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INTER-  
MEDIATE  
*Quarterly*

*"Social Teachings of the Church"*

# INTERMEDIATE SUNDAY SCHOOL QUARTERLY

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Spring Quarter 2026

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----- **Ages 12-14 (Middle School)** -----

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**INTERMEDIATE SUNDAY SCHOOL QUARTERLY**

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## THE ORDER OF SERVICE

- I. Bell tap or organ voluntary as a signal for silence
- II. Singing
- III. The Apostles' Creed
- IV. Prayer, closing with the Lord's Prayer in concert
- V. Singing
- VI. Calling roll of officers and teachers
- VII. Responsive reading of the lesson text by school
- VIII. The Decalogue

## THE LESSON

- I. Organ interlude while the classes are being arranged
- II. Class study of the lesson
- III. Warning bell — 5 minutes
- IV. Closing bell — silence

## THE CLOSING

- I. Singing
- II. Review and application of the lesson
- III. Secretary's report
- IV. The Church School Creed
- V. Singing
- VI. Benediction

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## THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth and in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried; the third day He arose from the dead, He ascended into heaven and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Church Universal, the communion of the saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

## THE CHURCH SCHOOL CREED

I believe my AME Church School must grow and grow; and that I must make it a top priority to make it so. Every member a Christian, every Christian a worker, every worker trained so that a worker need not be ashamed. This we ask in Jesus' name.

# OVERVIEW

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OBLIGATIONS TO  
NEIGHBORS

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Others

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LESSON 4: MARCH 22, 2026  
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# RECOGNIZING OUR DEBT TO OTHERS

**LESSON SCRIPTURE:** Nehemiah 4:15-23; Mark 12:28-34; Romans 15:1-7; Philippians 2:1-8; Colossians 3:12; 4:1; James 2:14-17

**FOCUS SCRIPTURE:** Mark 12:28-34; James 2:14-17



**KEY VERSE:** [The scribe said to Jesus,] "... 'to love [God] with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength' and 'to love one's neighbor as oneself'—this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices." Mark 12:33

## VOCABULARY

**OBLIGATION:** A responsibility or duty.

**NEIGHBOR:** Anyone in need, not just someone who lives near you.

**COMPASSION:** Deep awareness of the suffering of another and the desire to help.

**FAITH IN ACTION:** Belief demonstrated through loving behavior.



## FOCUS SCRIPTURE

### MARK 12:28-34; JAMES 2:14-17

**28** One of the scribes came near and heard them disputing with one another, and seeing that he answered them well he asked him, "Which commandment is the first of all?"

**29** Jesus answered, "The first is, 'Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one;

**30** you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.'

**31** The second is this, 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these."

**32** Then the scribe said to him, "You are right, Teacher; you have truly said that 'he is one, and besides him there is no other';

**33** and 'to love him with all the heart and with all the understanding and with all the strength' and 'to love one's neighbor as oneself'—this is much more important than all whole burnt offerings and sacrifices."

**34** When Jesus saw that he answered wisely, he said to him, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." After that no one dared to ask him any question.

### JAMES 2:14-17

**14** What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but does not have works? Surely that faith cannot save, can it?

**15** If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food

**16** and one of you says to them, "Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill," and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that?

**17** So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.



## INTRODUCTION

Let's be real: the world tells you to "look out for yourself," "get your bag," and "cut off people who don't serve you." But Jesus tells a different story. He says the most important thing you can do is love—really love—God and other people.



That's not always easy. What if someone's hard to love? What if you're the one feeling left out, ignored, or unseen? Jesus' answer was simple but powerful: Love God and your neighbor. That's everything.

But here's the twist: Love isn't just something you feel. It's something you do. Faith isn't about talking; it's about showing up, caring, and acting. What does it look like to live love, not just talk love?

## BIBLE STORY

Mark 12:28-34 highlights a conversation where Jesus prioritizes love, toward God and others, as the greatest commandment. Love becomes the measure of our relationship with God. In James 2:14-17, faith without works is declared dead. James criticizes empty declarations of care without practical help. These two passages together underscore a foundational Christian teaching: love that is alive must be seen in how we treat others.





## LIFE APPLICATION

When we love, we act. Jesus didn't just talk about love, he healed, fed, forgave, and served. Today, our love must look like meeting needs, standing for justice, and showing mercy. Loving neighbors may look like checking in on friends, volunteering, or sharing what we have. In the AME tradition, love and liberation go hand in hand—acting justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God.

## SUMMARY

Jesus commands us to love deeply, and James reminds us that our faith must move us to act. As followers of Christ, we are called to meet the needs of others with compassion and commitment.

### Reflection Questions:

1. What does it mean to love someone with your whole heart?
2. Have you ever said you would help someone and didn't follow through? What stopped you?
3. What is one way you can show active love this week?



## CLOSING DEVOTIONS

Pray that God will clothe each person in compassion and give them the courage to love boldly.



## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: LIVING THE COMMANDMENTS TODAY

**Instructions:** Read through the commandments (Exodus 20) and place them into one of two categories - Love God - commandments about our relationship with God, or Love Others - commandments about how we treat people. Then rewrite the commandment into everyday language.

| ORIGINAL COMMANDMENT   | CATEGORY    | TODAY'S LANGUAGE   |
|--|-------------|--|
| "You shall have no other gods before me."  | Love God    | "Put God first—don't make anything more important than God." |
| "Honor your father and your mother."   | Love Others | "Respect your parents and those who take care of you."       |
| You shall not make idols.  |             |  |
| You shall not murder.  |             |  |
| You shall not commit adultery.   |             |  |
| You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. Speak God's name with respect. |             |  |
| You shall not covet.   |             |  |

|   |  |  |
|---|--|--|
| Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.              |  |  |
| You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. |  |  |

### Reflection:

Which commandment was easiest to translate into today's language? Which was hardest?

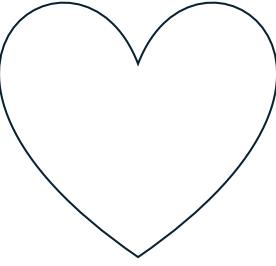
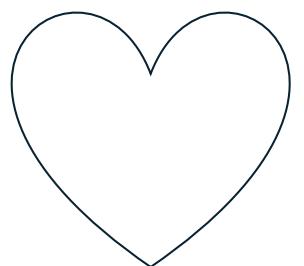
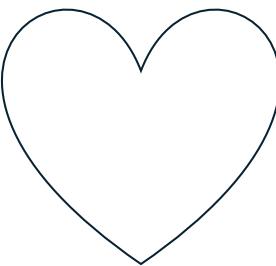
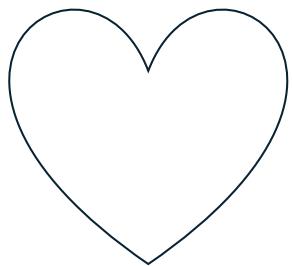
Why do you think God gave us these two types of instructions, some about God, some about people?

How does understanding the commandments in your own words make them easier (or harder) to follow?



## APPENDIX B: LOVE IN ACTION

Instructions: On each heart, print the name of someone you will show intentional love to this week. The challenge is to select someone you typically don't give time or space to. Print their name inside the heart and write the intentional act you will demonstrate inside the heart beneath the person's name.



Reflection:

How will your interaction with these people be different when you approach them with love?



# KEEPING FIT FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Daniel 1:8-20; 1 Corinthians 9:19-27;  
1 Timothy 4:7-12; 2 Timothy 2:1-5  
FOCUS SCRIPTURE: Daniel 1:8-17; 1 Timothy 4:7-8



**KEY VERSES:** Train yourself in godliness, for, while physical training is of some value, godliness is valuable in every way, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come. 1 Timothy 4:7b-8

## VOCABULARY

**DISCIPLINE:** The practice of training to obey rules or a code of behavior.

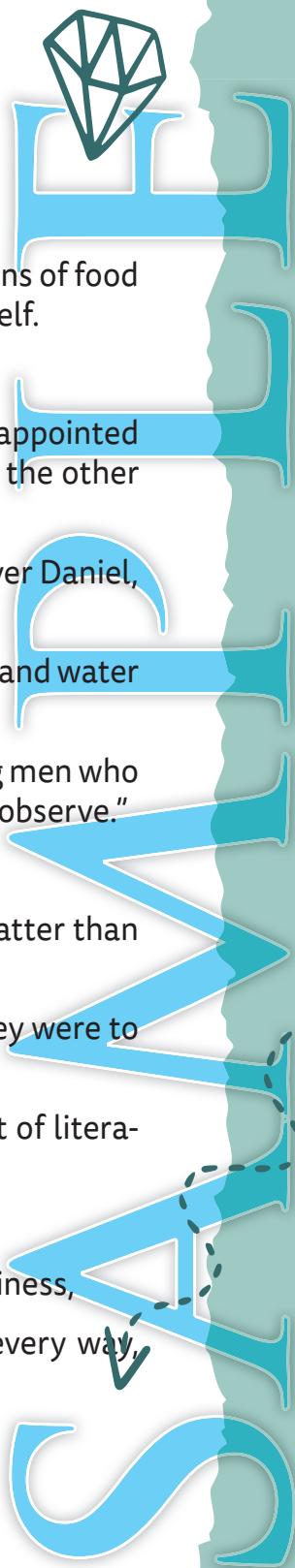
**GODLINESS:** Devotion to God shown through holy living.

**FITNESS:** Being healthy in body, mind, and spirit.



## FOCUS SCRIPTURE

**DANIEL 1:8-17; 1 TIMOTHY 4:7-8**



**8** But Daniel resolved that he would not defile himself with the royal rations of food and wine, so he asked the palace master to allow him not to defile himself.

**9** Now God granted Daniel favor and compassion from the palace master.

**10** The palace master said to Daniel, "I am afraid of my lord the king; he has appointed your food and your drink. If he should see you in poorer condition than the other young men of your age, you would endanger my head with the king."

**11** Then Daniel asked the guard whom the palace master had appointed over Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah:

**12** "Please test your servants for ten days. Let us be given vegetables to eat and water to drink.

**13** You can then compare our appearance with the appearance of the young men who eat the royal rations and deal with your servants according to what you observe."

**14** So he agreed to this proposal and tested them for ten days.

**15** At the end of ten days it was observed that they appeared better and fatter than all the young men who had been eating the royal rations.

**16** So the guard continued to withdraw their royal rations and the wine they were to drink and gave them vegetables.

**17** To these four young men God gave knowledge and skill in every aspect of literature and wisdom; Daniel also had insight into all visions and dreams.

### **1 TIMOTHY 4:7-8**

**7** Have nothing to do with profane and foolish tales. Train yourself in godliness,

**8** for, while physical training is of some value, godliness is valuable in every way, holding promise for both the present life and the life to come.





## INTRODUCTION

Athletes train daily to develop strength, speed, and skill. In the same way, we are called to train our spirits to be ready for whatever comes. Training takes effort, practice, and persistence. Our physical and spiritual health is not just about us; it's about how we show up for others.



## BIBLE STORY

Daniel and his friends chose a diet and lifestyle that honored God, even while living in exile (Daniel 1:8-17). Their spiritual and physical discipline led to favor and wisdom. In 1 Timothy 4:7-8, Paul reminds Timothy to stay spiritually strong through training in godliness. Bodily training is helpful, but spiritual training impacts eternity.



## LIFE APPLICATION

Being a good neighbor means taking care of yourself. You can't pour from an empty cup. Mental, emotional, and physical health impacts your relationships and your ministry. Encourage healthy eating, rest, prayer, and study. Teach that honoring our bodies and spirits prepares us to serve others well.



## SUMMARY

Discipline in both physical and spiritual life equips us for purpose. Like Daniel, we honor God by choosing habits

that prepare us to serve others and stand firm in our faith.

Reflection Questions:

1. What does "training in godliness" look like in your everyday life?
2. What habits help you feel strong and focused?
3. How does your physical or spiritual health impact those around you?

## CLOSING DEVOTIONS

Silently pray about one area where you want to grow stronger and the one healthy habit you will focus on this week.

Together: "I am training for a purpose. I honor God with my whole life." Amen.

## APPENDIX A

Scripture-Based Fill-in-the-Blank (Daniel 1:8-17, 1 Timothy 4:7-8)

"But Daniel resolved that he would not \_\_\_\_\_ himself with the royal rations of food and wine." (Daniel 1:8)

"God gave them \_\_\_\_\_ and skill in every aspect of literature and wisdom." (Daniel 1:17)

"Train yourself in \_\_\_\_\_. " (1 Timothy 4:7)

"Godliness is valuable in every way, holding \_\_\_\_\_ for both the present life and the life to come." (1 Timothy 4:8)

# HELPING NEIGHBORS IN NEED

LESSON SCRIPTURE: Deuteronomy 15:1-11; Matthew 25:31-46; Luke 10:25-37; James 1:27; 2:14-17

FOCUS SCRIPTURE: Deuteronomy 15:4-11; Matthew 25:42-45



**KEY VERSE:** Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, "Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land." Deuteronomy 15:11

## VOCABULARY

**NEIGHBOR:** Anyone we encounter, especially those in need.

**GENEROSITY:** A readiness to give more than is strictly necessary.

**COMPASSION:** Deep awareness of others' suffering, with a desire to help.

**JUSTICE:** Acting with fairness, equity, and concern for the well-being of others.

**STEWARDSHIP:** Responsible management of resources entrusted to us by God.

## FOCUS SCRIPTURE

### DEUTERONOMY 15:4-11; MATTHEW 25:42-45

**4** "There will, however, be no one in need among you, because the Lord is sure to bless you in the land that the Lord your God is giving you as a possession to occupy,

**5** if only you will obey the Lord your God by diligently observing this entire commandment that I command you today.

**6** When the Lord your God has blessed you, as he promised you, you will lend to many nations, but you will not borrow; you will rule over many nations, but they will not rule over you.

**7** If there is among you anyone in need, a member of your community in any of your towns within the land that the Lord your God is giving you, do not be hard-hearted or tight-fisted toward your needy neighbor.

**8** You should rather open your hand, willingly lending enough to meet the need, whatever it may be.

**9** Be careful that you do not entertain a mean thought, thinking, 'The seventh year, the year of remission, is near,' and therefore view your needy neighbor with hostility and give nothing; your neighbor might cry to the Lord against you, and you would incur guilt.

**10** Give liberally and be ungrudging when you do so, for on this account the Lord your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake.

**11** Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, 'Open your hand to the poor and needy neighbor in your land.'"

### MATTHEW 25:42-45

**42** "...for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink,

**43** I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me."

**44** Then they also will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison and did not take care of you?'

**45** Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me."

## INTRODUCTION

Imagine walking past someone hungry or homeless. What thoughts go through your mind? Today, we face countless needs, but we can also help. Giving is not just charity, it's justice. It reflects the heart of God.

## BIBLE STORY

In **Deuteronomy 15**, God commands the people to care for the poor with open hands and open hearts.

In **Matthew 25**, Jesus says that how we treat the hungry, sick, and imprisoned is how we treat him. This is a powerful call to generosity and justice.

## LIFE APPLICATION

Christian giving isn't about leftovers. It's a way of life. Young people can serve through providing meals, donating school supplies, or volunteering their time. They can be advocates for change in their schools and communities. The AME Church has a long history of social action; this is our legacy.

## SUMMARY

To love our neighbor is to meet their needs. When we give freely and love generously, we reflect God's justice and care. Giving is a spiritual act of worship.

### Reflection Questions:

1. What does it mean to give "liberally and ungrudgingly"?
2. When have you felt God calling you to give more than you expected?
3. How can you use your voice or time to meet the needs around you?

### LOVE IN ACTION CHALLENGE

Choose one real-life opportunity to serve or give this week, whether offering to help at home, support a cause, or reach out to someone in need.



Spring Quarter: January, February, March



## CLOSING DEVOTIONS

Lord, we are committed. Please help us become intentional in our assistance to others. Teach us to give generously, as you, our God, have given to us. Lord, each of us has committed to one thing for the week; help us to fulfil our commitment. Give us courage, boldness, and fill us with joy as we give to others. AMEN



## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX A: WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

Instructions: Read each scenario below. Choose the best way to respond, then explain why your choice reflects Christian generosity and justice.

**Scenario 1:** You see a classmate eating alone and looking sad. You brought an extra snack.

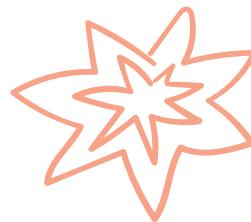
- A. Offer them the snack and sit with them
- B. Keep your snack and pretend you didn't see
- C. Text a friend about it



Why did you choose your answer?

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Your school is collecting supplies for participants affected by a fire.



- A. Donate the pens you never use
- B. Ask what's needed and give your best items
- C. Wait to see if anyone else gives first

How is your choice like what Deuteronomy 15:8 teaches?

## APPENDIX B: OPEN YOUR HAND

### MATCH THE VOCABULARY

Match the word to its correct meaning.

| WORD       | DEFINITION |
|------------|------------|
| GENEROSITY |            |
| NEIGHBOR   |            |
| JUSTICE    |            |

Definitions:

- A. Treating others **fairly** and helping those in need
- B. Readiness to give more than required
- C. Anyone you encounter, especially someone in need

### Scripture Fill-In-The-Blank

Key Verse: Deuteronomy 15:11

"Since there will never cease to be some in need on the earth, I therefore command you, '\_\_\_\_ your \_\_\_\_ to the and \_\_\_\_ neighbor in your land.'"

(Word Bank: poor, open, needy, hand)

Spring Quarter: January, February, March

### Memory Verse Challenge

Write Deuteronomy 15:11 in your own words — as if you were texting it to a friend.

## APPENDIX C: GIVING IS WORSHIP

### GIVING JOURNAL PROMPT

Consider someone in your neighborhood or church who could use assistance.

Answer the questions below:

1. What is their need?
2. What could you give or do to help?
3. How does giving show God's love?



### Art + Action

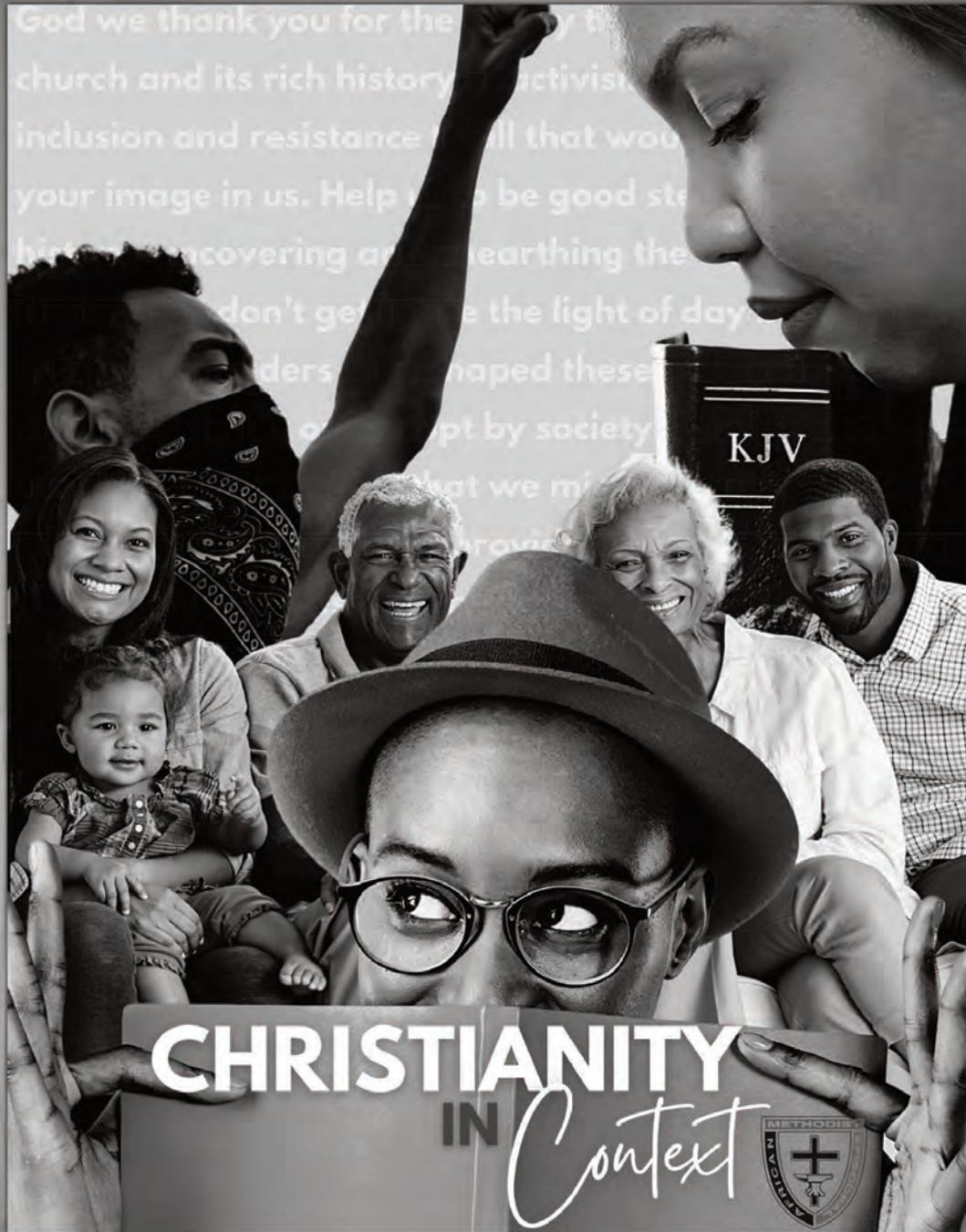
**Creative Task:** Draw or describe a scene where someone is being generous in a quiet, straightforward way. (Example: sharing lunch, helping with chores, visiting someone.)

Draw or describe below:

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