere.
God is with us everywhere.
God is with us.

Form a bridge with two people holding hands with arms held high. Have children walk underneath the bridge. When you get to the last phrase, catch the child in the arms of God and invite the child to name how God is with them.¹

2. Light a Christ candle to remind you of God's presence. As a family, decorate a large white pillar candle. Light it on Sundays to remind you to stop normal routines. Or light it to remind you of Christ's presence during special celebrations. When you light the candle, pray for the light of Christ to be reflected in your lives.²

3. Talk about our Creator God as you play in the snow, walk in the woods, plant flowers, or watch the garden grow.

4. Listen to music that reminds you of God's presence and love. Car rides are good times to sing and talk together about the songs.

5. Pray whenever you hear a siren. Sirens come from fire trucks, ambulances, and police cars. They indicate that someone needs help. When you hear a siren, stop and pray for the people that are needing help.

6. Include God all day long! In the morning, thank God for the gift of a new day! At mealtime, thank God for food. When you hear that someone is injured or sick, pray for them. When "Susie" achieves something new, thank God for helping her to learn. When "Sammie" is sad or hurt, pray for God to bring comfort and healing. At bedtime, be thankful for God's presence during the day!

7. Check out this "Building Faith" website designed by Daniel and Talashia Keim Yoder (pastoral team at College Mennonite in Goshen) and Tami Keim, to provide resources for parents to help children develop faith at home:
<http://buildingfaithfamily.com>

¹ Adapted from <https://www.daniellesplace.com/html/Biblethemes-Psalms139.html> (accessed October 22, 2016).

² Deborah Alberswerth Payden and Laura Loving, *Celebrating at Home: prayers and litanies for families* (Cleveland: United Church Press, 1998), 1-2.