

NE MN Synod Discipleship Challenge:
Love Like Jesus!
November 2013 Focus: INVITE

The NE MN Synod faith practice focus for October is *"Invite."* Below is a discussion guide that can be used in conjunction with the video teaser and Bishop Aitken's video challenge for *"Invite,"* which can be found on the Discipleship Challenge website at www.nemnsynod.org/Discipleship. The teaser and challenge videos are meant as conversation starters...the real learning and growth takes place in your discussions that follow the videos!

You are encouraged to use these questions in your homes, during coffee hour, at ministry meetings, in youth group - 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!** The questions are arranged in a way that allows you to move deeper into the conversation as you feel comfortable. They need not be done all at once and there is no right or wrong answers. You have all month (and beyond!) to dwell on these questions. The point is to make room for some thoughtful and deliberate discussion.

And 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 disciples, following Jesus in our daily life!

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

For more information and resources on the Discipleship Challenge:

www.nemnsynod.org/Discipleship

Love Like Jesus: INVITE!

November 2013

The discipleship practice of **INVITATION** takes some effort, thoughtfulness, and care in order for it to be ingrained into our life of faithfulness. And so we begin our exercise of faith...

THIS MONTHS THINKER:

Maybe I'm wrong, but I think many of us don't really know what we have. If you've ever been in the position of not having a job, a roof over your head, or enough money for food on the table, you know what I mean. I think the same can be said for our life of faith. If you've ever been outside of a church community, you know what I mean. With that being said, what do you think you "have" here at your congregation in terms of:

- Adult faith formation?
- Children/Youth faith formation?
- Outreach opportunities?
- Worship experiences?
- Prayer experiences?
- Ministry opportunities?

What feelings do your answers bring you? Joy? Gratitude?

Do you know anyone who you think could benefit from that same joy or gratitude? Have you invited them to church? Why/why not?

WADING INTO DEEPER WATERS:

"But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they've never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent?" Romans 10:14-15a

From the very beginning of the church, Jesus' disciples were "sent" into the world to INVITE others.

- How did you come to believe and to be a part of a church home? Were you invited by someone else? Was it just "what our family always does" or was it something else? Please share your experience of feeling INVITED into a deeper relationship with God.
- Think of all the things you share with others via the phone, Facebook, Twitter, letters, conversation, etc. How often is your faith story a part of that sharing?
- What do you think are the stumbling blocks that make it hard for us to share our faith story with others? (i.e., Why is it hard for us to INVITE others to church?) What are some ideas for removing those blocks, or making them less imposing?
- What are some ways in which we can be thoughtful and practiced as we prepare to INVITE others into a relationship with Christ?
- Do you have any ideas how we as a church can be more INVITING to the community around us? (And remember, YOU are the church 😊 This isn't a question about what you think others could do. We're all in this together!)