

SENDING

Song: SJ 76 *The Lord bless you and keep you*

Benediction: WFW2 165 *Triune God*

Session Nine

The Good Samaritan



Text: Luke 10:25-37

Focus statement: A good neighbor shows compassion.

GATHERING

Welcome

Call to worship: WFW2 3 *Wake Up!*

Song: SJ 9 *Come, now is the time to worship*

Opening prayer:

Loving God, we thank you for this new day as we gather to worship you. We ask you to move among us. Free us from any nagging thoughts or worries so we can focus on your loving-kindness offered to us today and every day. Amen.

PRAISING

Song suggestions:

GR CD *Awake, arise, O sing a new song* (*Together*, p. 3, for text)

HWB 71 *Joyful, joyful, we adore thee*

HWB 72 *When all thy mercies, O my God*

SJ 14 *Lord Jesus, you shall be my song*

SJ 17 *Halle, halle, hallelujah*

Prayer of thanksgiving: WFW2 44 *Lift Us to High Places*

Offering/offertory

CONFESSING AND RECONCILING

Silence

Prayer of confession with words of assurance: HWB 691 (Pause after each response from the people)

HEARING

Children's time:

Advance preparation: Prepare items the children can assemble for a relief kit (through an agency like Mennonite Central Committee) or a care basket for someone in your congregation (such as someone who is ill, is a shut-in, has a new baby, is new to the community, and so on). Gather supplies. This story lends itself to drama. If you wish, you may ask volunteers to dramatize the story as you tell it. You would need: traveler, robber(s), three passersby, donkey, innkeeper.

Supplies: Green blanket, container with grass, session 9 symbol (foot with cloth bandage around it), items for a relief kit or care basket.

Gather children. We gather with our friends to listen to some of the parables Jesus told. Invite the children to recall the symbols as you touch each one.

- We forgive because God forgives us (*touch symbol 7*).
- We are generous with others (*touch symbol 8*).

Ask: Who is our neighbor? What does it mean to be a good neighbor? Jesus' followers wondered how they could be good neighbors. So Jesus told them this story:

A traveler was on his way from Jerusalem to Jericho. Robbers grabbed him and took his money and clothes. They left him hurt on the side of the road. Someone came walking by. But he kept going. Another person came along. He kept walking too. A third person came along. He didn't have many friends, but he stopped to help the man who was hurt. He cleaned the cuts and bandaged up the wounds. Then he put the hurt man on his own donkey and took him to a nearby inn where he could rest. He gave the innkeeper money and said, "Please take good care of my new friend. If you need more money, I will pay you the next time I come."

Then Jesus asked, "Which of these people was a good neighbor?" A good neighbor shows compassion and care for others (*place symbol 9 into grass container*). I wonder who needs our compassion and care. Invite the children to help assemble a relief kit or care basket as an act of compassion. Pray for the person who will receive the kit or basket.

Pray: Compassionate God, thank you for people who care for us. We pray for (*person's name receiving the gift*). May (*person's name*) know you care for (*him/her*). Amen.

Scripture reading: Luke 10:25-37 (Possibly have several readers for the different individuals in the parable.)

Sermon seeds:

The story of the good Samaritan is probably the best known parable in the Bible; however, it is rarely read in context. Just prior to this passage, a Samaritan village rejects Jesus and the disciples as they begin their journey to Jerusalem. Nevertheless, the hero of this parable turns out to be a Samaritan who is also on a journey. As is often the case in Jesus' teaching in Luke, it is outsiders who model authentic discipleship.

The episode begins with an exchange between Jesus and a teacher of the law. The discussion has two main parts: a question concerning the requirements for eternal life and a question concerning who is one's neighbor. This kind of public conversation was common in Jewish culture. However, the lawyer's questions were most likely a testing of Jesus' credentials and an attempt to outwit him publicly to gain honor in the eyes of the crowd. Jesus' wisdom and mastery of the situation is evident as he shifts the focus of conversation from the lawyer's narrow self-interest to unbounded and enduring truth.

The real crux of the episode emerges when the lawyer attempts to justify himself. After quoting two of scripture's most expansive love commands, the lawyer introduces a calculating question intending to establish limitations on love. But Jesus responds by proposing a different question. Instead of asking who is my neighbor—based upon race, religion, or nationality—he asks which one acts like a neighbor. The lawyer may not be able to bring himself to speak of the hero's race in his answer, and so he responds universally: "The one who showed mercy." This may have been Jesus' intention all along, and he responds, "Go and do likewise."

RESPONDING

Song of response: SJ 42 *Listen, God is calling*

Prayers of the congregation

SENDING

Song: GR CD *Som' landela (We will follow)* (*Together*, p. 2, for text)

Benediction: SJ 158

Session Ten

The Pharisee and the Tax Collector



Text: Luke 18:9-14

Focus statement: Be humble.

GATHERING

Welcome

Call to worship: SJ 122

Song: HWB 6 *Here in this place*

Opening prayer: “God of Caring” (*Together*, p. 4)

PRAISING

Song suggestions:

GR CD *Awake, arise, o sing a new song* (*Together*, p. 3, for text)

HWB 55 *Cantemos al Senor (Let's sing unto the Lord)*

HWB 64 *Asithi: Amen (Sing amen)*

HWB 76 *Je louerai l'Eternal (Praise, I will praise you, Lord)*

SJ 19 *I will call upon the Lord*

Prayer of thanksgiving: SJ 125

Offering/offertory