

SPECIAL
SUNDAY

UNITED METHODIST STUDENT DAY



CHILDREN'S ACTIVITY



Open Hearts. Open Minds. Open Doors.

The people of The United Methodist Church®



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While your congregation may observe it at any time, United Methodist Student Day is traditionally celebrated on the fourth Sunday of November. In 2021, the date coincides with the First Sunday of Advent. This children's message is based on the lectionary readings for November 28, 2021 and can be adapted for any Sunday and to fit your context.

This activity is designed to work together with the children's sermon or may stand alone to celebrate United Methodist Student Day in your congregation.

Supplies needed:

- Blue ribbons (or some other item that represents an award)
- Cardstock folded into greeting cards
- Foil stars and other items to decorate the cards
- Printouts of the above scripture to glue into the inside of the card
- Addresses of college students connected to your congregation

How can we thank God enough for you, given all the joy we have because of you before our God? Night and day, we pray more than ever to see all of you in person and to complete whatever you still need for your faith. May the love cause your hearts to be strengthened.

—1 Thessalonians 3:9-10, 13a (CEB)

INTRODUCTION

As the students enter, offer each a high five and hand them a ribbon while enthusiastically saying something about each child to make them feel good.

Then read the scripture from 1 Thessalonians and say: This passage is from a letter that Paul and some of Jesus' other followers sent to a new church. Paul wanted the people in the new church to feel good about what they were doing. It was important to encourage them and let them know that it was OK to make mistakes because that is how they will grow in their faith. In a way, this is a love letter.

Paul tells them that they are loved. Love helps us feel stronger because we know that we are not alone.

You all have been amazing. You had more than a year of going to school in a pandemic. I wonder if you know how strong you are. And I wonder if you know how loved you are.

Today in our church we celebrate United Methodist Student Day. We want you to feel loved and we want to share that love with others.



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Hannah Loper with classmates. (2 row, far right) Courtesy photo.

Hannah Loper is a college student now but remembers when she was a child like you. Her mom was very sick. She says that because people in the church prayed for her, brought food and sent cards and letters her family felt comforted. Later when her mother recovered, they started a ministry in the church to take care of people the way they had been taken care of. When Hannah got older, The United Methodist Church, including churches like ours, collected money so that Hannah and other students could go to college and follow their dreams.

Hannah says that kind of support gives her hope and encourages her to do a good job in school. Today we are going to share some of that hope and encouragement with college students from our church.



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CRAFT

(Hold up a gold foil star sticker.) Has anyone seen one of these before? These are sometimes put on your schoolwork when you have done an especially great job. Today we are going to make gold star cards and send them to some of the college students who are part of this church.

Decorate the outside of the card with stars and other decorations. On the inside, glue the scripture onto one side and on the other side write:

You are doing a great job!

Pray over the cards

(if you have the names of the college students, say them out loud)

Thank you, God, for students of all ages.
Thank you for reminders of how much we are loved.

Bless these cards and the students who receive them.

May they be a source of encouragement and strength.

Amen.

