

# SERVICE

Session 2

Being Christ in the World

*This is the second session on service. In this session we will more deeply explore and cultivate how we can utilize the gifts God has given us in our church, community, and world. Our gifts are meant to draw us more deeply into community with one another. And, like all bodies, the body of Christ is meant to grow and change. So while we always remain centered on Jesus, our community is not static but rather a dynamic and ever-changing community of faith. Through the use of our spiritual gifts the church grows and adapts in new ways. We serve one another by being connected to one another.*

## Opening Activities



### Centering Moment

Light a candle and observe 30 seconds of silence as a reminder of God's presence among us.



### John 15:15-17

*"If you love me, you will keep my commandments. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Advocate, to be with you forever. This is the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, because he abides with you, and he will be in you."*



### Reflect

When we hear the term "advocate," what word associations or images come to mind? What does "Spirit of truth" mean to you?



### Opening Prayer:

Gracious Lord, we are called to act, love and serve one another in your name. Open our hearts, show us your mercy, and help us to give hope to the hopeless. Amen.



### Music (optional)

Sing or listen to "The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve"



## Share

Share with one another any thoughts from last weeks' exercises or session. Spend some time discussing the exercise on 1 Corinthians 12 from last session regarding where you feel you fit on the body and what gifts surprised you.



## Watch: Service - Being Christ in the World



## Discuss

- Spend a few moments thinking about the following:

*Where are you hearing God's call? What are you hearing God calling you to be and do? God is calling us all in a particular way in the here and now to take up a task, assume a responsibility, or devote our lives to meeting a real need in the service of Christ. This is how we align our lives with God's will in the world - "thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven."*

- **Read Exodus 3:1-14 and 4:1, 10**

Pay attention to the words or phrases that speak to you most clearly. Briefly name them. What does the story mirror about the nature of a call or about discovering one's calling?

- The story of Moses' call reflects at least two movements in discovering OUR call:
  1. It reminds us to pay attention to the burning bushes that illumine the way and call us forward. We do this by noticing people, situations, and human needs that call us to turn aside and look--that give us a glimpse of God's purpose at work among us and the purpose for which God is empowering us to live. Burning bushes may be outside us, but they reflect something of God's presence, promise and power at work in us.
  2. Name our human fears and reservations about accepting God's call and can receive God's assurance. Fears always accompany an awareness of God's calling because God calls us to go beyond where we already are. But a sense of God's assurance and empowerment also accompanies a genuine awareness of God's call.
- Solitary Reflection: Spend about 15 minutes contemplating these questions and writing down your thoughts.
  - *"I must turn aside and look at this great sight."*
  - *Spend a few moments turning aside to look at the burning bushes in your life. Recall one to three moments of penetrating insights, persistent concerns, or compelling encounters with human need that continue to speak of your calling in Christ. What is the common theme that you see or calling that you hear?*
  - *Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh?*
  - *What are your fears about heeding the call that you hear? List your "Who am I that I should..." feelings: reservations, objections, feelings of inadequacies, doubts or obstacles.*
- Come back together and allow each person to share what their burning bushes were and what their fears and objections are.



## *Closing Prayer*

Choose a prayer style that you have learned about to close.



## *Exercises To Do At Home*

### **Read Mark 11:15-19**

Meditate on the picture of Jesus in the Temple. Picture Jesus in your church today. What would Jesus see, hear, feel, affirm, and question? What would he recognize and not recognize as an expression of his life and mission? What does it mean to be “a house of prayer for all nations”? Listen in prayer for the ways you can use your gifts to help make that happen.

### **Read Acts 13:1-3**

Paul and Barnabas are sent out on a shared mission to participate in a common work. With whom in your group or your church are you sensing a shared mission? Toward whom is the Holy Spirit leading you for the purpose of responding to a need? Pray about your call with openness to the Holy Spirit’s enabling guidance.

### **Read Matthew 25:31-46**

Meditate on the call to the church to see and respond to “the least of these” with whom Christ has united himself. Who are the people in our world today that fit this description? What prevents you from seeing the people that Jesus names? What practices would enable you to better see them as beloved by Christ? What would help you and your church to see those Jesus saw, be present to those for whom Jesus was present? Pray for eyes to see and the heart to respond.