



2022 Middle School Huddle

Pre-Event Bible Study

Leaders, gather your students together for this 15-20 minute Bible study. Have Bibles and pencils available. Open the study in prayer.

Setting the stage: Joe's story (read aloud)

Joe was a strange man. He had a funny accent. He lived with friends and never had a house to call his own. He spent what he earned on the other outcasts of Port Hope. Joe had come to Canada from Ireland after his fiancée died in an accident the day before their wedding. Joe knew what suffering is. Ten years later, a second fiancée also died from an illness shortly before the wedding day. **What hope can you offer Joe?**

This year's Kansas District Middle School Huddle theme, "What a Friend We Have in Jesus," is based on John 15:12-17. **Read the theme verses.**

¹² "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. ¹⁷ These things I command you, so that you will love one another.

Many of you know the hymn *What a Friend We Have in Jesus*. It's hymn 770 in the *Lutheran Service Book*. **Sing the first stanza of the hymn together** (yes, out loud with your voices). This hymn shares a message of great hope in the midst of suffering in this world. Perhaps Joe could find comfort in the words of this hymn based on our theme verse from John 15:

1. What a friend we have in Jesus, All our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry Ev'rything to God in prayer!
Oh, what peace we often forfeit; Oh, what needless pain we bear—
All because we do not carry Ev'rything to God in prayer!

God's Word is truly powerful. It helps us through all of life's ups and downs. When things are going well, Scripture encourages us to give God thanks and praise for His blessings. When things aren't so good, Scripture encourages us to remember our true identity in Jesus. Jesus said, "*I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you.*"

How does your identity as Jesus' friend help you through life's ups and downs? Look up these verses to help you answer:

John 15:10 _____

Ephesians 5:2 _____

John 3:32 _____

There's something else you should know about Joseph Medlicott Scriven; he wrote *What a Friend We Have in Jesus* in 1865. But, that's not all. Even though he knew what suffering was all about, he devoted his life to being a friend to others and sharing the Gospel with the people of Port Hope whether they wanted to hear it or not. He was arrested in 1873 for "preaching on the street," but that didn't stop him from sharing the Good News of Jesus laying down His life for His friends.

How can you share the Gospel with your friends? Look up these verses to help you answer:

John 16:13 _____

John 14:13 _____

John 15:7 _____

Luke 12:4 _____

Let's finish up the same way we started. Now that you've looked at the theme verses for the Huddle, **what hope can you offer Joe? Sing the rest of *What a Friend We Have in Jesus* before you answer.**

2. Have we trials and temptations? Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged—Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our ev'ry weakness— Take it to the Lord in prayer.

3. Are we weak and heavy laden, Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Savior, still our refuge— Take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do thy friends despise, forsake thee? Take it to the Lord in prayer.
In His arms He'll take and shield thee; Thou wilt find a solace there.

Close the study in prayer.