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Golden'eers

The goal for Golden'eers is an attempt to weave service, friendship, love, faith, hope and dreams to form treasures for each one to cherish. This ministry is for those in our churches who are 55 years and older. We try to help our Golden'eers see that it is important to look at Luke 2:52 and try to follow the example of Jesus. He grew in wisdom, stature and favor with God and man.

- Ways to grow in wisdom: Bible studies, seminars, workshops, etc.
- Ways to grow in stature: Exercise, diabetes classes, etc.
- Ways to grow in favor with God and man: Be involved with your local church and hopefully involved with Golden'eers.

Statistics help to put all of this into perspective.

- 34% of all Americans are 50 years of age or older.
- Every 7 seconds, another person turns 50!
- There are over 35 million Americans that are 65 and over (1 out of 8).
- In the United States alone, 2 million people celebrated their 65th birthday last year, almost 5,500 per day.

The growing number of senior adults is living longer than ever before. More than 200 Americans reach age 100 every week. American seniors now outnumber the entire population of Canada. The graying of the church can actually be a wonderful opportunity for the growing of the church in the 21st century.

As our seniors mature, they become even more unique and individualistic. And I think they contribute even more as they age. Our senior adults volunteer more than any other age segment. I believe this is because our senior adults today are more active, alert and energetic.

Instead of thinking of retirement as a slow-down time, we need to realize that retirement is the opportunity for people to devote time to learning, serving, planning and living more active and exciting lives than they have ever lived before. Please join us at Parchment Valley on May 1-3, 2017 for our next Golden'eers' conference.

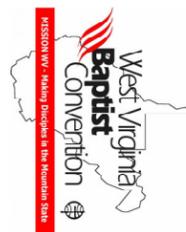
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if you do not want to receive this mailing or if there
is someone else in your church who would benefit
by receiving it.



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DISCIPLESHIP NOW!

West Virginia Baptist Convention

MARCH 2017

DISCIPLESHIP NOW is a
periodic resource
provided for local
churches from the office
of Discipleship
Ministries.

This issue:

- ◆ Children
- ◆ Parchment Valley
- ◆ Ministry Websites
- ◆ Devotional Resources
- ◆ Easter Readiness
- ◆ Golden'eers



There's an App for That!

The West Virginia Baptist
Convention app is available for
Android and Apple
products. Download yours today!

Find it on the Web @

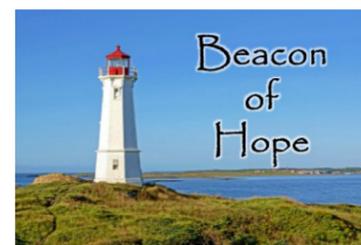
West Virginia Baptist Convention -
www.wvbc.org

American Baptist Churches USA -
www.abc-usa.org

www.internationalministries.org

American Baptist Home Mission
Society - www.abhms.org

www.judsonpress.com



Beacons of Hope and Bruce Springsteen

(Made you look!)

Yes, it's a crazy title, meant to get your attention. Hopefully you will stay with me for a few minutes.

Shortly after the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, Bruce Springsteen recorded a new CD titled, "The Rising." Sadly, he was inspired by the history changing events of 9/11 and several of the songs on the CD speak to the thoughts and feelings of people directly impacted as well as the many who watched in horror on television, read the news and listened to reports via radio or internet.

The lyrics of the song, "The Rising," suggest the feelings and thoughts of a firefighter who is on the scene at the World Trade Center. Springsteen paints a picture which is hard to look at. It is ugly, horrifying and dark. The lyrics tell a story of fear, ruin and loss of life. However, they also tell a story of bravery, unity, determination and hope. The singer invites the listener to "Come on up for the risin.' Come on up, lay your hand in mine."

We have chosen as our theme for the West Virginia Baptist Convention, Beacon of Hope. Being beacons of hope means:

- Being the persons who can and WILL tell both the stories of loss, fear, loneliness and rejection, AND tell the stories of reconciliation, courage, resolve, grace, forgiveness and love.
- Seeing a future because God is in the lead.
- Joining hands with other members of the community of faith to do more and be more together than we could ever be apart.
- Rising up, standing firm on God's Word (even when it is tough) and being the peculiar people of God.

Long before Springsteen, the apostle Paul shared these words: "Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer." (RSV Romans 12:11-12) or from The Message: "Don't burn out; keep yourselves fueled and aflame. Be alert servants of the Master, cheerfully expectant. Don't quit in hard times; pray all the harder."

This is a picture of a disciple.

Lisa G. Simmons
Director of Discipleship Ministries

Our mission is to empower local churches to be Christ honoring communities of faith, and to help them fulfill their mission by enabling them to do together what they cannot do alone.

Children's Ministry

Whether you're looking for resource providers, idea generators, organizational tools, or ways to keep current with media, our list has you covered.

1. allfreekidscrafts.com This site is a treasure trove of free craft ideas. With 24 different categories, you'll find the perfect craft to match any lesson. If you sign up for free, you'll get newsletters full of ideas. You'll also be able to save favorite crafts, add personal notes to crafts, and upload your own ideas.
2. babble.com This Disney-run website gives deep insight into what it's really like to parent in today's world. It's easier to minister to kids when we understand issues parents face, such as big things like depression and over-scheduled lives to small things like wondering what in the world to make for dinner tonight. The site includes insightful articles on parenting, pregnancy, entertainment and lifestyle topics.
3. basecamp.com This project-management platform lets you organize and keep track of every aspect of a project—from inception to execution. Rather than sending (and trying to keep track of) a bunch of communication streams, they're all in one place.
4. childrensministry.com You love the magazine. Right?! Well, our website is packed with even more practical advice, articles and help for children's ministers—all from the same trusted team who bring you the magazine. You'll find articles on games, Bible activities, teacher tips, leadership, free Sunday school lessons and info on our popular KidMin Conference. Come join the conversation
5. cmconnect.org With nearly 13,000 members, this massive community is full of people who are in your shoes. Go here to ask ministry-related questions, answer questions or browse past topics. You'll make connections with children's ministers near and far, which makes what we do everyday seem less isolated.
6. daniellesplace.com This site is full of Bible-based crafts, games, VBS-specific crafts and activities. You'll even find free lessons in Spanish.
7. family.disney.com You'll get loads of great crafts, ideas and activities here, but the real stars are the great recipes, including lots of allergy-friendly treats. Fun and yummy! What else would Disney deliver?
8. howstuffworks.com Have you ever wondered how political primaries work? Or what the difference is between an English, French and Japanese garden? Look here to find out. This site is chock full of useful knowledge of the basic workings of just about everything. Great info for yourself and for kids.
9. kidology.org Kidology is a nonprofit organization dedicated to resourcing children's ministers and to making their lives easier. You'll find a podcast, coaching, YouTube videos, a job center and a wide range of categories.
10. kidscreen.com This site is devoted to keeping you informed about the children's entertainment industry. You'll discover ways marketers are targeting kids, which studios are releasing kid-friendly flicks, and what technology will soon hit the market.
11. commonsensemedia.org No site is more useful for keeping informed about the media kids are consuming. With in-depth reviews of movies, TV shows, books and video games, you'll be on the cutting edge of kids' media consumption.
12. kidsundayschool.com With sections for both preschool and grade school, this site has downloadable Sunday School lessons, crafts, games, puzzles, skits, songs and more. You do have to purchase a membership—\$39 per year for an individual, or \$98 per year for a group.
13. ministry-to-children.com This free site lets you search for lessons based on activity, topic and season—and there are plenty of resources for you as a leader. The site typically posts 7-10 new articles and lesson plans each week, so check back often.
14. openresources.org All this site asks is that you use its materials in a non-commercial way to lead people to Jesus. The materials are high-quality sermon-series pieces, many of which come as complete packages, with artwork, graphics, videos, outlines and transcripts
15. relevantmagazine.com *Relevant* has been around for 13 years now, and it remains on the cutting edge of Christian culture—and the culture at large. News, reviews, interviews and challenging ways to look at our faith.
16. signupgenius.com Genius is just the right word to describe this terrific service. Just create a page where you want people to sign up—say a VBS or a Christmas outreach event. Invite your list, and they respond online, in one handy place. And the site even sends out reminders for you. It's free, but there are subscriptions if you need more advanced features.
17. skitguys.com The Skit Guys' unique brand of touching and hilarious skits hit the funny bone and the heart. You can search their videos by season, category or theme. And they have scripts, so you can perform your own skits and deliver the same heartfelt message.
18. ultimatecampresource.com If there's one thing camps know, it's games. And this site is a gold mine of game ideas. It even includes videos that show just how to play the games.
19. worshiphousekids.com This site features mini movies, worship tracks, countdowns, motion backgrounds, still backgrounds and more for your ministry. All resources are professionally produced and ready to use.
20. youtube.com/user/groupvbs We're sure you're already big fans of Group's VBS—and its awesome music. Did you know you can find over 300 videos on the YouTube channel? From decorating and recruiting ideas to commercials and music, go here for every video you're looking for.
21. YouTube: Saddleback Kids Worship songs, animated Bible passages, songs with motions and songs with accompanying lyrics are some of the over 200 videos on this YouTube channel.

(Excerpt from *Children's Ministry Magazine* May/June 2016)

Easter Readiness

For Lenten Observances

Lent, the 40-day period leading up to Easter Sunday, is a time of reflection and penance and represents the 40 days that Jesus spent alone in the wilderness before starting his ministry, a time in which Christians believe he survived various temptations by the devil. Here are some places to find resources to help with observance of the Lenten season:

Online

- www.pts.edu/Devotional03-01-17 - Online, audio and PDF resources for individual or group use
- ccca.biola.edu/lent - Online 40-day individual study. Includes music, art, scripture and devotional thoughts
- www.biblegateway.com - Click [Study](#) and [Reading Plans](#) for individuals
- <http://www.upperroom.org/> - Search: Lent. Many handouts, discussion questions and Lenten reading plans are available.

Great Reads for Lent:

[The Lenten Tree: Devotions for Children and Adults to Prepare for Christ's Death and His Resurrection](#) by Dean Lambert Smith, Abingdon Press. Includes devotions for both children and adults with a 40-day activity.

[God Is on the Cross: Reflections on Lent and Easter](#) by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Westminster John Knox Press

For Holy Week Observances

The week preceding Easter is called Holy Week and includes Maundy Thursday, which commemorates Jesus' last supper with his disciples; Good Friday, which honors the day of his crucifixion; and Holy Saturday, which focuses on the transition between the crucifixion and resurrection.

Try this:

[Holy Week in a Box](#) - camillelebronpowell.wordpress.com/2013/03/18/holy-week-box/ A wonderful way to tell the Easter story to children and then have an item to take home.

[Making Easter Flags](#) - www.buildfaith.org/making-easter-flags/

What a way to decorate your church, Sunday School room or bedroom! Should be done prior to Easter Sunday. Includes craft idea and lessons. Fun for children, youth and adults.

For Holy Week Tenebrae Service

Involve all generations in this simple, unique service. Can be adapted to work for any group.

www.buildfaith.org/holy-week-childrens-service-with-visual-props/

For Good Friday Service

Use the story [Ragman](#) by Walter Wangerin. The author reading the story can be found on Youtube as well as enactments of the story. Or have a storyteller from your church tell the story.



The Great Surprise – an Easter event for families

You'll be doing something special this Easter to connect with your community and celebrate the season...so do something that maximizes your impact and points kids to Jesus!

At The Great Surprise, you'll see parents actively engage with their children rather than sit on the sidelines of an Easter egg hunt. Thrill families as they discover in surprising ways — and maybe for the first time — that Jesus is alive!

Reach your church and community with this fun-filled event that focuses on Jesus

— and draws them back to your church.

Great for ANY SIZE church!

Leaders will LOVE The Great Surprise:

It's easy to plan

It's easy to get volunteers

And...it's easy to decorate!

Parchment Valley Conference Center



Ephesians 4:12 (NIV) *“To equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up”*

As Parchment Valley prepares for the hiring of summer staffing, we are encouraged through sharing what we do at work. Our mission statement is simply “where lives are changed.”

A young woman came to us from Cedar Lakes Conference Center and just wanted more hours. She works there and also for Parchment Valley, trying to make ends meet. She is a wonderful cook and a great housekeeper. She is polite, punctual and dresses neatly.

One day last week, she brought in a few wooden, hand carved items that her husband makes. The detailed work he puts into the bowls, acorns and Christmas ornaments that even light up seems to come to life through each different type of carved wood. The oak, cherry, poplar and walnut hand carved pieces are beautiful and uniquely made. Her husband is disabled from an accident. Teresa and I purchased some of the beautiful masterpieces and complimented her husband’s God given talent. The next day she brought in several crosses made from different types of wood and handed each staff person and our volunteers a wooden cross and a leather string to display them.

When I asked her how much for the crosses as I pulled out my wallet to pay her, she quickly replied, “Oh no! They are free. My husband won’t take money for the crosses.” Amen.

Since she came on board, we have received several other applications from her co-workers seeking to work at Parchment Valley. As a disciple of Christ (learner), I’m reminded of an elementary church song, “Red and yellow, black or white, we are precious in HIS sight...”

Mark 3:35 (KJV) *“For whosoever shall do the will of God, the same is my brother and my sister and mother.”*

*Frank R. Miller
Director of Operations*

Book Review

[Rest in the Storm, Self-Care Strategies for Clergy and Other Caregivers](#), by Kirk Byron Jones. I chose this book because I found it so helpful and practical for my life. I was recently introduced to this book through the Spiritual Formation Class of Palmer Seminary, taught by Dr. Michael A. Poke, Sr.

We all lead busy lives. We are busy with family, work and church. This book reminds us of the importance of putting God first and keeping Him in first place in our lives. Jones shares with his readers the tragic things that have happened to him and can happen to us when we try to do the work of the ministry in our own strength. Sometimes, we are so busy working for God, we forget that He is there to help us and has a better plan for us.

Jones gives us the warning signs that signal burnout and the results that can occur if we do not get a handle on the stress in our lives. This book is written with pastors in mind, but I think it would be helpful for lay people, Sunday School teachers and anyone who serves in ministry at any level. It would also be a good book for the people who serve on Pastoral Relations’ committees. It is important, even if we are not in full-time ministry, to understand the stress that is put on pastors and their families.

Deadlines come faster and faster. Many times, we just simply try to hold on until the stress and the storm is over. But Jones teaches us we can find peace during the storm. As Christians, our lives will be enhanced and we will have more energy to do what God has called us to do both in times of peace and when the storms arise. We will be able to recognize if we are doing too much, and how can we help someone who is on the verge of burnout. I highly recommend not only reading this book, but applying Jones’ teachings to your own life.

*Don Dague
Pastor, First Baptist Church of Weirton*

Bible Blast Games for Children’s Ministry

With these indoor, no-prop, no-prep, fun, faith-building games galore—kids will have a blast at your church and grow closer to God. Use these lively indoor games to keep the fun going and faith growing—without all the heavy lifting on your part. None of these games requires any prep or supplies. All you need is a Bible, and they’re sure to be a hit with your kids!

1. Crazy Cross

Use this game to remind kids that God will never abandon them.

Form four teams, and have each team stand at a different wall. Have one child (the “Freedom Giver”) stand in the center of the room. Explain when you say “Go,” you’ll begin counting to 15 and everyone will try to tag the opposite wall before you finish counting. (You may need to adjust the count based on the size of your room.)

If a child bumps or touches any other player when moving across the room, he or she must freeze and stay frozen until tagged by the Freedom Giver. He or she can yell to get the Freedom Giver’s attention, and freed players continue crossing.

Play several rounds, and have kids keep track of the number of rounds in which they’re able to cross within the time limit. If a child is still frozen at the end of a round, he or she can be unfrozen in the next round and can continue to the wall within the new round’s time limit.

Ask: **What was challenging about this game?**

How did it feel to be frozen? Freed?

Read aloud [2 Corinthians 4:8-9](#).

Ask: **How was this game like real life?**

What are things you can do when you bump into hard things in life?

Say: **There will always be trouble in life, but God is always with us. He is always there when we need Him.**

2. One Animal, Many Parts

Use this game to show kids the purpose of working together.

Form equal-size teams. Say: **In this game, I’ll name an animal and you’ll work with your group to form that animal, each person taking on different body parts. As soon as your group has completely formed the animal, you’ll all make that animal’s sound.**

Begin play and call out “duck” for the first round. Repeat several times, calling out a different animal each time. At the end of each round, observe the animals each group made, pointing out the animal’s body parts you can identify.

Ask: **What were positive things about your team in this game?**

What were some things your team struggled with?

What do you think it takes to make a strong body?

Read aloud [1 Corinthians 12:14-20](#) and then invite kids to talk about roles they can play in Jesus’ family.

Say: **We all work together as important parts of Jesus’ family.**

3. Fish Frenzy

Use this game to help kids know that we need Jesus’ power to make us strong.

Explain that in this version of Tag, the person who is “It” is called the “Fisherman” and the other players are called the “Fish.” When the Fisherman tags a Fish, the Fish joins the Fisherman by standing behind the Fisherman and holding on to the Fisherman’s shoulders (or any Fish behind the Fisherman). The Fisherman tries to catch all the Fish in the room by the time you count to 60. Play several rounds, each time switching who is the Fisherman.

Ask: **What was your reaction when I said the Fisherman’s goal was to catch all the Fish in the room?**

Read [Luke 5:1-5](#).

Ask: **When are times you can relate to Simon?**

Read [Luke 5:6-11](#).

Say: **We can’t do things in our own power, but we can do amazing things with Jesus’ help. When we’re following Jesus, he does the amazing work and all we have to do is stay close to Him.**

Ask: **What are some of your struggles as you follow Jesus?**

How does Jesus strengthen you as you follow Him?

4. Shoe Store

Use this game to discuss sharing our faith.

Say: **For this game, we’ll pretend we’re in a shoe store.**

Have all the kids put one of their shoes in the center of the room and line up along one wall with their other shoe in hand. Choose a “Shoe Salesperson.” Mix up the shoes in middle.

Say: **The Shoe Salesperson will choose a shoe from the pile, and if it’s your shoe’s match, run for the opposite wall with your shoe in hand.**

Explain the runner will try to tag the opposite wall before being tagged by the Shoe Salesperson. If the runner is tagged, the Shoe Salesperson will invite the tagged person to join the shoe store. He or she can choose whether or not to join. If the runner isn’t tagged or decides not to join the store, the runner returns to the original wall with his or her one shoe and the matching shoe goes back into the pile. Anyone who joins the store can help tag shoe owners. Keep the game moving quickly and have kids play for about 10 minutes.

Ask: **Think about how we might try to tell others about Jesus. How was this game like or unlike your experience with that?**

Read aloud [Matthew 4:18-22](#).

Say: **In these verses, everyone dropped what they were doing and joined Jesus. But that doesn’t mean all people are ready to drop what they’re doing immediately to follow Jesus.** (If time allows, you can talk about other examples from the Bible, such as Saul’s conversion in Acts 9.) **Sometimes it takes time and that’s okay. Jesus gives us a choice.**

Ask: **What are ways you can lovingly tell others about Jesus and wait for Jesus to bring them to Him?**

(Taken from *Children’s Ministry Magazine*, November-December 2016)



Idea Bank

Topical Resources for Discipleship
Topic: Beacon of Hope



Definitions of Beacon: 1. A light or other visible object serving as a signal, warning or guide especially at sea or on an airfield. 2. A signal fire commonly on a hill, tower or pole. 3. A lighthouse or other signal for guidance. 4. A radio transmitter emitting signals to guide aircraft. 5. A device that broadcasts signals that can be heard by smart devices nearby. 6. A source of light or inspiration.

Stories about Beacons and Lighthouses

I'm a Battleship

In *U.S. Naval Institute Proceedings*, the magazine of the Naval Institute, Frank Koch illustrates the importance of obeying the Laws of the Lighthouse.

Two battleships assigned to the training squadron had been at sea on maneuvers in heavy weather for several days. I was serving on the lead battleship and was on watch on the bridge as night fell. The visibility was poor with patchy fog, so the captain remained on the bridge keeping an eye on all activities.

Shortly after dark, the lookout on the wing reported, "Light, bearing on the starboard bow."

"Is it steady or moving astern?" the captain called out.

The lookout replied, "Steady, Captain," which meant we were on a dangerous collision course with that ship.

The captain then called to the signalman, "Signal that ship: 'We are on a collision course, advise you change course twenty degrees.'"

Back came the signal, "Advisable for you to change course twenty degrees."

The captain said, "Send: 'I'm a captain, change course twenty degrees.'"

"I'm a seaman second-class," came the reply. "You had better change course twenty degrees."

By that time the captain was furious. He spat out, "Send: 'I'm a battleship. Change course twenty degrees.'"

Back came the flashing light, "I'm a lighthouse." We changed course.

Max Lucado, *In the Eye of the Storm*, Word Publishing, 1991, Page 153.

Upper and Lower Lights

The old mariners used systems to guide them as they sailed on the oceans of the world. Anciently, there were only what they called the "Upper Lights," which were the stars, moon and the sun. They believed that God provided these "Upper Lights" especially for this purpose, especially Polaris or the "North Star."

These "Upper Lights" were fine for mid-ocean direction finding, but as the wooden ships approached the shore, they had no directors to bring them safely into harbor. Usually they just looked for the lights from towns and farms near the shore to tell them where they were.

Lighthouses were constructed to beam lights out into the ocean to warn the mariners of obstacles and other dangers on shore, which if unknown would bring disaster to the ship, crew and cargo. Many times these lighthouses were at the entrances to safe harbors. The captains or pilots of the ship would search intently for these beams of light, knowing if followed they would provide safe entry.

Eventually, these lights were called the "Lower Lights" as opposed to the "Upper Lights" which God controls. The light sources were usually quite small as compared to our lighthouses of today, but using focusing lenses concentrated the light beam so that it was seen from some distance.

During storms, it was imperative the captain or the pilot saw those beams to insure safe passage to harbor.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=qjBhrJYWFEo



Meaningful Music

"Let the Lower Lights Be Burning" is a well-known hymn. But many don't know its origin. When understood, this story takes on a much more profound meaning. Philip Paul Bliss was directing the singing for a series of services being conducted by the well-known preacher Dwight L. Moody. As he closed his message, Moody told the story of a captain who was attempting to bring his boat to the Cleveland harbor one very dark and stormy night.

The waves rolled like mountains, Moody said, and not a star was to be seen in the clouded sky. He pictured the boat rocking on the violent waves as the captain peered through the darkness for the sight of a signal light by means of which to guide his vessel to safety. When he finally spotted a single light from the light-house, he turned to the pilot and asked:

"Are you sure this is Cleveland harbor?"

"Quite sure, sir," the pilot replied.

"Then where are the lower lights?" the captain continued.

"Gone out, sir," the other man answered.

"Can you make the harbor?" the captain asked anxiously.

"We must, or perish, sir," the pilot replied.

But despite his strong heart and brave hand, in the darkness he missed the channel. With a resounding crash the boat piled up on the rocks and then settled slowly to a watery grave.

As the congregation listened intently, Moody concluded with this admonition to the Christians:

"Brethren, the Master will take care of the great light-house; let us keep the lower lights burning."

That was all Bliss needed to pen one of his most popular hymns, "Let the Lower Lights Be Burning."



"Let the Lower Lights Be Burning"

Brightly beams our Father's mercy

From his lighthouse evermore,

But to us he gives the keeping

Of the lights along the shore.

Let the lower lights be burning;

Send a gleam across the wave.

Some poor fainting, struggling seaman

You may rescue, you may save.

Dark the night of sin has settled;

Loud the angry billows roar.

Eager eyes are watching, longing,

For the lights along the shore.

Let the lower lights be burning;

Send a gleam across the wave.

Some poor fainting, struggling seaman

You may rescue, you may save.

Trim your feeble lamp, my brother;

Some poor sailor, tempest-tossed,

Trying now to make the harbor,

In the darkness may be lost.

Let the lower lights be burning;

Send a gleam across the wave.

Some poor fainting, struggling seaman

You may rescue, you may save.

Try a new song – "We Are"

Contemporary Christian singer/songwriter Kari Jobe has penned a song titled "We Are." Suitable for congregational singing and can be found on www.Youtube.com. Sheet music for vocal and piano at www.JWPepper.com, chords, lead sheets, choir parts at www.praisecharts.com.

Online resources

Parable of the Lighthouse – at Parable of the Lighthouse.wmv on Youtube

Parable of the Life-saving Station –<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qjBhrJYWFEo>

Lighthouse Sermon Illustration, by Adam Dorband - www.youtube.com/watch?v=5vhhOm1KogE