Cold Winter Day Moment

A Mother of two, once told me, “In the morning, I take my coffee out to the porch and take a few minutes to reflect on everything I’m grateful for. This is how I find God and keep sane.” This Moment is a version of her tradition, adapted for family use. Gratitude has been proven, time and again, to be a value that increases health of all kinds: spiritual, metal, and physical. To take a moment and reflect on all of life’s many blessings, even once a week, is a worthwhile endeavor.

This Cold Winter Day Moment has four steps: caring conversation, bible reading, activity and ritual.

1. **Caring conversation**:

   Create a special hot/warm beverage station for the family. For those who enjoy coffee have a special creamer available, for hot chocolate lovers provide some marshmallows, peppermint sticks and/or sprinkles, for tea enthusiast a dollop of honey.

   Once everyone has their special beverage begin a conversation using one or more of the following questions:

   a) What are your favorite things about winter?
   b) When you are cold what kind of things help you feel warm again?
   c) Finish the sentence: I feel safe and warm when Mom/Dad/Child… (give a hug, make me a snack, take me to hockey practise…)
   d) Answer the question “what are you grateful for”? Share at least three things.

2. **Bible reading: Psalm 100:1-5**

There are many passages in the Bible where the people are grateful for God's love and grace. The Psalms contain many songs and poems of gratitude and one of my favourites is Psalm 100. You can find this Psalm in our Voices United Hymn Book too.

1 Make a joyful noise to the LORD, all the earth.
2 Serve the LORD with gladness;
come into his presence with singing.

3 Know that the LORD is God.
It is he who made us, and we are his[a]
we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.

4 Enter his gates with thanksgiving
and his courts with praise.
Give thanks to him; bless his name.

5 For the LORD is good;
his steadfast love endures forever
and his faithfulness to all generations. (NRSV)

Giving thanks helps us feel warm, inside and out.

3. Activity: (chose one or more)

a) Think about all the animals who have to live outside. What can you do to help them through the cold winter? Hang a bird feeder in your yard and watch the birds appreciate your gift.
b) Bring a donation of tea, hot chocolate or coffee for the food bank bin at church to warm the heart of someone in need.
c) Participate in the SOCKS for the homeless campaign at McClure church. See November newsletter for inspiration.
d) Make a blanket fort and read your favorite books all snuggled in together.

4. **Ritual**:

Write or draw on "post-it-notes" your answers to the question "What are you grateful for" (a gratitude for each post-it-note) and then post them all over the house (fridge, bathroom mirror, pillow, etc.) When you are done posting the notes get together and say a prayer.

Thank you God, for teaching us to be grateful. We are thankful for our warm home and our loving family on cold days. We pray that everyone will have a safe and warm place to live and we pray everyone will have love in their family too. Amen.