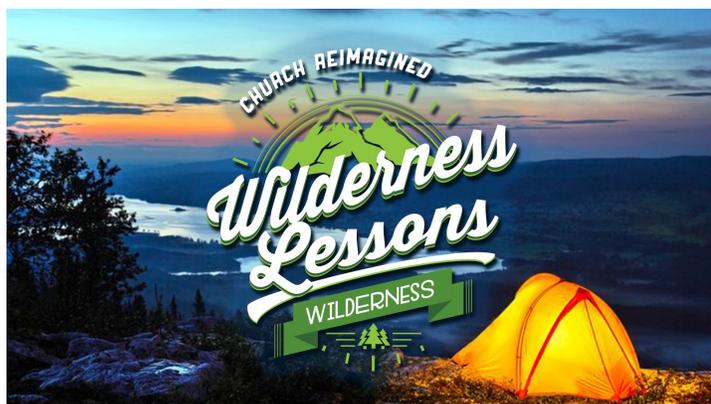


SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



**PRINCE
OF PEACE**
Called to Connect



The Wilderness

May 10, 2020

The Exodus is a template for our lives. We live in a cycle of leaving behind what is familiar, wandering the wilderness, and finally arriving in a new place. And the wilderness is always the place in which God shapes people for what is next. In this series we will explore some of the core lessons to be learned in this time that can help us to reimagine what it can mean to be Church in a new reality.

SCRIPTURE TEXT: EXODUS 40:1-5, 33-38

Read the scripture text together as a group.

BACKGROUND INFO

Camping or wandering through the wilderness means making home away from home. By its nature camping means temporary “homing”. You assume that you will pack it up and move on, either to a new campsite or perhaps to a new home. And, according to some, camping is best done with a minimalist approach. You learn to do without by learning what is truly needed and essential. What great lessons for the Church in a new reality. We’ve learned that a building (our home) is a wonderful resource, but ministry can “camp” in all sorts of different ways and places, and the wilderness journey we are on has revealed what is truly necessary and what isn’t. Can we live into these new realities, or will we follow our human nature to recreate (yearn for the fleshpots of Egypt) what we used to know? The story of the Israelites in the wilderness provides both example and warning. God dwells in every tent we set up!

We are in a time of transition. And the truth is, we always are and always have been. The church has been in significant decline, and this crisis has forced us think about church differently or reimagine it. There’s a great story in the bible that provides a kind of template for what we’re going through. A reminder that we aren’t the first, nor will we be the last, people who endure this kind of journey. And God has always seen people through. We’re going to look at the Exodus story.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Describe a camping experience you’ve had. Highlights? Challenges? What did you learn?
- What parallels to camping can you find with this pandemic? Are there similar lessons to be learned?
- How has this pandemic felt like the wilderness?
- In this section of Exodus, God provides direction to the Israelites through a pillar. How are you sensing God’s direction during this pandemic?

APPLICATION: Take time each day to acknowledge God’s presence. Though we are in a wilderness journey, God is ALWAYS with us. Thank God for that today—God WILL see us through.