



TODAY'S TOPIC:

Winter Solstice

You are welcome to use this lesson to inspire spiritual conversation in your family or youth classroom. It is written for elementary age but could be adjusted as needed.

THINKING JOB: Ask a “thinking job question” to get everyone thinking about something pertinent to the lesson. This could be asked moments or hours before your conversation.

Where does light come from?

Lesson

Materials	Things to Prepare	Today's Goal
•	•	Discover the light within. Know what the Winter Solstice is.

ASK: What do you think of when I say the word “light”? Sunlight, lightbulbs, flashlight, candlelight, nightlight.

SAY: The month we are in today is December. Why do so many people talk about and celebrate light in December? Because something real happens – the winter Solstice.

ASK: Have you heard that before? What is the solstice?

SHARE: The Solstice is an event that happens in outer space having to do with the sun and our planet, Earth. (There are great videos and explanations online for older youth.) Because of how the earth turns and faces the sun, here where we live the days have been getting shorter and the nights longer. You may have noticed there is less daylight every day, that it's darker when you get up and when you go to bed. In mid-December, right about now, the earth starts to shift and something exciting happens. We get more and more light every day!

ACTIVITY: Have everyone close their eyes and visualize.

SAY: Imagine we are going back in time to a very long time ago. Go back to before we had electricity to turn lights on or furnaces to keep our houses warm before we had cars to get us places. Can you picture it? During the darkest part of the winter, we would spend a lot of time inside. You would be carefully planning how to eat your food to make sure it would last. You would

be sure to have enough candles and firewood to keep the light burning and the house warm. What would you do with all that time inside? How excited would you be when the solstice happened, and the days started to get longer and the light returned? Do you think it would be something to celebrate? How would you celebrate? You can open your eyes now.

SAY: Because of the real experience of lots of dark and the return of the light, many people feel the return of the light in their body and even inside in their heart and soul. During the Solstice, they celebrate the gifts of Spirit and the way Spirit's light shines in the world and in their lives. Many religions and cultures have developed stories and rituals to honor this time of darkness and the return of the light.

ASK: Many people give Christmas gifts this time of year. What kinds of things would you give to celebrate the Winter Solstice?

- **Solstice Stories:** Sharing ancestral folkways and traditions, myths, and legends with winter themes.
- **Smudge Kit:** The traditional practice of burning herbs is said to heal, cleanse, and restore positive energy—all things we could benefit from in our life.
- **Animal Feeder:** Feeding creatures through the cold winter months is a wonderful tradition where you place grains, seeds, and nuts where our animal friends can find them.

ASK: Do you think they are just celebrating light from the sun or a light bulb or are they celebrating something more? Exactly! While there is actual light like lightbulbs and the sun, there is also spiritual light which is Spirit, God, love, peace, kindness. That is a big part of what people celebrate.

ASK: Where does that kind of spiritual light live? In your heart, in the kindness and love you share. Let's say our affirmation together.

AFFIRMATION – I am always in the light. repeat 4X

Note: Printable affirmations and coloring sheets for this lesson are available at <https://www.milehichurch.org/youth-family/> .