

# The 2014-2015 NE MN Synod Discipleship Challenge

*Dig deep together on a faith journey to...*

**KNOW** the Story

**BE** the Story

**TELL** the Story

*...of Christ's love in the world.*



## Family Discussion Guide December: **SERVE**

All of us are living a story. Together we are living in the middle of God's story – for us, and for our neighbor. Faith practices help us on our faith journey to **KNOW** God's Story for our lives and the world...to **BE** God's story of love and reconciliation in the world...and to **TELL** God's Story so the world can know they are part of God's Story.

The Northeastern Minnesota Synod Discipleship Challenge focuses on the faith practices of *Give, Invite, Serve, Study, Worship, Prayer, and Encourage*. There are many more, and we hope you and your family explore others on your journey as well!

The NE MN Synod faith practice focus for December is "Serve." You are encouraged to use this discussion guide after dinner, 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 KNOW the Story, BE the Story, and TELL the Story of Christ's love in the world!** There are no right or wrong answers, no right or wrong way to do this. You can do different sections at different times, or pick and choose what will work for your family. The point is to make room in your lives for thoughtful and deliberate faith conversations.

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 as a family in your discipleship to Christ our Lord!

**[www.nemnsynod.org/Discipleship](http://www.nemnsynod.org/Discipleship)**

# **NE MN Synod Discipleship Challenge:**

## **KNOW...BE...TELL the Story!**

### **December 2014 Family Discussion Guide: SERVE**

#### **KNOW the Story: *How is the faith practice “serve” part of God’s Story?***

In Mark 10:45 we are reminded that Jesus set the example for his followers:

*For the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.*

1 John 3:18 in The Message reminds us that we are called to serve as Jesus did.

*My dear children, let’s not just talk about love, let’s practice real love.*

The Bible is full of stories and letters showing how Jesus served and giving examples of how we might serve one another in Christ’s name through word and deed. In the ELCA we say “God’s Work, Our Hands” as a reminder of our call to serve one another. We can use our hands, our feet, our eyes, our ears, our mouths, even the stuff we own to serve one another.

Read together Luke 10:25-37. As you read, point to the body part the Samaritan used to serve his neighbor. If he used the “stuff” that he owned to serve, yell out what “stuff” he used to serve.

*<sup>25</sup>Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” <sup>26</sup>He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?” <sup>27</sup>He answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” <sup>28</sup>And he said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.” <sup>29</sup>But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” <sup>30</sup>Jesus replied,*

*“A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. <sup>31</sup>Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. <sup>32</sup>So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. <sup>33</sup>But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw (EYES) him, he was moved with pity. <sup>34</sup>He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them (HANDS). Then he put him on his own animal (STUFF), brought him (FEET)*

to an inn, and took care of him. <sup>35</sup>The next day he took out two denarii (STUFF), gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.' (MOUTH)

<sup>36</sup>Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?" <sup>37</sup>He said, "The one who showed him mercy." Jesus said to him, "Go and do likewise."

### **Discuss:**

What does the lawyer say is written in the law? ("You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.")

How did the man use his hands, feet, eyes, ears, mouth, and the stuff that he owned to serve?

How does the lawyer say the Samaritan man acted like a neighbor? (He showed mercy. He served.)

What is Jesus' command in this Bible text? ("Go and do likewise")

### **BE the Story: *How has the faith practice "serve" been part of my Story, my faith journey?***

**Use the "I Will Serve" spinner.**

Take a paper clip and put a pencil tip through one end. Hold the pencil tip on the small circle at the center of the wheel. Take turns spinning the paper clip.

- Your first spin will tell you how to share a time you have been served by another. For example, if you spun "stuff" in the "friends" quadrant, share how a friend used stuff that they owned to serve you.
- Your second spin will tell you how to share a time you served another. For example, if you spin "feet" in the quadrant labeled "family", share a way you have served your family using your feet.

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

Think of the quote, “Through you we have experienced God’s love”. When you serve another, you are an expressing God’s love for them.

**Use the “I Will Serve” spinner.**

Have each family member spin a challenge for the next day/week. For example, if you spin “ears” in the neighbors’ quadrant, your challenge will to be serve your neighbor using your ears. Some spins will create challenges that will be harder than others. How can you serve with your ears? Brainstorm as a family.

Take a moment to be still and pray quietly that God would provide you with the opportunity to serve and share God’s love in this way.

After everyone has had a day/week to complete their challenge, take time to gather together.

- Share how you served. How was your act of service received by the other? How did it make you feel? What did you enjoy about serving? What was challenging?
- Discuss how you experienced God’s presence or call as you were serving.

Then, spin for another challenge.

**Pray:**

Thank you God for the hands, feet, eyes, ears, mouth, and stuff to serve others. Amen.

**Bless:**

Guide our hands (*touch hands*),

move our feet (*put your toes together*),

open our eyes and ears (*stare at each other as you shout these words*),

bless the words that come from our mouths(*draw a cross over your lips*),

and use our stuff (*through your arms open and look around you*)

to share your love with others. Amen.