



OUR LIFE TOGETHER IN LEARNING TO FOLLOW JESUS

LENT 2019

Gathering Overview

Gathering	Gather as a group, check in with one another about your week or take time to get to know one another and grow as a group.	3 minutes
Opening Prayer	Open the session in prayer using the provided prayer or one of your own.	1 minute
Scripture Meditation	Read and reflect on the passage. Passages are printed in this booklet from the NRSV (New Revised Standard Version). One suggestion is to have one person read the passage slowly and clearly; have the group listen and think of a word or phrase that stands out; go around the room and share just that word or phrase; have another person read the passage a second time; go around the room and share in a few words why the word or how the passage connects with your life today.	15 minutes (time to read the passage and each person share 1 minute)
Teaching	Go over the topic for the day, read the short devotional teaching to open discussion.	10 minutes
Discussion	Spend time discussing the topic of the day, refer to the discussion questions as a conversation starter.	20 minutes
Reflection	Have each person share a quick take-away from today's gathering for the coming week.	5 minutes (30 seconds per person)
Closing Prayer	Share any prayer concerns and close in prayer using the provided prayer or one of your own.	6 minutes
Total		1 hour

Note: Each week has additional pages for personal reflections and notes for use throughout the week.

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Welcome to a Holy Lent

“I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to the observance of a holy Lent, by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting, and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God's holy Word.” (Book of Common Prayer, 265)

As part of the observance of a holy Lent this year, Christ Church welcomes you into this small group: Walking with God - our life together in learning to follow Jesus. This short series, grounded in Scripture, discussion, and prayer, is a building block in our strong foundation, as together we explore what it means to follow God and deepen relationships with our neighbors.

Over the next five weeks, you will gather with trusted individuals, and hopefully soon-to-be friends, to reflect, discuss, and be attentive to God's love and guidance. It will be an intentional time to explore life together as followers of Christ, and to grow as individual learners and disciples. Specifically, this series will explore how to be more attentive to God's presence in our lives and the world around us, how to walk in step with God in a healthy rhythm of life, how to develop deeper and more balanced relationships, how to walk in the rhythm of discipleship, and how God ultimately then leads us into action.

Our prayer is that this series and the conversations that arise, may invite you deeper in your relationship with Christ. May this be a fruitful time of growing, not only as we continue to learn to follow Jesus, but as we share this life together in community with fellow disciples of Christ.

Small Group Recommended Guidelines

As followers of Christ, these small group gatherings will be a time for journeying and growing in community through Scripture reading, reflection, discussion, and prayer. It is our hope that this group may be a place for deep, spiritual conversations with one another. Over these five weeks, you are committing to gather with your group as a priority (barring extenuating circumstances). These gatherings are welcoming, hospitable spaces encouraging sharing and open discussions. Below are a few recommendations for groups:

- ❖ During the hour gathering, be fully present with your group. Bring your entire self and welcome your fellow group members. We all learn and grow most effectively when we practice radical hospitality and set aside distractions.
- ❖ Listen deeply to your group members. Support one another as you reflect and discuss. Help maintain a safe space for sharing by refraining from judgment, analysis, giving advice, or trying to “fix” what another group member shares. Avoid side conversations and interrupting another group member.
- ❖ Share only as you feel comfortable. All are invited and given equal opportunity for sharing. Speak for yourself and share your personal thoughts or experiences, rather than generalized statements, to encourage others in the group to speak their voice.
- ❖ Respect silence. If there are moments of silence after someone has shared or spoken, this may be an opportunity for further reflection and honoring what was spoken. Silence is a rare gift in our culture; it need not always be filled with words.
- ❖ As a welcome and safe space to reflect and discuss, all questions are invited, as the goal is to grow, learn, and explore.
- ❖ Maintain confidentiality. Feel free to discuss your own learnings, growth, and reflections outside the group; however, hold as sacred and confidential anything shared by other group members.

Week 1: Attentiveness

Learning to be attentive to God's presence in every moment of our lives and the world around us.

Opening Prayer:

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so control our wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated unto you; and then use us, we pray, as you will, and always to your glory and the welfare of your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

(Prayer of Self Dedication, *Book of Common Prayer*, 832)

Scripture Meditation: Acts 17:15-34

Those who conducted Paul brought him as far as Athens; and after receiving instructions to have Silas and Timothy join him as soon as possible, they left him. While Paul was waiting for them in Athens, he was deeply distressed to see that the city was full of idols. So he argued in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and also in the marketplace every day with those who happened to be there. Also some Epicurean and Stoic philosophers debated with him. Some said, "What does this babblers want to say?" Others said, "He seems to be a proclaimer of foreign divinities." (This was because he was telling the good news about Jesus and the resurrection.) So they took him and brought him to the Areopagus and asked him, "May we know what this new teaching is that you are presenting? It sounds rather strange to us, so we would like to know what it means." Now all the Athenians and the foreigners living there would spend their time in nothing but telling or hearing something new.

Then Paul stood in front of the Areopagus and said, "Athenians, I see how extremely religious you are in every way. For as I went through the city and looked carefully at the objects of your worship, I found among them an altar with the inscription, 'To an unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in shrines made by human hands, nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things. From one ancestor he made all nations to inhabit the whole earth, and he allotted the times of their existence and the boundaries of the places where they would live, so that they would search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him—though indeed he is not far from each one of us. For 'In him we live and move and have our being'; as even some of your own poets have said,

‘For we too are his offspring.’ Since we are God’s offspring, we ought not to think that the deity is like gold, or silver, or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of mortals. While God has overlooked the times of human ignorance, now he commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has fixed a day on which he will have the world judged in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed, and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead.”

When they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some scoffed; but others said, “We will hear you again about this.” At that point Paul left them. But some of them joined him and became believers, including Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris, and others with them.

Teaching:

During these small groups, we enter a time to pause and reflect with trusted individuals on where we see God’s presence – both in our lives and the world around us. It is a time of growing as followers of Christ and learning in our relationship with God – of listening carefully for his voice, recognizing the ways he leads and guides us, and feeling his gaze of love and mercy. This process is one of growing as disciples. We are growing as learners who have listened and responded to Christ’s call to “Follow me.” One way to grow is to learn from Scripture, such as from Paul, the ways to be attentive to God and walk closely with God.

In Paul’s address to the Athenians, he preaches the Good News of Christ. Paul is attentive to the ways God’s kingdom breaks in around them and shares the ways he has been attentive to who God is: “The God who made the world and everything in it, he who is Lord of heaven and earth, ... he himself gives to all mortals life and breath and all things” (Acts 17:24-25). Indeed, throughout history, our ancestors and us today “search for God and perhaps grope for him and find him – though indeed he is not far from each one of us” (Acts 17:27). As followers of Christ, and more than that, as God’s own offspring, we learn to be attentive to God’s presence in our own lives and the ways we “live and move and have our being” by learning to walk with God.

In learning to walk with God, we begin to observe how God continually breaks in and speaks to us. We may think of specific experiences of being with God, for example, in prayer, worship, community fellowship, engaging in service and God’s mission. In these experiences, we can notice what God says about himself, or about us, and what God challenges us to do as we walk with him.

Discussion Questions:

- ❖ When reflecting on our ability to be attentive to God's presence in our lives, it is helpful to recall the beginning of the Letter to the Hebrews: God breaks in and speaks to us "in many and various ways" (Hebrews 1:1). What are ways that you have encountered God's presence?
- ❖ What are ways that you feel God speaking to you or nudging you in this current season of life?
- ❖ Sometimes we tend to be more attentive to God in times of great crisis. What are some ways that you can be attentive to God in the ordinary moments of your life?
- ❖ Attentiveness involves paying close attention, opening our eyes to God's presence around us. What activities could you engage in to reflect on God's creation and how we are all maintained by God (e.g. attentiveness walk, spending time looking at nature and reflecting on God's presence, Contemplative prayer, etc.)?

Closing Prayer:

O heavenly Father, who has filled the world with beauty: Open our eyes to behold your gracious hand in all your works; that, rejoicing in your whole creation, we may learn to serve you with gladness; for the sake of him through whom all things were made, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(For Joy in God's Creation, *Book of Common Prayer*, 814).

Personal Reflections:

This page, found at the end of each week, is designed for you to record your thoughts during the gathering or throughout the week. One or more quotes from poetry, literature, and other texts are provided for further reflection.

Connection to Literature:

Some time when the river is ice ask me
mistakes I have made. Ask me whether
what I have don is my life. Others
have come in their slow way into
my thought, and some have tried to help
or to hurt: ask me what difference
their strongest love or hate has made.
I will listen to what you say.

You and I can turn and look
at the silent river and wait. We know
the current is there, hidden; and there
are comings and goings from miles away
that hold the stillness exactly before us.
What the river says, that is what I say.

William Stafford, "Ask Me"

Notes:

Week 2: Rhythm

Learning to walk in step with God and develop a healthy rhythm of life.

Opening Prayer:

Heavenly Father, in you we live and move and have our being: We humbly pray you so to guide and govern us by your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our life we may not forget you, but may remember that we are ever walking in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Collect for Guidance, *Book of Common Prayer*, 100)

Scripture Meditation: Matthew 11:28-29

“Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls.”

Teaching:

In our daily lives we encounter a culture that drives us to work more, to do more, to always be moving. At times, we tend to define ourselves by our ability to be productive and stay busy. In these moments, it is vital to remember that God already identifies who we are – deeply loved as God’s beloved child. Recalling our identity draws us back to Genesis 2:2-3, where we find that God created us, and both blessed and hallowed our first full day as a day of rest. Our Christian life involves developing a healthy rhythm, a proper balance of resting in God and allowing our work to emerge from that rest. As we reflect on how we grow as disciples of Christ, we learn to walk in step with God to develop a rhythm of life – a balance of work and rest, and a pattern of being yoked to Christ.

In the passage from Matthew, Jesus uses the image of the yoke – a large wooden beam that would keep two animals together (such as oxen) for plowing. The beam rests upon the shoulders as a way of sharing the burden and allowing a more experienced animal to guide the other in the pattern of work. When both animals work in tandem, the work is less of a burden. In Jesus’ use of the image of the yoke, he is providing an invitation to be inseparably linked to Him. Jesus bears the weight and directs our path. There is a freedom and rest that comes from releasing our burden of sin, guilt, and shame, of the weight of the circumstances in our life, and of the weight of trying to carry it by ourselves. The invitation to lay down our burdens and be yoked to Christ is one of abiding in Christ, finding rest, and learning a rhythm – a rhythm of walking in step with Christ – that brings fullness of life.

Discussion Questions:

- ❖ What challenges do you find in balancing work and rest?
- ❖ What challenges do you experience in finding times to release your burdens and walk in step with Christ?
- ❖ Where do you experience restoration? Where do you experience a deep sense of being fed from walking in step with Christ?
- ❖ Where in your life do you feel God calling you to lay down your heavy burdens and be yoked to Christ?
- ❖ What might a healthier daily rhythm of life look like for you as one yoked to Christ? How can you incorporate this form of rest in the coming weeks?

Closing Prayer:

Direct us, O Lord, in all our doings with thy most gracious favor, and further us with thy continual help; that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in thee, we may glorify thy holy Name, and finally, by thy mercy, obtain everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(For Guidance, *Book of Common Prayer*, 832)

Personal Reflections:

Connection to Literature:

“The Sabbath is a reminder of the two worlds—this world and the world to come; it is an example of both worlds. For the Sabbath is joy, holiness, and rest; joy is part of this world; holiness and rest are something of the world to come.”

“The meaning of the Sabbath is to celebrate time rather than space. Six days a week we live under the tyranny of things of space; on the Sabbath we try to become attuned to holiness in time. It is a day on which we are called upon to share in what is eternal in time, to turn from the results of creation to the mystery of creation; from the world of creation to the creation of the world.”

Abraham Joshua Heschel – *The Sabbath*

Notes:

Week 3: Relationships

Learning to develop deeper and balanced relationships “up” with God, “in” with our community, and “out” with the world.

Opening Prayer:

Almighty God, you have so linked our lives one with another that all we do affects, for good or ill, all other lives: So guide us in the work we do, that we may do it not for self alone, but for the common good; and, as we seek a proper return for our own labor, make us mindful of the rightful aspirations of other workers, and arouse our concern for those who are out of work; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

(Various Occasions 25: For Labor Day, *Book of Common Prayer*, 261)

Scripture Meditation: Luke 6:12-19

Now during those days he went out to the mountain to pray; and he spent the night in prayer to God. And when day came, he called his disciples and chose twelve of them, whom he also named apostles: Simon, whom he named Peter, and his brother Andrew, and James, and John, and Philip, and Bartholomew, and Matthew, and Thomas, and James son of Alphaeus, and Simon, who was called the Zealot, and Judas son of James, and Judas Iscariot, who became a traitor.

He came down with them and stood on a level place, with a great crowd of his disciples and a great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. They had come to hear him and to be healed of their diseases; and those who were troubled with unclean spirits were cured. And all in the crowd were trying to touch him, for power came out from him and healed all of them.

Teaching:

As disciples, we are not only followers of Jesus, but we are learners. We learn the sound of his voice in our walk of life and we learn to follow in his footsteps. This process of learning began with baptism and continues throughout our Christian life as we grow into the full stature of Christ. It is a process in which we are molded into individuals with unique gifts that we may then use in blessing others. Yet, in this process of developing, we also find the life-giving ways of patterning our lives after Jesus' life.

Jesus lived a life with three dimensions of relationships: an upward relationship with his Father in heaven, close inward relationship with his followers, and an outward relationship to the hurting world around. We see the three dimensions of relationship modeled by Jesus in our passage from Luke. First, he spends time in prayer with his Father. It is a time of deepening relationship and prepares him for his mission. Second, he calls and chooses twelve as his disciples and apostles. Throughout Jesus' ministry, we see Jesus shepherd and lead his disciples who follow him. Third, at the end of the passage, Jesus and his disciples encounter a larger crowd and great multitude of people from all Judea, Jerusalem, and the coast of Tyre and Sidon. Jesus goes out into the countryside/plain to encounter and tend to the crowds through teaching and healing.

In our world, as we continue to grow into the full stature of Christ, we develop and strengthen relationships in three areas: up with God through prayer, reading and studying Scripture, partaking in the sacraments of the church, and worship. We also have relationships with an inward group of people that we consider friends, who help remind us of our identity and belovedness, and whom we share life and serve together. Finally, we have outward relationships with individuals in the community and world.

Discussion Questions:

- ❖ Within your “up” relationship (with God), what are some aspects of fruitfulness and life you have experienced recently (e.g., in prayer, spending time with God, abiding with Christ, experiencing peace, worshipping, walking in step with Christ, etc.)?
- ❖ Within your “in” relationships (with close friends, family, Christ Church, etc.), what are some aspects of fruitfulness and life you have experienced recently (e.g., loving the people in your community, trusting, caring for others, resolving conflict, maintaining healthy boundaries, etc.)?
- ❖ Within your “out” relationships (with the broader community), what are some aspects of fruitfulness and life you have experienced recently (e.g., seeing Christ in another, participating in mission and service, preaching the Gospel through deeds and words, spending time with those in need, proper stewardship of resources, practicing radical hospitality, etc.)?
- ❖ Of the three relationships – “up” with God, “in” with family, friends, and the Christ Church community, and “out” with those in the community – which do you see as needing the greatest level of attention and growth in your life? Very few individuals have a perfect balance; thus, it is useful to regularly reflect on our relationships.

Closing Prayer:

O God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, our only Savior, the Prince of Peace: Give us grace seriously to lay to heart the great dangers we are in by our unhappy divisions; take away all hatred and prejudice, and whatever else may hinder us from godly union and concord; that, as there is but one Body and one Spirit, one hope of our calling, one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism, one God and Father of us all, so we may be all of one heart and of one soul, united in one holy bond of truth and peace, of faith and charity, and may with one mind and one mouth glorify thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(For the Unity of the Church, *Book of Common Prayer*, 818)

Personal Reflections:

Connection to Literature:

Intimacy with God and solidarity with all people are two aspects of the indwelling presence of God. These two realities can never be separated. They come together in the physical place called the human body and are realized in community.

Henri Nouwen – *Spiritual Formation*

If we take seriously the idea that God is faithful and doesn't change, we need to think of him speaking over and over again the same Word to us – our true name, our real identity – and making us be, over and over again, in that speech of his, in his Word.

Rowan Williams – *A Ray of Darkness*

Special acknowledgement and gratitude to Mike Breen for shaping thinking about relationships in three dimensions: up, in, and out.

Notes:

Week 4: Leadership

Learning the rhythm of following the Good Shepherd and being sent out as servant leaders to form disciples.

Opening Prayer:

O God, whose Son Jesus is the good shepherd of your people; Grant that when we hear his voice we may know him who calls us each by name, and follow where he leads; who, with you and the Holy Spirit, lives and reigns, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

(Fourth Sunday of Easter, *Book of Common Prayer*, 225)

Scripture Meditations: John 10:10-18

“The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. The hired hand, who is not the shepherd and does not own the sheep, sees the wolf coming and leaves the sheep and runs away—and the wolf snatches them and scatters them. The hired hand runs away because a hired hand does not care for the sheep. I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, just as the Father knows me and I know the Father. And I lay down my life for the sheep. I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd. For this reason the Father loves me, because I lay down my life in order to take it up again. No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. I have received this command from my Father.”

Matthew 28:18-20

And Jesus came and said to them, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”

Teaching:

In the parable of the Good Shepherd, Jesus lays down two models of leadership. First, that of the hired hand, who does not personally care for the sheep. Selfish and motivated by his income, the hired hand runs away at the first signs of trouble. Conversely, the Good Shepherd owns the sheep. They are his and he knows them by name. He loves them and is willing to die for them. “The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep,” so that they may have abundant life.

Colin Powell, former Secretary State and four star general, once said, “The most important thing I learned is that soldiers watch what their leaders do. You can give them classes and lecture them forever, but it is your personal example they will follow.”

Jesus did not tell his disciples how to be leaders in the Kingdom of God: he showed them. Occasionally he told a parable or taught his disciples that the first shall be last, but the earliest church leaders, the disciples, watched what Jesus did. They watched how the Good Shepherd led by example.

And what did they see? They saw Jesus talk to the outsiders and love the lowly. They saw him spend time with the elderly, children, women, Samaritans, tax collectors, and the sick. They saw him speak to crowds and take time to pray. They saw him wash their feet and comfort the broken. And they saw him die on a cross. That is the type of leader that they followed, the type of leader that they strived to become, and the type of leader that they tried to lift up within their new churches.

What kind of leader will you be?

Discussion Questions:

- ❖ Describe someone who has been a strong leader in your life. What qualities did he/she have that made you want to follow?
- ❖ What qualities of Jesus should we look for in a leader?
- ❖ How do these characteristics differ from what ‘the world’ looks for in a leader?
- ❖ Jesus commands us to go out and make disciples. What can we do to lift up the future leaders of the church?

Closing Prayer:

Almighty God our heavenly Father, you declare your glory and show forth your handiwork in the heavens and in the earth: Deliver us in our various occupations from the service of self alone, that we may do the work you give us to do in truth and beauty and for the common good; for the sake of him who came among us as one who serves, your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

(Various Occasions 24: For Vocation in Daily Work, *Book of Common Prayer*, 261)

Personal Reflections:

Connection to Literature:

“Leadership is very much like the Christian life itself, where only by losing our lives through the love of Christ and our neighbor do we truly find them. The satisfaction, joy, and high esteem that leaders experience are always bound up in the good of those they serve.”

Christopher A. Beeley – *Leading God’s People*

The footprint of [the Christian leader’s] good living should be the path others follow rather than the sound of his voice showing them where to go.”

Gregory the Great, 6th century Pope

Notes:

Week 5: Mission

Learning how we as disciples who walk with God are led into action to participate in God's transforming work in the world.

Opening Prayer:

Lord Jesus Christ, you stretched out your arms of love on the hard wood of the cross that everyone might come within the reach of your saving embrace: So clothe us in your Spirit that we, reaching forth our hands in love, may bring those who do not know you to the knowledge and love of you; for the honor of your Name. Amen.

(Third Prayer for Mission, *Book of Common Prayer*, 101).

Scripture Meditation: John 21:15-19

When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my lambs." A second time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He said to him, "Yes, Lord; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Tend my sheep." He said to him the third time, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, "Do you love me?" And he said to him, "Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you." Jesus said to him, "Feed my sheep. Very truly, I tell you, when you were younger, you used to fasten your own belt and to go wherever you wished. But when you grow old, you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will fasten a belt around you and take you where you do not wish to go." (He said this to indicate the kind of death by which he would glorify God.) After this he said to him, "Follow me." And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

Teaching:

Author and speaker Reggie McNeal likes to say, “The Church does not have a mission, God’s mission has a Church.” The Church is the community of believers, the Body of Christ. The Church is people. God has a mission: to reconcile all things and heal this broken world. And God has invited the Church, the people, to join Him in this mission.

Peter is heartbroken. He had just seen his Lord die on a cross. He had seen Jesus suffer. He had denied Jesus three times while he was on trial. And Peter must have been afraid that the same people who killed Jesus would come after him next. In the midst of that fear, anguish, and guilt, the Resurrected Jesus appears and asks him a simple question: “Do you love me?” When Peter rushes to say “Yes,” Jesus focuses that “yes” into mission: “Then feed my sheep.” The Good Shepherd asks Peter to care for his sheep; he invites Peter to join him in transforming this world into the Kingdom of God by loving each of the children of God.

Over the last 2000 years, Jesus has continued to invite broken, scared people to the same mission. Every missionary; every martyr; every famous saint from Teresa to Martin Luther King Jr.; every kindergarten teacher who loves her kids because they are loved by God. Every military chaplain who has prayed over a dying soldier; every priest, bishop, deacon, and lay-reader; every Sunday School teacher and altar guild member. Every follower of Jesus has been asked the same question: “Do you love me?” and given the same mission: “Then feed my sheep.”

At the end of every Eucharist, one of the clergy says the dismissal. There are four options in the Book of Common Prayer, and all of them include an action verb.

- ❖ Let us **go** forth in the name of Christ.
- ❖ **Go** in peace to **love** and **serve** the Lord.
- ❖ Let us **go** forth into the world, **rejoicing** in the power of the Spirit.
- ❖ Let us **ble**ss the Lord.

Being fed by the love of Jesus at the altar, we are sent out to join in God’s mission to heal a broken world. Thanks be to God.

Discussion Questions:

- ❖ What are some examples of God's mission? What is God trying to do?
- ❖ What is an example that you have seen of someone "feeding Jesus' sheep"?
- ❖ How does evangelism (drawing people to follow Jesus) fit within God's mission? What type of evangelism are we called to do?
- ❖ If a sacrament is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, how is mission sacramental? (Hint: What is the visible part, and what is the spiritual part?)
- ❖ Reread the last sentence from today's Scripture meditation. What is the promise? What is the comfort? How is this connected to mission?

Closing Prayer:

Give us grace, O Lord, to answer readily the call of our Savior Jesus Christ and proclaim to all people the Good News of his salvation, that we and the whole world may perceive the glory of his marvelous works; who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

(Third Sunday after the Epiphany, *Book of Common Prayer*, 215)

Personal Reflections:

Connection to Literature:

“[The Mission of the Church] is the proclamation of the kingdom, the presence of the kingdom, and the provenience of the kingdom. By proclaiming the reign of God over all things the church acts out its faith that the Father of Jesus is indeed ruler of all. The church, by inviting all humankind to share in the mystery of the presence of the kingdom hidden in its life through its union with the crucified and risen life of Jesus, acts out the love of Jesus that took him to the cross. By obediently following where the Spirit leads, often in ways neither planned, known, nor understood, the church acts out the hope that it is given by the presence of the Spirit who is the living foretaste of the kingdom. This threefold way of understanding the church’s mission is rooted in the triune nature of God himself.”

Lesslie Newbigin – *The Open Secret*

A Christian is the one who, wherever he looks, finds Christ and rejoices in Him. And this joy transforms all his human plans and programs, decisions and actions, making all his mission the sacrament of the world’s return to Him who is the life of the world.

Alexander Schmemmann – *For the Life of the World*

Notes:

Holy Week Schedule

Palm Sunday, April 14, 2019

8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I	<i>Christ Church</i>
10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I	<i>Christ Church</i>
5:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I	<i>Old Christ Church</i>

Monday in Holy Week, April 15, 2019

12:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I	<i>Chapel</i>
12:30 p.m. Rite of Reconciliation	<i>Chapel</i>

Tuesday in Holy Week, April 16, 2019

12:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I	<i>Chapel</i>
12:30 p.m. Rite of Reconciliation	<i>Chapel</i>

Wednesday in Holy Week, April 16, 2019

12:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I	<i>Chapel</i>
12:30 p.m. Rite of Reconciliation	<i>Chapel</i>

Maundy Thursday, April 17, 2019

12:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I	<i>Chapel</i>
12:30 p.m. Rite of Reconciliation	<i>Chapel</i>
5:30 p.m. Maundy Thursday service with Foot washing and Stripping of the Altar	<i>Christ Church</i>

Good Friday, April 18, 2019

10:00 a.m. EDS Stations of the Cross	<i>Christ Church</i>
10:30 a.m. Stations of the Cross	<i>Old Christ Church</i>
12:00 p.m. Good Friday Liturgy	<i>Chapel</i>
5:30 p.m. Passiontide	<i>Christ Church</i>

Holy Saturday, April 19, 2019

10:00 a.m. Holy Saturday Service	<i>Christ Church Choir Stalls</i>
10:00 a.m. Children's Stations of the Cross and Easter Egg Hunt	<i>Christ Church</i>

Easter Sunday, April 20, 2019

5:30 a.m. Easter Vigil	<i>Christ Church</i>
7:00 a.m. Easter Breakfast	<i>Christ Church Parish Hall</i>
8:00 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II	<i>Christ Church</i>
10:30 a.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite II	<i>Christ Church</i>
5:00 p.m. Holy Eucharist, Rite I	<i>Old Christ Church</i>



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