



VOICES
INSPIRING MESSAGES
ON TODAY'S TOPICS

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Week 2 August 18, 2024

“The ‘Nones’ and ‘Dones’”

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, we thank you for this group and for leading us to a place where we can feel connected. Lead us in this time as we think about those who aren't connected to a church – and the times when we have felt disconnected ourselves. Guide our conversation, that we might consider how better to love like You love and see others as You see them. Amen.

SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

Acts 3:12-19 (NIV)

¹² When Peter saw this, he said to them: “Fellow Israelites, why does this surprise you? Why do you stare at us as if by our own power or godliness we had made this man walk? ¹³ The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified his servant Jesus. You handed him over to be killed, and you disowned him before Pilate, though he had decided to let him go. ¹⁴ You disowned the Holy and Righteous One and asked that a murderer be released to you. ¹⁵ You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this. ¹⁶ By faith in the name of Jesus, this man whom you see and know was made strong. It is Jesus’ name and the faith that comes through him that has completely healed him, as you can all see.

¹⁷ “Now, fellow Israelites, I know that you acted in ignorance, as did your leaders. ¹⁸ But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Messiah would suffer. ¹⁹ Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord,

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INTRODUCTION

This week in worship, Rev. Sue Pizor Yoder spoke about the “nones” and “dones” – those who have never been connected to the church as well as those who have been connected to the Christian church at some point but, for a range of reasons, left it. This week’s questions will probe into the things that may turn people away from church – and the things we, as The Church (God’s people; the Body of Christ), need to be aware of as well.

QUESTIONS

1. Take time to discuss some of the reasons you know that people have for refusing to be part of - or leaving - a church. Feel free to share examples from people you personally know, but be careful to not share in a way that the person wouldn’t be comfortable with; and be careful to not veer into gossip, judgment, or complaining. For the reasons named, what are some possible solutions to the barriers that keep people away from church?
2. How does it make you feel to know that there are people who feel like they don’t fit into a church community? Do you think anyone with any viewpoint should be welcomed into a church? Why or why not?
3. Was there ever a time when you left or wanted to leave a church – whether for organizational/community reasons or theological/faith reasons? How did you deal with the pain of that situation? What did it teach you about the church? About faith? About yourself?
4. Read Acts 3:12-19 (on page 1) where Peter speaks to an audience of Jews who were shocked at the healing Peter had just performed (if you need more context, pull out a Bible and read the full chapter). In what ways did Peter tailor his speech directly to his audience? What does Peter’s approach teach us about how we can share the story of Jesus with those who may not initially be receptive to it?
5. What is the difference between having a “personal relationship with Jesus” and living out our spiritual lives in isolation? What role does a local church need to play in both building community and developing faith?

FINAL APPLICATION

As a group, spend time in prayer for those who are separated from a church community, whether they were part of a church and left it or they have never been part of a church community.