

NE MN Synod Discipleship Challenge:
Love Like Jesus!

Children's Discussion Guide November 2013: INVITE!

The NE MN Synod faith practice focus for November is *"Invite."* You are encouraged to use this discussion guide with younger children in your home or as part of a Sunday school class or church children's event. As a family you might do this after a meal, for nightly devotions, as you drive from one activity to the next, on a Sunday afternoon – whenever or wherever you have the opportunity to dwell on and discuss what it means for us as individuals and as a family of faith to Love Like Jesus! There are no right or wrong answers, no right or wrong way to do this...the point is to make room in your lives for thoughtful and deliberate faith conversations.

Remember – our spiritual hunger to grow and deepen our faith has nothing to do with success, getting the "right" answer, or works. It's all about living – fully living – into the grace of God as God's children...as discipleship, following Jesus in our daily life!

Thank you for your partnership in the gospel and for your willingness to help younger children grow in their discipleship to Christ our Lord!

For more information and resources on the Discipleship Challenge:

www.nemnsynod.org/Discipleship

Love Like Jesus: INVITE!
Children's Discussion Guide NOVEMBER 2013

Invite is a faith practice that is essential for our children to be actively engaged in. To invite others is to be a welcoming and loving presence to those around us. Encourage young people to think about ways they can invite others to feel included and welcome. Bullying is a huge problem that many of our young people are dealing with every day. Invitation is a faith practice that breaks down walls between people and removes the label of "outsider." Jesus welcomes all to be known and loved by him! We want to invite everyone to know the love of Jesus. We

can invite by telling our faith story or stories of Jesus, or by asking others to join in activities of our life (meals, worship, events, etc.). When we invite others, we love like Jesus.

Introduction:

Ask: *What kinds of events or activities do you get invited to be a part of?* Invite the children to give examples.

Ask: *Would you attend a birthday party or go to a friend's house for dinner if you were not invited first? Why not? Why is it important to invite people to join in?*

Story/Bible Reading:

Read the story of Jesus welcoming the children in Luke 18:15-17. Have older children read the story aloud from their bibles. Read the story from a children's bible if you have younger children.

Ask: *What were the disciples doing in the story? What did Jesus tell them? How is Jesus' invitation to the children important for us?*

What is it like to not feel welcome? How can we help others feel welcome at church or at school?

Craft/Activity Suggestion:

As a church, we are always welcoming new people to join us for worship, Sunday school activities, or other events. All are welcome! There are special times in the life of the church where people are formally invited and welcomed like on a New Member Sunday or at a baptism.

Have each child create a special card, drawing, or gift to welcome new members or the newly baptized to your church family.

Another idea could be to create posters or signs to hang up around your church or Sunday school/children's ministry space that tell people that everyone is welcome here. The art created could even be scanned or copied to be used as bulletin covers or special inserts/handouts for a "New Member Sunday" or an "Invite Your Neighbor" event or as periodic reminders that we are to always be inviting others to know the love of Jesus.

Closing Prayer:

Gracious God, thank you for inviting us to know you. We thank you for our church family. Help us to be loving and inviting just like Jesus to everyone we meet. Amen.