

SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



**PRINCE
OF PEACE**
Called to Connect



Neighbor

June 14, 2020

Mr. Rogers taught generations of children that life is like a neighborhood, and everyone we encounter is our neighbor. There are challenges and conflicts in the neighborhood, but with grace, gentleness and persistence we can live together well. Racism is a big, scary word and the thought of engaging in the battle against it can be even bigger and scarier. But what if we saw marginalized people of color as our neighbor?

SCRIPTURE TEXT: LUKE 10:25-37

Read the scripture text together as a group.

BACKGROUND INFO

The prime directive of the Christian faith is to love God and love our neighbor as ourselves. The story of the Good Samaritan is a response to the question “who is my neighbor”? Jesus frames our neighbor, not geographically but relationally. Our neighbor is the person before us in need. And to be a neighbor means to respond to the needs of those who have been robbed and are bleeding at the side of the road. What an apt metaphor for our neighbors of color, made in the image of God yet beaten and left bleeding from slavery, inequity and injustice. Will we be a neighbor? Will we love our neighbor as we love ourselves? It’s too easy to think that racism and its effects are “out there”, someone else’s problem. But that changes when we recognize people of color as our neighbor and hear Jesus’ call.

Jesus once told a story about the Kingdom of God. He said, “I was hungry and you did not feed me. Thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink? Naked and you did not clothe me. Sick and you did not visit me.” And the people responded, “Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty, naked or sick?” And Jesus responded, “Whatever you failed to do for the least of these, for those in need, you failed to for me.”

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Have you ever moved to a new neighborhood? What was that experience like?
- Who do you think of as your neighbor?
- How have you been challenged to broaden your scope of “neighbor” due to recent events?
- The story of the Good Samaritan is one most of us know well. Are you reading it through a new lens this time? What stands out to you in the story now?

APPLICATION: How can you take a step towards being a neighbor to someone new? What might you need to work on to get yourself ready to say yes? Take some time this week in self reflection to guide you.