

Third Sunday after Epiphany
For Groups Meeting from January 17 through January 23

OUR MISSION: As a missional congregation we *celebrate* Christ's presence, *invite* people into a growing relationship with Jesus, and *equip* them to *serve* in a broken world.

Prayer of the Day: Almighty God, by grace alone you call us and accept us in your service. Strengthen us by your Spirit, and make us worthy of your call, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.

BIBLICAL EQUIPPING TOGETHER

Share: How did last week's scripture (John 1:43-51) work in your life this week?

Mission:

- What was most satisfying about your ministry last week?
- Where do you see God at work?
- How did you participate in God's missional activity?
- How did inviting go last Saturday and Sunday? – How has 'inviting' changed in this time of social distancing? Do you know how to forward the YouTube worship video to share with others?
- *How many new people did you talk to?*

Hear: Mark 1:14-20

Explore Questions: (Use these or develop your own.)

1. What context does Mark provide for this call story of the disciples? What kind of atmosphere was Jesus facing as he began his ministry?
2. Why do you think Jesus called ordinary people like fishermen to be his first disciples and friends?
3. What do we learn about the cost of discipleship, or following Jesus, in this passage?

Connect Questions: (Use these or develop your own.)

1. How do you think about discipleship in 2021? What does "following Jesus, fishing for people" mean, look like, or entail? What is the cost?
2. How do we establish or differentiate ourselves as specifically ELCA Lutheran followers of Jesus?
3. What are the gifts of discipleship? How can we share some of the gifts of our faith in every day life like hope and grace in these days of the pandemic? Try listening to the song, "The Summons" or "Will You Come and Follow Me" for a pretty song about discipleship.

Prepare: Memorize this verse: "Come, follow me, Jesus said, and I will send you out to fish for people.." (Mark 1:17) How do you hear God calling you?

BIBLICAL EQUIPPING APART:

Obey: During this week follow through on your intentions.

Meditate: Meditate on Psalm 62:5-12. How does this speak into your life?

Reflect: What have I learned in my week of living with this text? What can I share with my group when we next meet?

Notes for ChristCare leaders:

Jesus' ministry began in a time of great political turmoil and unrest. The Jewish people were unhappy and occupied by the Romans. It was a dangerous time to be speaking out. Jesus' cousin, John the Baptist, had just been arrested and eventually executed, for speaking against the sins of Herod. Jesus faced great odds, yet he carried on with his life changing mission. He set an example for his disciples to continue the mission of love in the face of resistance, to stand up to injustice, and to share peace, healing, and love in the face of hate. He called his disciples and all his followers to do the same and follow in his way. It is critical for us in 2021 to model the loving and gracious Lord that we follow. We are setting an example of what disciples of Jesus look like for the world. So it is good for us to study scripture and know what Jesus taught and expected! What a gift that we can read God's word together and determine how we will be and live in challenging times as we attempt to walk in the way of Jesus.

Thanks be to God,

Pastor Andrea

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Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
As we forgive those
Who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
And deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
And the glory are yours,
Now and forever. Amen

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
Born of the virgin Mary,
Suffered under Pontius Pilate,
Was crucified died and was buried;
He descended to the dead,
On the third day he rose again;
He ascended into heaven,
He is seated at the right hand of the Father,
He will come to judge the living and the
dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
The holy catholic church,
The communion of saints,
The forgiveness of sins,
The resurrection of the body,
And the life everlasting. Amen.