

In Step! – A Walkathon Program

GOAL

To discover scriptural truths which inspired a hymn about stepping in the light of Jesus.
To provide an opportunity for all women to participate in the current, annual Atlantic Baptist Women's walkathon.

GATHER RESOURCES

Information on current walkathon project and the ministry it supports found in Tidings or ABW website.

Various kinds of footwear, either actual footwear or pictures.

Copies of the hymn - *Stepping in the Light* (words at the end of this program) Music can be found at: <http://www.hymntime.com/tch/pdf/s/t/e/Stepping%20in%20the%20Light.pdf>

Bibles

EARLIER IN YOUR MEETING

Discuss contributing to the walkathon, perhaps during the offering.

Someone from your group or area may bring the group's contribution to the walkathon table at interMISSION or it can be sent to your ABW Provincial Treasurer, marked "Walkathon".

Your group may choose to take a short walk at some point in the program or at the end.

INTRODUCTION

Say: Today we all have the opportunity of participating in the annual walkathon promoted during interMISSION. (Introduce the current ABW interMISSION walkathon project.)

Show: The footwear or pictures that you brought.

Ask: What were your favorite kind of shoes to wear... when you were a child? ...when you were 20? ...now? What made/makes them special? What was/is more important: fashion or comfort?

The type of shoes we wear can affect our steps and the way we walk.

HYMN & HYMN WRITER



Say: In our lives, it is important to walk in the ways of Jesus. *Stepping in the Light* is one hymn inspired by Scripture that helps us understand what it means to walk in the light of Jesus. The words were written by Eliza Hewitt in 1890. Eliza was born on June 28, 1851 in Philadelphia. Eliza's love for learning and children led her to become a teacher. A few years into her teaching career, while correcting one of her students, Eliza was severely hit in the back by a slate. Eliza spent the next 6 months in a hospital, wearing a cast that completely immobilized her. After her release from hospital, Eliza slowly started

to walk again but her back never completely recovered and she had to give up teaching. Her experience led her to a deeper relationship with her Lord as she spent much time studying Scriptures. She used her knowledge of Scripture to write poems which were later put to music by others to become hymns. Besides *Stepping in the Light*, other hymns written by Eliza include *Sunshine in My Soul*, *More About Jesus*, *My Faith has Found a Resting Place*, and *When We All Get to Heaven*. She wrote poems for children and Sunday School material. In time she recovered enough to teach a weekly Sunday School class. Eliza died on April 24, 1920 at age 69. (information and photo from <https://lights4god.wordpress.com/2012/06/28/eliza-hewitt-2/>)

SCRIPTURE FOCUS

Pass out copies of the hymn, *Stepping in the Light*, and Bibles. Assign members of the group the following verses to be read out loud at various times: Prov. 16:9, Prov. 3:5-6, Eph. 5:1-2, Psalm 119:133, James 4:7-8, Luke 1: 51-53, Eph. 4:2, Isaiah 52:7, Heb. 4:14-16, John 8:12, Psalm 48: 12-14, Isaiah 33:17.

Say: Psalm 119:105 says “Your word is a lamp for my feet and a light to my path.” (NIV) So let’s look at scripture and song to discover about stepping in the light of Jesus.

(Sing or read together the first verse and chorus of the hymn. Have each Scripture verse read one at a time and then discuss that verse.)

Prov. 16:9 – Sometimes we make plans about where we want to go in life, but it is important that our plans be in stride with God’s will and follow Jesus’ steps.

Prov. 3:5-6 – Christ is our Savior and King. When we trust in his ways, we know the way to go and our path is straight and goes in the right direction.

Eph. 5:1-2 – Christ is our example of love and sacrifice. Our whole lives should be shaped by the ways of Jesus.

Ask: When is it easy to trust God? When is it more challenging to trust God? Share a time when you did not understand the “why” of God’s path for you, but you trusted him anyway.

Sing or read together verse two and the chorus

Psalms 119:133 – We must walk closely with God and ask him to direct us.

James 4:7-8 – Satan makes it look attractive to walk in his ways rather than in God’s ways, so we need to walk even more closely with God in order to recognize and resist temptation.

Luke 1:51-53 – Like Mary, we can praise God for how he defends and cares for us. He has power over the proud and gives good things to those in need.

Ask: When do you feel closest to God? How has he helped you overcome temptation?

Sing or read together verse three and the chorus

Eph. 4:2 – To forbear means to be patient or self-controlled when someone is annoying or provoking you. As this verse points out, our footsteps are to be humble, gentle, patient and loving.

Isaiah 52:7 – As we share the good news of Jesus Christ, we are to proclaim his faithfulness, mercy and love. His beauty shines through us when we share with others about him.

Heb. 4:14-16 – Because of Jesus, we can approach and receive his grace freely and with confidence to help us in every situation.

Ask: How do you react when someone is annoying or provoking you? In what ways can we proclaim God's faithfulness, mercy and love?

Sing or read together verse four and the chorus

John 8:12 – The steps of the Savior are filled with light not darkness. When we walk with him, we have the light of life.

Psalms 48: 12-14 – God is everlasting. He is not just our guide now. God is our guide forever. He is not only our God but he is also the God of the next generation.

Isaiah 33:17 – When Christ the King returns, we will see the fullness of his beauty for eternity.

Ask: How can we help the next generation to walk with the Lord so they too will see the beauty of the King?

One final scripture to leave with you – **Read:** 1 John 1:5-7. Let us walk in the light of God, be in step with Jesus and fellowship with one another!

Sing or read the chorus of the song one final time. Close with a short prayer.

Pray: Thank you Jesus for your example of how to walk in the light. Help us to stay close to you so that we may be in step with your good and perfect will. Give us courage to use our beautiful feet to proclaim your goodness to others.

Inspired by a program given by ABW member, Myrna Till

Stepping in the Light

Words: Eliza E. Hewitt

Music: William J. Kirkpatrick

Trying to walk in the steps of the Savior,
Trying to follow our Savior and King;
Shaping our lives by His blessed example,
Happy, how happy, the songs that we bring.

Refrain:

*How beautiful to walk in the steps of the Savior,
Stepping in the light, stepping in the light,
How beautiful to walk in the steps of the Savior,
Led in paths of light.*

Pressing more closely to Him Who is leading,
When we are tempted to turn from the way;
Trusting the arm that is strong to defend us,
Happy, how happy, our praises each day.

Refrain

Walking in footsteps of gentle forbearance,
Footsteps of faithfulness, mercy, and love,
Looking to Him for the grace freely promised,
Happy, how happy, our journey above.

Refrain

Trying to walk in the steps of the Savior,
Upward, still upward, we follow our Guide;
When we shall see Him, "the King in His beauty,"
Happy, how happy, our place at His side.

Refrain

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<https://gardenofpraise.com/lyrics43.htm>