

NE MN Synod Discipleship Challenge:

KNOW...BE...TELL the Story!

November 2014 Children's Discussion Guide: INVITE

KNOW the Story: How is the faith practice "invite" part of God's Story?

Prior to your time together:

Send out invitations to each child to join you for a special time together. Encourage them to bring their invitation with them to the event.

When children arrive, start with a short conversation:

Raise your hand if you received an invitation to come here today. How did you feel when you got the invitation?

Did anyone not receive the invitation? How do you feel when you don't get invited to something that others are invited to?

What are some other things you have been invited to? Have you ever invited someone to something? How does it feel to invite someone to something special?

As a large group READ: John 1: 25-51 from your Bible or read the excerpt below.

³⁵The next day John again was standing with two of his disciples, ³⁶and as he watched Jesus walk by, he exclaimed, "Look, here is the Lamb of God!"

³⁷The two disciples heard him say this, and they followed Jesus. ³⁸When Jesus turned and saw them following, he said to them, "What are you looking for?" They said to him, "Rabbi" (which translated means Teacher), "where are you staying?" ³⁹He said to them, "Come and see." They came and saw where he was staying, and they remained with him that day.

⁴³The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me." ⁴⁴Now Philip was from Bethsaida, the city of Andrew and Peter. ⁴⁵Philip found Nathanael and said to him, "We have found him about whom Moses in the law and also the prophets wrote, Jesus son of Joseph from Nazareth." ⁴⁶Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see."

TALK:

- What is happening in this text? Have the group retell the story in their own words.
- When the disciples are curious about where Jesus is staying and what Jesus is up to, what does Jesus invite them to do? (*Come and see*)
- Later, after Philip has followed Jesus, he finds Nathanael and tells him the good news about Jesus. How does Philip describe Jesus? (*He is the one Moses and the prophets wrote about, the son of Joseph from Nazareth.*)
- Nathanael is not sure he can believe what Philip is telling him. What does Philip invite Nathanael to do? (*Come and see*)

BE the Story: *How has the faith practice “invite” been part of my Story, my faith journey?*

Prior to your gathering:

Set up a special surprise, in a separate space not visible from where you are gathered for your opening large group. Maybe you have the space set up like a party with balloons and cupcakes. Maybe you have invited someone to bring in their pet to share with the children. Make it something that children will want to be invited to “come and see” and be a part of.

In the large group say:

I have something special happening in the other room.

Raise your hand if you are curious about what is in the other room?

Raise your hand if you would like to “come and see” what is going on in the other room.

Select one child to go with you into the other space. Allow them to “see” as well as use their other senses to experience what you have set up in the other space.

Return to the large group. Have the child tell the large group what they saw and experienced. Ask the child to invite the group to “come and see”.

Move the large group into your special space. After everyone has “seen” and experienced the special surprise. Go around the room and let everyone share what they “saw” and experienced and how it made them feel.

Connect:

- Which did you enjoy more, hearing about what was in this special room or getting to “come and see” and experience it for yourself?
- Ask the first child that was picked to “come and see” how it felt to get to share with others what was in the room and invite them to come along?
- Ask the whole group if they enjoyed telling one another about what they had experienced,

Reflect:

We are to be like Jesus. As disciples, like Philip, we are to look for opportunities to invite others to “come and see” the good news of Jesus.

- Who has told you about how special Jesus is and shared the good news with you in your life?
- Who has invited you to “come and see” Jesus or experience Jesus at work in the church and the world? Share a time you were invited to “Come and See” the good news of Jesus.

TELL the Story: *How can I share this faith practice “invite” so it can be part of my neighbor’s story?*

In our story from the Bible, there are two parts to inviting:

First Philip is able to tell the good news he has experienced. Before Philip invites Nathanael to “come and see” Jesus, he shares who he thinks Jesus is and how he believes Jesus is at work in the world.

Secondly, Philip is able to invite the other to “come and see”, to be part of the experience.

We are called to share our story. To tell in words who we think Jesus is and how we believe Jesus is at work in the world. We are then called to invite others to experience Jesus and God at work in the world for themselves.

Invite the children to take part in a special “Jesus experience” before the end of your session. You could:

- Talk about how Jesus loves everyone and invites us to love one another, then have them tie a blanket for someone in the community or congregation.

- Explain that Jesus was a servant and invites us to serve one another, then make cookies to serve during fellowship time.
- Tell how Jesus provides for us and fed those that were hungry, then make sandwiches for the community soup kitchen.
- Explain how we get to know Jesus through the Bible and select a story from the Children’ Bible and have them act it out.

Then give each child a copy of the invitation below and ask them to think of someone they can invite to “come and see” the good news of Jesus by joining in the fun next week.

(One option for the following week together is printed below.)

The following week, have the children start by introducing those they have invited to the group. If they haven’t invited anyone talk about how it can be hard to invite and why.

Then have the kids repeat the special experience they did the week before with the new people that were invited. At the end of your time together, have everyone share what they have experienced.

Pray Together: Dear God, Thank you for inviting us into your love and work in the world by sending your son Jesus. Help us to invite others. Amen.

Blessing Each Other:

Jesus invites you to “come and see” – go invite others.

Today at church I was invited to “come and see” Jesus.

I saw and experienced Jesus’ love for me and others when we:

You are invited to “Come and see” with me!

Date: _____

Time: _____

Place: _____

RSVP: _____