FAMILY CONNECTIONS

Find time to explore these questions as a family after each session.

Session 1

- Who do you learn from, follow, or serve as a disciple? How do they affect you?
- What is the difference between learning from or following someone (like a favorite teacher, coach, or boss) and being a disciple of someone like Jesus? How does Jesus affect you?
- Why did Jesus' disciples sometimes fail to follow his directions? How are mistakes a part of discipleship?
- Tell about a mistake you made that helped you grow in discipleship and faith. How can you be a better disciple in the future?

Session 2

- Who or what competes for your attention, telling you what to believe? How does the Christian message stand out from the crowd? How can you help the Christian message stand out from the crowd?
- Where is the line between passionate and offensive evangelism? How can you faithfully share the Christian message without being rude or argumentative?
- Why are some people skeptical about the good news of Jesus Christ? How would you share the glory of God with a religious skeptic? If a skeptic showed some interest in God, how would you teach him or her more?
- Why is it important to tell people about Jesus?

Session 3

- What does it mean to you that "the whole law" (Galatians 5:14) can be summarized in service? What does that imply about discipleship?
- Consider Jesus as a servant: How did he help people who had personal problems? How did he address problems on a broader, structural scale? How did he urge people and powers to change, so that the system that causes problems would change? How can you do each?
- Is service more about doing things, or living in some way? Explain.
- How do you think the disciples felt when Jesus washed their feet? What does Jesus' role reversal (when he washed the disciples' feet) tell us about the type of service Jesus intends for us to do?
- If I love God and God loves me, why do I have to worry about other people?

Session 4

- What does it mean to be "one in Christ" (Galatians 3:28)? Paul mentions three of the divisions of his culture that he wants to bring into diverse unity: Jew/Greek, slave/free, male/female. What are some tense divisions in your life? What are some diverse unities in your life?
- Do you know any Christians who practice differently than you? What do you know about their different faith practices? What can you learn from Christian communities that interpret your shared faith differently?
- What do you suppose is similar across all or most Christian churches? What do you suppose is unique about your tradition of Christianity? Why do you think God created so many differences?
- Martin Luther King Jr. once said that "Sunday morning is the most segregated hour in America." Is that still the case? Why or why not?
- When inviting and accepting diversity into your congregation, should you embrace the differences, or blend together in unity? Explain.
- Why is it important for the church to be diverse?

1. Martin Luther King Jr., "Methodist Student Leadership Conference Address" (1964, Lincoln, Nebraska), americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkmethodistyouthconference.htm



APOSTLE OR DISCIPLE?

$ M N \Xi O \Pi P \Sigma T Y \Phi X \Psi \Omega A B \Gamma \Delta E Z H \Theta I K A M N \Xi O < $	A
🞽 άΠόστολος	В
μαπουτολός	Г
 The Greek word άπόστολος (apostolos, from which we get the English 	\triangleright
"apostle") means someone "sent away" (apo = away) for a purpose.	
 Jesus sent apostles away, into the world to baptize, teach, heal, and grow 	Ν
the church. (See Matthew 28:18–20 and Luke 9:1–2.)	Η
 We are apostolic when we go into the world on behalf of God. 	I
• Epistles are letters "sent from" (epi = from) someone.	Ι
 Diastolic pressure occurs as the heart expands, as blood is "sent through" 	K
<pre>(dia = through) or into it</pre>	\geq
 Systolic pressure occurs as the heart contracts, as blood is "sent with" 	\leq
isyn = with) or from it.	Z
\times (syn - with) of from it.	[I]
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Π Ρ Σ Τ Χ Φ Χ Ψ Ω Α Β Γ Α Ε Ζ Η Θ Ι Κ Α Μ Ν Ξ Ο Π Ρ Σ Τ Υ	[

Λ Μ Ν Ξ Ο Π Ρ Σ Τ Υ Φ Χ Ψ Ω Α Β Γ Δ Ε Ζ Η Θ Ι Κ Λ Μ Ν Ξ \triangleright \mathbf{N} μαθητής Ψ Г • The Greek word $\mu\alpha\theta\eta\tau\eta\varsigma$ (mathetes) means "one who learns, has \triangleright Η learned, or shares information learned." Π N • The Latin word for $\mu\alpha\theta\eta\tau\eta\varsigma$ is *discipulus*, from which we get the English N LT) "disciple." Ξ • Jesus taught his disciples, and despite their imperfect grasp of his 1 message, they were committed to his teaching and taught others. Ω X • We engage in discipleship when we learn, grow, and follow Christ. \geq Cl • Mathematics was a core component of ancient Greek learning. \leq ¥ • Discipline is training, self-control, or punishment intended to help Z someone learn. \times [I] Ð \bigcirc Π Ρ Σ Τ Υ Φ Χ Ψ Ω Α Β Γ Δ Ε Ζ Η Θ Ι Κ Λ Μ Ν Ξ Ο Π Ρ Σ Τ Υ

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DISCIPLESHIP PLAYOFFS



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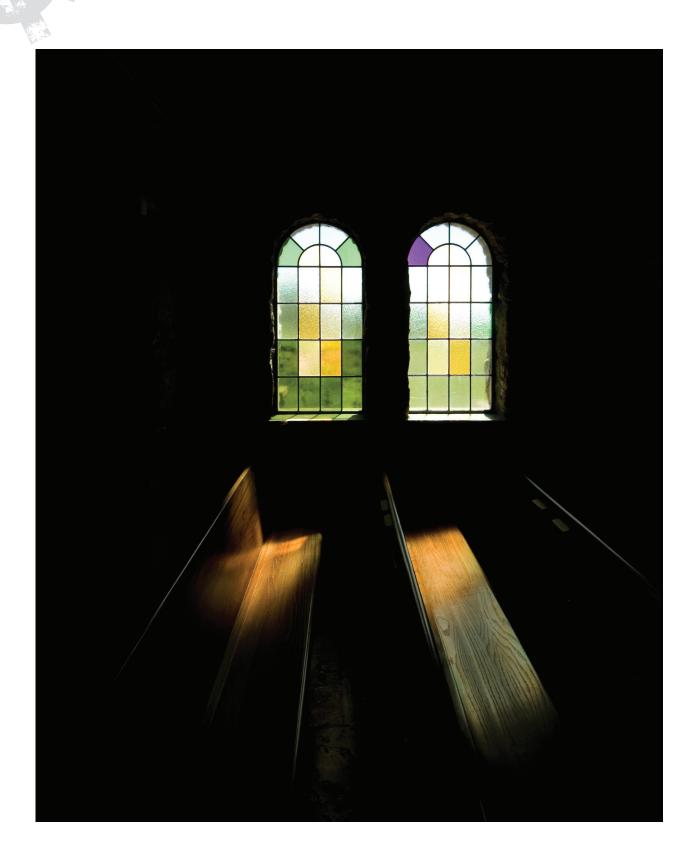
Lectio Divina

Read the Scripture below slowly. Pause for a minute as you think about one of the words or phrases. Read it again, in a different tempo or tone, focusing on another word or phrase. Pause again, and read it slowly a third time, as you center on a third word or phrase.

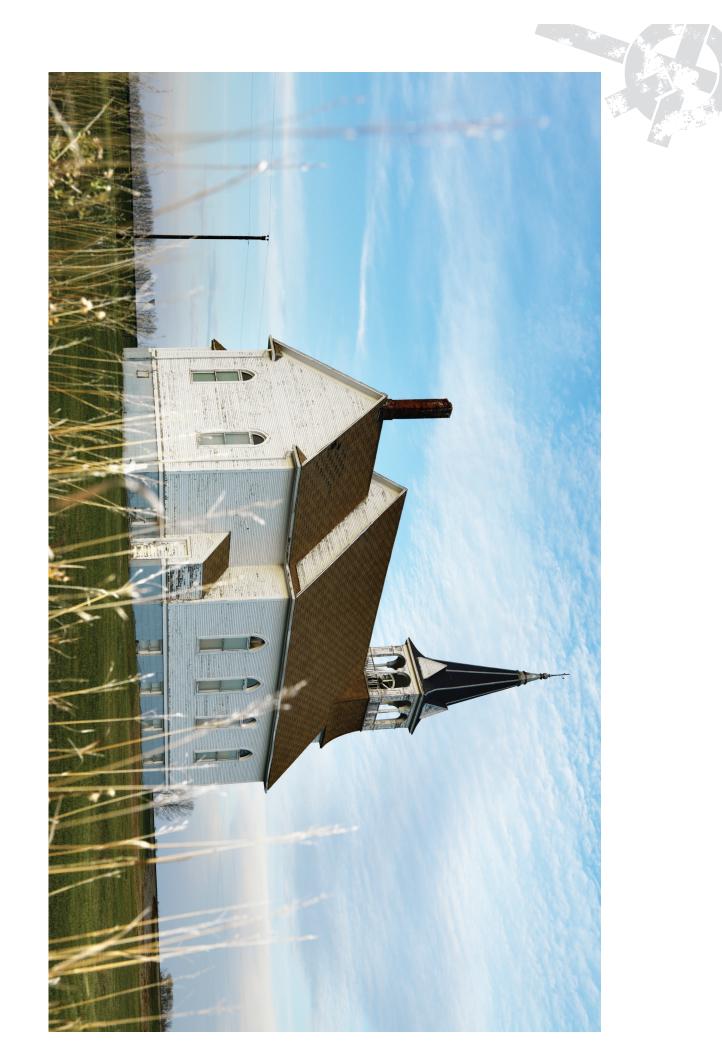
"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God."

-Colossians 3:16





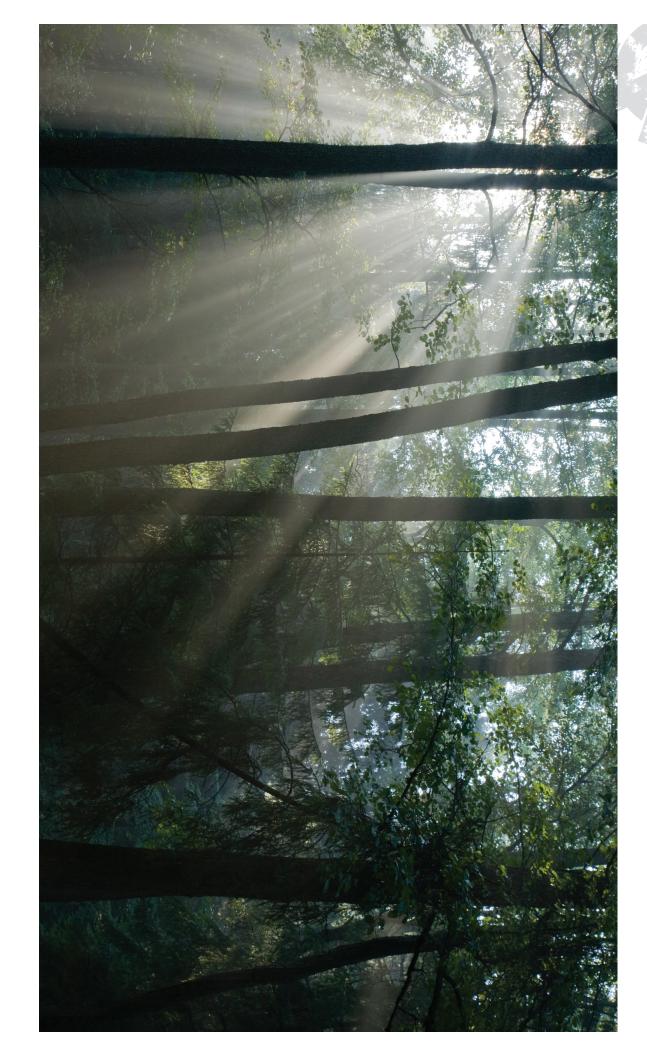




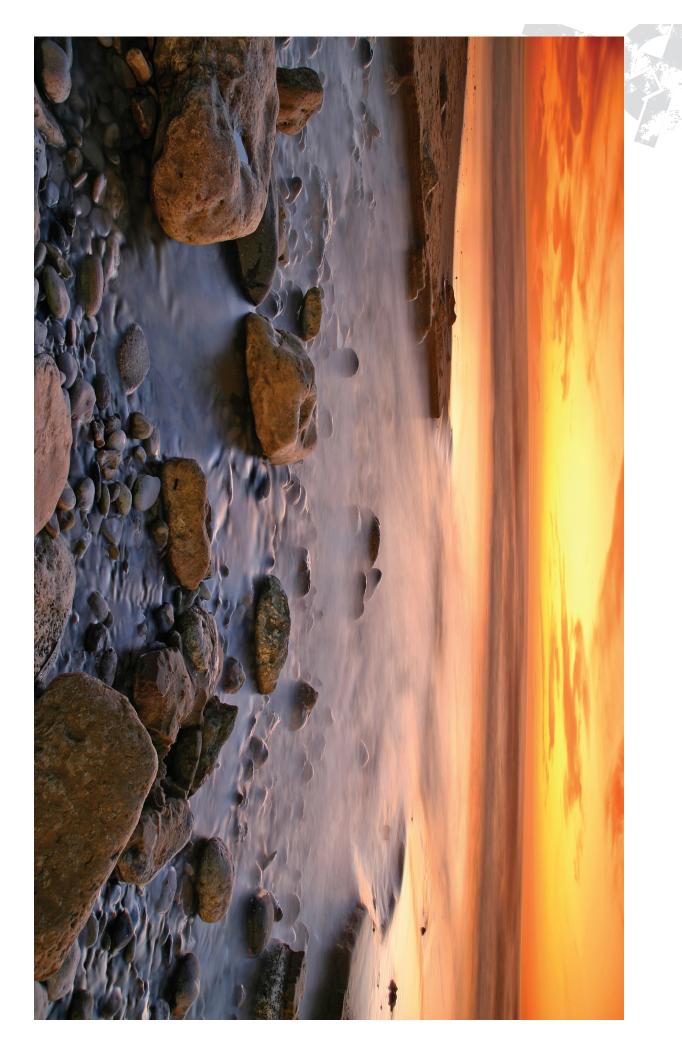














DISCIPLESHIP FOOTPRINT

Do you . . . If so, write these points:

Pray regularly? 1 pt. for each day you've prayed in the past week _____ Engage in forgiveness? 1 pt. for each time you've forgiven someone or accepted forgiveness in the past week _____ Help those in need? 0 to 3 pts. for how often you help those in need _____ Act as a steward for God's creation? 1 to 3 pts. for how much you care for creation _____ Speak with respect? 0 to 2 pts. for how often you resist cursing or speaking unkindly _____ Invite friends to church? 1 pt. for each friend you invited to church in the past month _____ Read the Bible regularly? 1 pt. for each time you read the Bible in the past week _____ Talk openly about your faith? 1 pt. for each time you discussed your faith in the past week _____ Volunteer your time in service? 1 pt. for each hour you've volunteered in the past month _____ Respect your body? 0 to 2 pts. for how well you respect your body _____ Welcome diversity? 0 to 2 pts. for how much you welcome diversity _____ Observe the Sabbath? 0 to 2 pts. for how well you balance work and rest _____ Total Discipleship Footprint score: ______





GOOD NEWS

Luke 2:8–11 (The angel tells the shepherds about Jesus' birth) In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you they on the solution of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord.

Luke 24:1-9 (A group of women encounter angels at Jesus' empty tomb). But on the first day of the week, at early dawn, they came to the tomb, taking the spices that they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they did not find the body. While they were perplexed about this, suddenly two men in dazzling clothes stood beside them. The women were terrified and bowed their faces to the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He is not here, but has risen. Remember how he told you, while he was still in Galilee, that the Son of Man must be handed over to sinners, and be crucified, and on the third day rise again." Then they remembered his words, and returning from the tomb, they told all this to the eleven and to all the rest.





"BUTLER STREET" by David LaMotte



There's a neon cross on a mountain Saying 'sinners best beware' That means that somebody went to the trouble To run power way up there These mountains speak to my spirit And I guess it kind of blows my mind To think someone could look at that vista And think God needs a neon sign

The old man asked me if I was saved And I turned to check his eyes I didn't see any concern there And it's sad that I wasn't surprised No, he was just trying the secret handshake Where you push until the push comes to shove His hands were deep in his pockets And his eyes said nothing of love

(Chorus:)

Sing me a song about Jesus But please don't sing about the poor It's already been a long day I don't really want to hear any more Sing me a song about Jesus That will make me feel happy inside Sing me a song about forgiveness That will make this lifestyle feel justified Sing a song about Jesus Ran into Jesus this morning He was down on Butler Street He was carrying his bedroll He was standing in line for something to eat He got splashed with the muddy water When the shiny hubcaps rolled by Well he brushed himself off and chuckled and looked over at me And he said "hey, there but for the grace of God go I"

(Chorus:)

Sing me a song about Jesus But please don't sing about the poor It's already been a long day I don't really want to hear any more Sing me a song about Jesus That will make me feel happy inside Sing me a song about forgiveness That will make this lifestyle feel justified Sing a song about Jesus

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FILM CONNECTIONS-SAVED!

Watch the movie *Saved!* (2004, PG-13) with your family. Use the following questions to reflect on the film and the style of evangelism it portrays.

- Mary says she has been faithful since age three.
 Can a three-year-old really be faithful? When can we first genuinely experience God's love? When can we first understand God's love? When can we first accept God's love?
- One of the significant subjects in the film is Dean's sexual orientation. Dean's parents send him for "Christian treatment," but Patrick says that Dean isn't sick. Regardless of what you think about homosexuality, how should Dean's friends and family have treated him?
- Another significant subject in the film is Mary's pregnancy. She rationalized that she was following Jesus when she was having sex, but really she wasn't thinking about the consequences of her choice. (Later she admits that she got the message
- wrong.) Can Jesus direct us toward dangerous behavior?
- What do you think about Pastor Skip? Is Hilary Faye a good leader? What makes a good Christian leader?
- At Mary's most desperate point, she looks up to the cross for help . . . and curses. Would you call that prayer? Would God answer a prayer like that?
- As Mary searches for answers, she says of other religions, "They can't all be right; but they can't all be wrong." What does she mean? What do you think about that?

- How do Mary's original friends treat her? What should real friends have done instead? How does her enemy Cassandra treat her? What does that say about our judging other people?
- When Hilary Faye says, "I am filled with Christ's love," and throws a Bible, Mary answers, "This is not a weapon." How could the Bible have been used in that situation? How should the Bible be used when people are hurting?
- Would God lead Pastor Skip and Mary's mom together, or are they rationalizing immoral behavior?
- Hilary Faye often prays in shallow ways, but when she does pray deeply, she substitutes her vindication for God's voice. How can someone who seems to care so much about God be so misguided? How can we really hear what God wants?
- Mary tells Pastor Skip, "Everything that doesn't fit into some stupid idea of what you think God wants, you just try to hide or fix or get rid of." Dean tells him, "I know in my heart that Jesus still loves me." How would you respond to that circle?
- This movie takes teenage Christian culture to a truly silly degree. But what aspects of these teenagers' school-life might you appreciate in your school? How do you think your environment is more holy than theirs?



GALATIANS 5:13-14

CEV

My friends, you were chosen to be free. So don't use your freedom as an excuse to do anything you want. Use it as an opportunity to serve each other with love. All that the Law says can be summed up in the command to love others as much as you love yourself.

TNIV

You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the sinful nature: rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: "Love your neighbor as yourself."

NRSV

For you were called to freedom, brothers and sisters; only do not use your freedom as an opportunity for self-indulgence, but through love become slaves to one another. For the whole law is summed up in a single commandment, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."



IT'S ALL GREEK TO ME!

The Greek word diakonos (διάκονος) means "servant." This is where we get the English word deacon. Servant comes from the Latin word servus, a direct translation of the Greek word doulos (δουλός), which is a hired personal servant, sometimes awkwardly translated as slave.

> Throughout ancient Greek literature *diakonos* most commonly referred to a king's servant. **Read Matthew 22:13** and John 2:9.

Soon after Jesus' death, the word *diakonos* began being used to reflect a general sense of ministry, mission, or life's service. **Read 2 Corinthians 4:1.** In the Bible, Jesus uses diakonos to refer to a way of living in which one's own interests are less important than others' interests. **Read Mark 9:35.**

Within a few decades after his death, diakonos began being used in another sense: to refer to the office of deacon, which then and now is focused on caring for people. **Read Romans 16:1.** In a few biblical passages, diakonos even refers to Christian deacons who performed their office by serving people food. **Read Acts 6:1-4.**

One thing that set Christians apart from other religious groups in the first two centuries was that deacons cared for sick people, creating something like the first hospital system.¹

1. F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone, eds., The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 795.



NETWORKERS

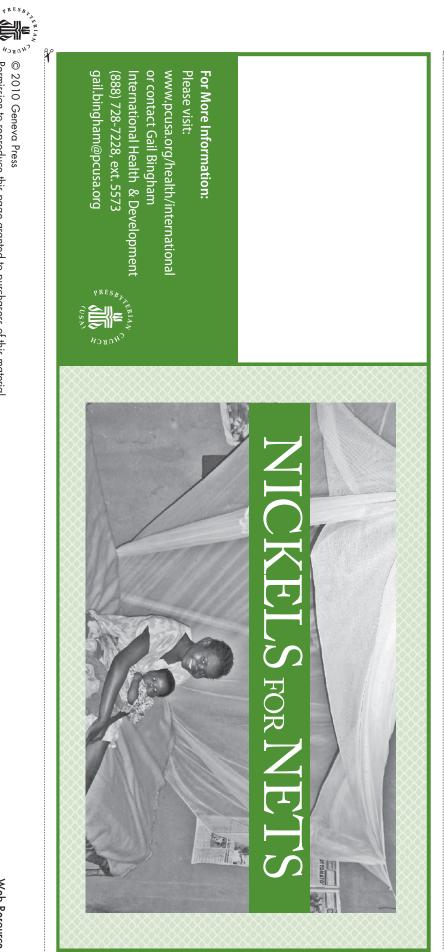
The NetWorkers Malaria Prevention Program was developed by International Health and Development in response to the tragic human toll of malaria, which claims over a million lives each year. Malaria is the leading cause of death among children under five in Africa and a major health threat to pregnant women.

Malaria kills a child every thirty seconds, making it the most common cause of death among children in Africa and the second leading cause of death among children in Asia. This year alone, 700,000 children, most under age five, will die from malaria. Millions of other children fall behind in their education, as an average of six malaria bouts each year makes them miss school repeatedly.

Fortunately, because malaria is a disease caused by parasites borne by night-biting mosquitoes, infection can be significantly reduced simply by sleeping under an insecticide-treated mosquito net. Nets are effective, inexpensive, and easy to use. The NetWorkers program provides nets and malaria prevention education at project sites in Africa and Asia. Every \$10 collected provides a mosquito net and malaria prevention education for a family in sub-Saharan Africa.

Reprinted from pcusa.org/health/international/networkers.htm.







Here's how you can make a bank to support the Nickels for Nets project.

1. Cut the label off this instruction sheet. In the blank area of the label, participants may write their name or draw a picture. Or you may wish to write in basic instructions for your Nickels for Nets project.

so there are no sharp edges. 2. Use any standard size can. (An empty soup can works well.) Make sure the top has been removed carefully

3. Wrap the label around the can and glue or tape over the seam

CAN BANK LABEL

TAPE

CAN

4. Cut a circular piece of nylon net, 6" in diameter. Cut a small slit (about 11/2") in the middle of the net

can. Tie a string or ribbon on top of the overhanging net, around the upper edge of the can, to hold the net top in place. (Putting a rubber band around the fabric, under the ribbon, will hold it securely.) 5. Center the net over the open top of the can and let the extra fabric hang down around the upper edge of the

Pittsburgh, PA 15264–3700. Checks should be made out to PC(USA). Important: Indicate ECO 052095–Nickels for Nets on the check. Thank you! Nickels for Nets is part of PC(USA)'s Healthy Women Healthy Families program. Donations should be sent in the form of a check to PC(USA), P.O. Box 643700

Helping Children Stay Healthy Nickels for Nets



PRESBYTERIAN MISSION AND SERVICE

World Mission

Thirty-five networks that focus on mission in countries around the world are helping PC(USA) congregations engage in mission more effectively. *Learn more at pcusa.org/worldmission*

Presbyterians at Work around the World

The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) works with partner churches and organizations in more than one hundred countries and has appointed personnel to serve in nearly seventy countries.

Learn more at pcusa.org/worldwide

International Health and Development

International Health and Development (IHD) helps PC(USA) church partners address the underlying causes of illness, in collaboration with over thirty mission personnel in more than a dozen countries, and with Presbyterian mission initiators throughout the United States.

Learn more at pcusa.org/health/international

Mission Service Recruitment

Mission Service Recruitment connects Presbyterians with ways to be involved in and to support mission service in the PC(USA). *Learn more at pcusa.org/msr*

Mission Connections

Through the Mission Connections Web site, you can learn about the work of PC(USA) mission personnel around the world and communicate with them. Learn more at pcusa.org/missionconnections/index.htm

International Evangelism

Through its International Evangelism ministry, the PC(USA) seeks to work with congregations, organizations, individuals, and overseas partners in proclaiming the good news of Jesus Christ throughout the world.

Learn more at pcusa.org/evangelism/international

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance enables congregations and mission partners of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to witness to the healing love of Christ through caring for communities adversely affected by crisis and catastrophic events. *Learn more at pcusa.org/pda/whoweare.htm*

Self-Development of People

The Self-Development of People (SDOP) ministry affirms God's concern for humankind and participates in the empowerment of economically poor, oppressed, and disadvantaged people. *Learn more at pcusa.org/sdop*

Presbyterian Hunger Program

The Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP) works to alleviate hunger and to eliminate its causes, responding with compassion and justice to poor and hungry people in U.S. and international communities. *Learn more at pcusa.org/hunger/who.htm*

Interfaith Relations

The Interfaith Relations Office seeks to support those in the church who are interested in, concerned about, or engaged in building interfaith relationships. *Learn more at pcusa.org/interfaith*



PRESBYTERIAN MISSION AND SERVICE (CONTINUED)

Church Growth

This office produces and identifies resources for congregations and middle governing bodies that are helpful in growing healthy, missional, and vital congregations.

Learn more at pcusa.org/churchgrowth

National Volunteers Office

The National Volunteers Office helps adult volunteers share their skills in various settings in the continental United States.

Learn more at pcusa.org/nvo

Presbyterian Border Ministry

Presbyterian Border Ministry (PBM) is called to share a holistic gospel with those who live along the 2,000mile U.S./Mexican border.

Learn more at presbyterianborderministry.org

Presbyterian Peacemaking Program

The work of the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program is guided by three affirmations: that the church is faithful to Jesus Christ when it is engaged in peacemaking, that the church is obedient to Jesus Christ when it nurtures and equips God's people as peacemakers, and that the church bears witness to Christ when it nurtures the moral life of the nation for the sake of peace in the world.

Learn more at pcusa.org/peacemaking

Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy

The Advisory Committee on Social Witness Policy (ACSWP) develops, interprets, and monitors policies that encourage and challenge the Church and society to reflect and act in faithful response to God's call to do justice.

Learn more at pcusa.org/acswp

Mission Responsibility Through Investment

The Mission Responsibility Through Investment Committee of the PC(USA) works to connect Presbyterians to God's call for justice, compassion, and humility through financial investments. Learn more at pcusa.org/mrti

Presbyterian Health, Education and Welfare Association

PHEWA encourages the church to be responsive to the needs of the excluded and suffering by providing programmatic, organizational, and technical assistance to Presbyterians working for justice. *Learn more at pcusa.org/phewa/who.htm*

Presbyterian United Nations Office

The Presbyterian U.N. Office represents the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) at the United Nations. Learn more at pcusa.org/peacemaking/un/index.htm

The Washington Office

The Presbyterian Washington Office is the public policy information and advocacy office of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). *Learn more at pcusa.org/washington/whatis.htm*



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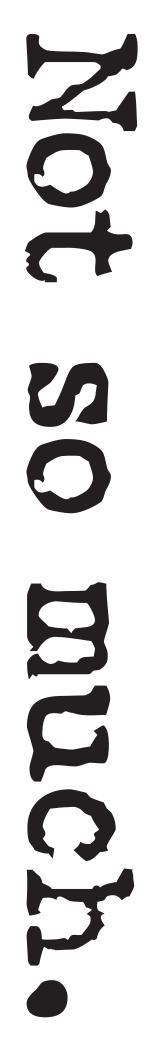


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SMALL GROUP QUESTIONS

- Do you know any Christians who practice their faith differently than you do? What do you know about their faith practices?
- Is there a standard type of Christianity? If so, what is it? If not, why not?
- What do you suppose is similar throughout all or most Christian congregations?
- What differences exist among Christian churches in your community, the nation, and the world? Why do you think God created so many differences?



DIVERSE PRESBYTERIAMS

Multicultural Ministries

The Office of Multicultural Ministries assists the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)'s efforts in becoming a multiracial, multilingual, and multicultural community of faith. It strives to empower congregations and governing bodies as they seek to claim, live, and celebrate the vision expressed in this biblical mandate.

Learn more at: pcusa.org/multicultural/who.htm

New Immigrant Congregational Support

New Immigrant Congregational Support provides the PC(USA) with resources aimed at facilitating entry of new immigrant groups into the life of the denomination.

Learn more at: pcusa.org/immigrant

Presbyterian Border Ministry

Presbyterian Border Ministry, a joint ministry of the PC(USA) and the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico, shares a holistic gospel with those who live along the 2,000-mile U.S./Mexican border. Learn more at: presbyterianborderministry.org

Asian Congregational Support

Asian Congregational Support works with Asian constituencies to assist with issues related to Asian American ministries, to create resources for leadership development, to help in new church development projects, to consult on issues in church redevelopment, to facilitate leadership training conferences and to provide staff service to the Southeast Asian Advisory Committee.

Learn more at: pcusa.org/asian

African American Congregational Support

The African American Congregational Support Office seeks to help black congregations in the PC(USA) grow in health, vitality, and ministry within their communities and the larger church. Learn more at: pcusa.org/africanamerican

Hispanic/Latino-a Congregational Support

Hispanic/Latino-a Congregational Support promotes evangelism and the growth of Hispanic churches by providing information and assistance to local congregations and governing bodies. *Learn more at: pcusa.org/hispanic*

Korean Congregational Support

The Korean Congregational Support Office strives to enable Korean American Presbyterians to participate actively in the mission of the PC(USA) and to facilitate evangelism and leadership development within Korean Presbyterian congregations. *Learn more at: pcusa.org/korean*

Middle Eastern Congregational Support

The office of Middle Eastern Congregational Support provides spiritual and organizational services to enhance the ministry of Middle Eastern Presbyterian congregations and fellowships in the United States. *Learn more at: pcusa.org/middleeastern*

Native American Congregational Support

The Native American Congregational Support Office enables Native American Presbyterians to participate actively in the mission of the PC(USA) and facilitates evangelism and leadership development in Native American congregations.

Learn more at: pcusa.org/nativeamerican





DIVERSE PRESBYTERIANS (CONTINUED)

Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries and Presbyterian Women

The Office of Racial Ethnic and Women's Ministries and Presbyterian Women equips, empowers, and inspires individuals, congregations, and the whole church to develop Presbyterian communities of faith that reflect our multicultural society, build leaders of every race and gender, and work for racial and gender justice.

Learn more at: pcusa.org/women

National Network of Presbyterian College Women

The National Network of Presbyterian College Women connects young women in college who are seeking to understand what it means to claim a Christian faith that empowers women. *Learn more at: pcusa.org/nnpcw/aboutus/index.htm*

Racial Ethnic Young Women Together

The purpose of REYWT is to be a nationally structured network of racial ethnic young women whose leadership will reflect the diversity of today's church and who will develop and provide resources that support the goal of becoming a vital and recognizable constituency of the PC(USA). Learn more at: pcusa.org/reywt/work/ourwork.htm

Racial Justice and Advocacy

The PC(USA) professes that racism, in all its forms, is contrary to the gospel of Jesus Christ. Yet it acknowledges that racism is a reality in both church and society. In faithful witness to the love of Christ, the PC(USA) is committed to confronting the ideology of racism and racial oppression, working to overcome racism with prayer, discernment, and worship-based action.

Learn more at: pcusa.org/racialjustice/whoweare.htm

Collegiate Ministries

The PC(USA) Collegiate Ministries support the work of over 1,300 higher education ministries serving on behalf of the PC(USA).

Learn more at: pcusa.org/collegiate/aboutcollegiate.htm

Ministries with Youth

The Presbyterian Youth Connection seeks to provide young people with an identity as believers in Jesus Christ, a sense of belonging in the PC(USA), and skills as leaders.

Learn more at: pcusa.org/youthministry

Presbyterians in Covenant with Children

The Presbyterians in Covenant with Children Network unites PC(USA) congregations and groups in ministries of justice and compassion for children through worship, education, service, and advocacy. *Learn more at: pcusa.org/children*

Men of the Church

The mission of Presbyterian Men is to lead men into a vital relationship with Christ and to assist them in their spiritual, personal, and community development. *Learn more at: pcusa.org/men*

Older Adult Ministries

The Older Adult Ministries Network equips leaders, develops covenant connections, and provides resources to welcome and encourage older adults to participate at every level of the PC(USA). Learn more at: pcusa.org/olderadults

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