

This book belongs to



Annunciation
of Our Lady

EPISCOPAL CHURCH

*Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord!
Unnumbered blessings give my spirit voice;
Tender to me the promise of his word;
In God my Savior shall my heart rejoice.*

*Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his Name!
Make known his might, the deeds his arm has done;
His mercy sure, from age to age to same;
His holy Name--the Lord, the Mighty One.*

*Tell out, my soul, the greatness of his might!
Powers and dominions lay their glory by
Proud hearts and stubborn wills are put to flight
The hungry fed, the humble lifted high.*

*Tell out, my soul, the glories of his word!
Firm is his promise, and his mercy sure
Tell out, my soul, the greatness of the Lord
To children's children and for evermore!*

*Words by Timothy Dudley-Smith
based on the Magnificat (Song of Mary)
Luke 1:46-55*

Week 1

Our Sacred Stories

Introduction to the Series

1. Structure and goals of the series.
2. Norms and expectations
3. Lightbulbs

The Spirituality of Story-telling and Story-listening

“*My story* is important
not because it is mine,
God knows, but because
if I tell it anything like right,
the chances are you will recognize
that, in many ways, it is also yours ...
It is through our stories that God
makes himself known to each of us
most powerfully and personally.
If this is true, it means that
to lose track of our stories
is to be profoundly impoverished
not only humanly but also spiritually.”

*Frederick Buechner,
Telling Secrets*

Our Stories

1. How long have you been coming to Annunciation?

2 0 1 9

– _____ *year you arrived*
_____ *years at Annunciation*

2. Get a piece of string that's *closest* to the number of years you've been at Annunciation.
3. At your table, stretch your string out or hold it between your fingers if you can.
Take a moment to visualize this string as your entire life in this church.

4. We're going to decorate your string with a few of your most important stories. We'll start with your **First Sunday** at Annunciation.

In the space below, write what concrete things you remember about this day: *What did you see? What did you hear? Whom did you meet? What was done and said? What about this day made you come back again?*

5. When ready, take one ornament and write "First Sunday" on it. Then, write on it one or two strong words from the box above. Finally, tie this ornament near the left end of your string (leave a little slack at the end).

6. Now, add up to 3 more stories to your string. Some ideas to get you started:

Special worship events:

Easter, Christmas, Holy Week

Social Events

Picnics, Dinners/Dances, auctions, garage sales, Lunch Bunch, etc.

Life Events

wedding, baptism, confirmation, reception, funeral

Service Projects:

Habitat for Humanity, Appalachian Service Project, PADS, Vets Closet, Feed My Starving Children, etc.

Interpersonal:

Heart-to-hearts, conflicts resolved, help received, help given, how you have felt valued

Spiritual Growth

Sermons, new piece of music, classes/forums, prayer groups, study groups

7. As before, use the boxes below to write what concrete things you remember about these moments: *What happened? What did you see? What did you hear? Whom did you meet? What was said/done? What about this event changed your life for the better?*

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8. When ready, take 3 ornaments for your 3 stories. On each ornament, write a word or two to describe each story (or even give it a title!). Tie each ornament onto your string approximately when it happened during your time at Annunciation. It doesn't have to be exact!
9. Lastly, when invited, hang your string on the big timeline on the wall.

Plenary Discussion

Week 2 | Going Deeper: Bible Stories

The Secret to Reading the Bible

Individual: Open the Bible

1. Pick one of your stories from last week, and review the details of that story to yourself. OR, if you weren't here last week: Go to pages 4-5, and use steps 6 and 7 to come up with one story for today.
2. Now, use the list below to pick a story from the Bible that reminds you of your story — or if you know a story that's not on this list, use that. Don't overthink it!
3. Use a Bible to look up the story you selected. Read through it on your own.

Old Testament

The Beginning	Genesis 1:1 - 2:3
Adam and Eve	Genesis 2:15 - 3:24
Cain and Abel	Genesis 4:1 - 4:16
The Flood	Genesis 6:9 - 9:17
The Tower of Babel	Genesis 11:1 - 11:9
God's Covenant with Abram	Genesis 12:1-9; 17:1-8
Three Divine Visitors	Genesis 18:1 - 18:15
Sacrifice of Isaac	Genesis 22:1 - 22:19
Jacob steals his brother Esau's blessing	Genesis 27:1 - 27:40
Jacob's Ladder	Genesis 28:10 - 28:22
Jacob wrestles with a divine being, renamed	Genesis 32:22-32
Jacob reconciles with Esau	Genesis 33:1-17
Joseph and His Brothers	Genesis 37
Joseph interprets Pharaoh's dreams	Genesis 41
Moses & the Burning Bush	Exodus 3:1 - 3:15
The Ten Plagues on Egypt	Exodus 7:6 - 11:10
The Passover	Exodus 12
Crossing the Red Sea	Exodus 13:17 - 14:31
Bread from heaven	Exodus 16
Water from a rock	Exodus 17:1-7
The Golden Calf	Exodus 32

Joshua to succeed Moses	Deut. 31:1-8
Death of Moses	Deut. 34
Hospitality to Spies	Joshua 2
Naomi & Ruth	Ruth 1-4
Samuel anoints David	1 Samuel 16:1-13
David and Goliath	1 Samuel 17
Nathan rebukes David	2 Samuel 12:1-15
Salomon's wisdom	1 Kings 3:16-28
Solomon's temple	1 Kings 6
Solomon & the Queen of Sheba	1 Kings 10:1-13
God appears to Elijah	1 Kings 19
Elijah ascends to heaven	2 Kings 2:1-2:12
Elisha heals Naaman of leprosy	2 Kings 5
Valley of Dry Bones	Ezekiel 37:1-14
Writing on the Wall	Daniel 5
Daniel in the Lion's Den	Daniel 6

New Testament

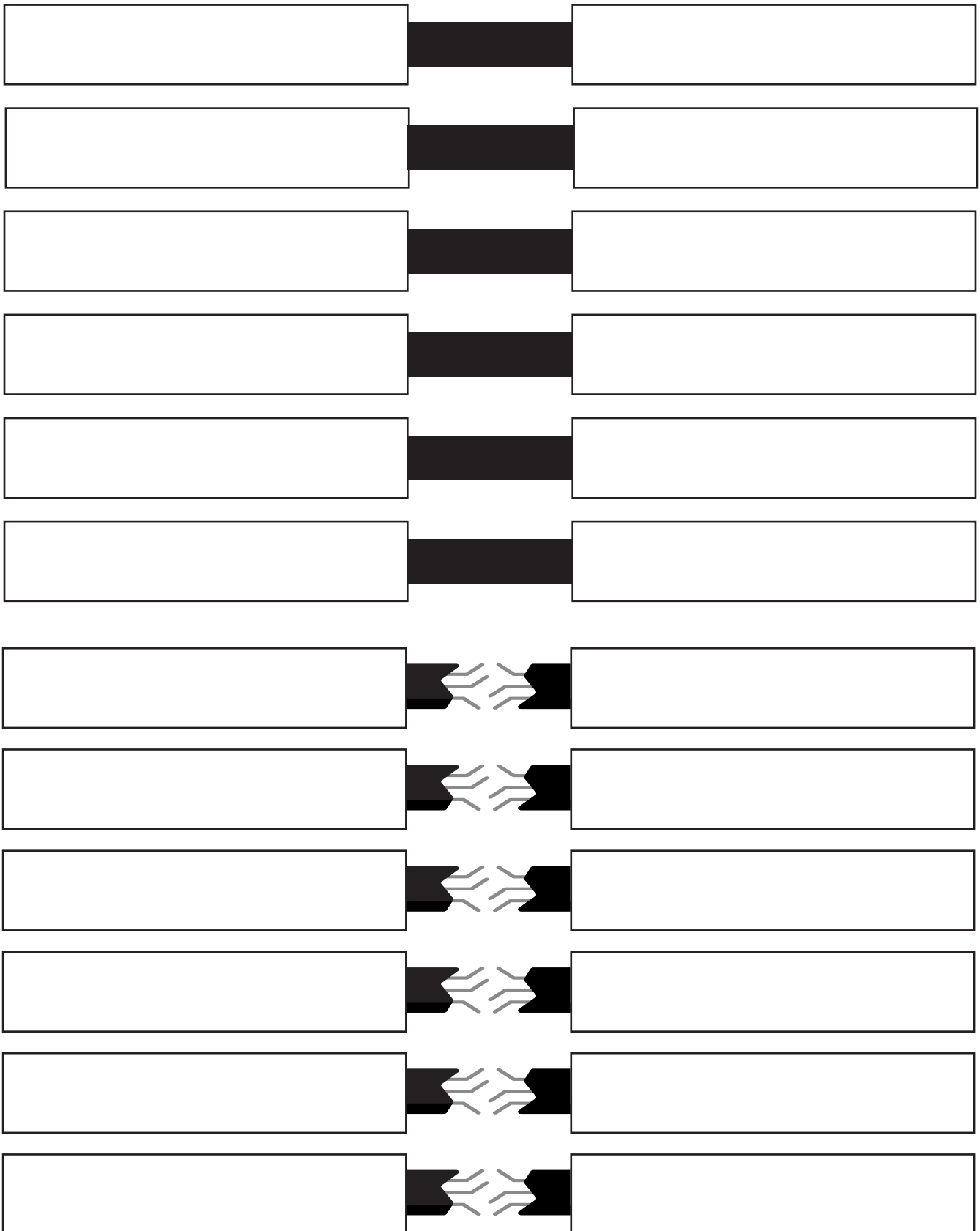
The Birth of Jesus Foretold	Luke 1:26 - 1:38
The Birth of Jesus	Luke 2:1 - 2:7
The Shepherds and the Angels	Luke 2:8 - 2:20
The Visit of the Magi	Matthew 2:1 - 2:12
Jesus Presented to the Temple	Luke 2:22 - 2:40
The Escape to Egypt	Matthew 2:13 - 2:23
The Boy Jesus at the Temple	Luke 2:41 - 2:52
John the Baptist Prepares the Way	Matthew 3:1 - 3:12 Mark 1:1 - 1:8 Luke 3:1 - 3:18
The Baptism of Jesus	Matthew 3:13 - 3:17 Mark 1:9 - 1:11 Luke 3:21 - 3:22 John 1:29 - 1:34
The Temptation of Jesus	Matthew 4:1 - 4:11 Mark 1:12 - 1:13 Luke 4:1 - 4:13
The Calling of the First Disciples	Matthew 4:18 - 4:22 Mark 1:16 - 1:20 Luke 5:1 - 5:11 John 1:35 - 1:51
Jesus Changes Water to Wine	John 2:1 - 2:11
Jesus Rejected at Nazareth	Luke 4:13 - 4:30
Jesus Heals Mary	Mark 1:21 - 1:34 Luke 4:31 - 4:41
Jesus Heals a Paralytic	Mark 2:1 - 2:12 Luke 5:17 - 5:26
Jesus Teaches Nicodemus	John 3:1 - 3:21
Jesus Talks With a Samaritan Woman	John 4:4 - 4:42
The Faith of the Centurion	Matthew 8:5 - 8:13 Luke 7:1 - 7:11
Jesus Calms the Storm	Matthew 8:23 - 8:27 Mark 4:35 - 4:41 Luke 8:22 - 8:25
Eating With Sinners and Tax Collectors	Matthew 9:10 - 9:13 Mark 2:15 - 2:17 Luke 5:29 - 5:32
A Dead Girl and a Sick Woman	Matthew 9:18 - 9:26 Mark 5:21 - 5:43 Luke 8:40 - 8:56
John the Baptist Beheaded	Matthew 14:1 - 14:12 Mark 6:14 - 6:29
Jesus Feeds Five Thousand	Matthew 14:13 - 14:21 Mark 6:30 - 6:44 Luke 9:10 - 9:17 John 6:1 - 6:15
Jesus Walks on the Water	Matthew 14:22 - 14:36 Mark 6:45 - 6:56 John 6:16 - 6:24
Peter's Confession to Christ	Matthew 16:13 - 16:20 Mark 8:27 - 8:30 Luke 9:18 - 9:27

The Transfiguration	Matthew 17:1 - 17:13 Mark 9:2 - 9:13 Luke 9:18 - 9:27
The Healing of an Epileptic Boy	Matthew 17:14 - 17:21 Mark 9:14 - 9:29 Luke 9:37 - 9:43
Who Is The Greatest?	Matthew 18:1 - 18:6 Mark 9:33 - 9:37 Luke 9:46 - 9:48
Jesus Heals a Man Born Blind	John 9:1 - 9:43
The Parable of the Good Samaritan	Luke 10:25 - 10:37
At the Home of Mary and Martha	Luke 10:38 - 10:42
Jesus Raises Lazarus From the Dead	John 11:1 - 11:46
The Little Children and Jesus	Matthew 19:13 - 19:15 Mark 10:13 - 10:16 Luke 18:15 - 18:17
The Rich Young Man	Matthew 19:16 - 19:30 Mark 10:17 - 10:31 Luke 18:18 - 18:29
Zacchaeus the Tax Collector	Luke 19:10
Jesus Anointed at Bethany	Matthew 26:6 - 26:13 Mark 14:3 - 14:9 Luke 7:36 - 7:50 John 12:1 - 12:8
The Triumphal Entry	Matthew 21:1 - 21:11 Mark 11:1 - 11:11 Luke 19:28 - 19:44
Jesus at the Temple	Matthew 21:12 - 21:13 Mark 11:15 - 11:19 Luke 19:45 - 19:46
The Widow's Offering	Matthew 12:41 - 12:44 Luke 21:1 - 21:4
The Greatest Commandment	Matthew 22:34 - 22:40 Mark 12:28 - 12:34
The Last Supper	Matthew 26:17 - 26:30 Mark 14:12 - 14:26 Luke 22:7 - 22:34 John 13:1 - 13:30
Jesus' Agony in Gethsemane	Matthew 26:36 - 26:56 Mark 14:32 - 14:52 Luke 22:39 - 22:54 John 18:1 - 18:12
The Resurrection	Matthew 28:1 - 28:15 Mark 16:1 - 16:8 Luke 24:1 - 24:12 John 20:1 - 20:18
On the Road to Emmaus	Luke 24:13 - 24:35
Jesus Appears to the Disciples	Matthew 28:16 - 28:20 Luke 24:36 - 24:53 John 20:19 - 20:29
Jesus Reconciles with Peter	John 21:1 - 21:25
Jesus Taken Up Into Heaven	Acts 1:4 - 1:11

4. Where are the connections between your story and the bible story? What are the disconnections? Use the diagram below to note them.

Your Story

Bible Story



Pairs: Helping Each Other Hear a Word from God

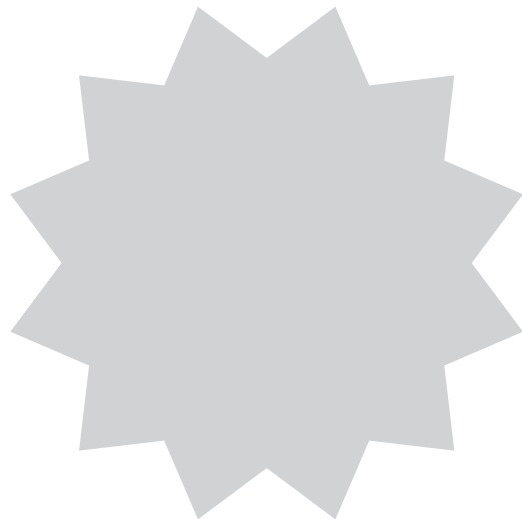
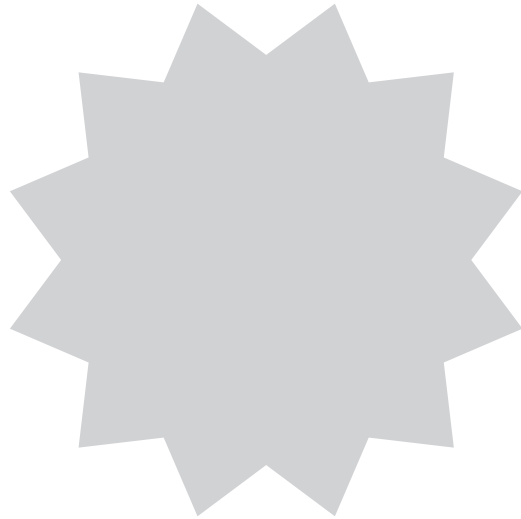
5. Get in pairs for discussion.

Share your stories and diagrams with one another.

How do the connections with the bible help you understand your own story in new ways?

How do the disconnections?

6. Write down the *revelations* you've received about your own story:



Plenary Discussion

Week 3

Our Values DNA

Decoding Our Stories

“The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”

Matthew 13:33

“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which someone found and hid; then in his joy he goes and sells all that he has and buys that field.”

Matthew 13:44

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant in search of fine pearls; on finding one pearl of great value, he went and sold all that he had and bought it.”

Matthew 13:45

Examples of Values

Acceptance	Environmentalism	Intelligence	Quiet
Achievement	Equality	Intimacy	Rationality
Action	Excellence	Joy	Reconciliation
Adventure	Excitement	Justice	Reliability
Affection	Fierceness	Knowledge	Respect
Ambition	Financial Security	Labor	Safety
Art	Forbearance	Laughter	Self-control
Beauty	Forgiveness	Learning	Self-esteem
Belonging	Freedom	Loyalty	Serenity
Challenge	Fun	Optimism	Service
Change	Generosity	Mentorship	Social Reform
Comfort	Harmony	Morality	Skill-building
Companionship	Health	Music	Stability
Compassion	Help from Others	Mysticism	Strength
Consensus	Help for Others	Nature	Success
Continuity	Heritage	New Ideas	Teamwork
Courage	Honesty	Passion	Technology
Curiosity	Hope	Peace	Tradition
Creativity	Humility	Personal Growth	Transcendence
Dignity	Humor	Play	Welcoming Strangers
Diversity	Inclusivity	Pleasure	Witness
Education	Independence	Power	
Emotion	Integrity	Purposefulness	

Individual: Pick a Story

1. Pick one of your stories from Week 1, and review the details of that story to yourself. OR, if you weren't here for that: Go to p. 4, and use steps 6 and 7 to come up with 1 story for today.

In Pairs: Listening for the Leaven

2. Pair with someone you don't know very well. Designate someone as Partner A and the other as Partner B.
3. Partner A tells their story to Partner B, while Partner B listens carefully and uses the box below to jot down the VALUES they hear in the story.
6. Rinse and repeat! Partner B now tells their story while Partner A listens and jots down the values they hear in the box below.

Partner A Values

Partner B Values

4. Partner B will then tell A what values they wrote down, and Partner A will write those down in the box above.
5. If Partner A disagrees with any of those, discuss it until you come to agreement. Cross off any you decide to get rid of. If Partner A wants to *add* any values, discuss that, too. Your goal is to have the same values listed in the box above.

7. Partner A will then tell B what values they wrote down, and Partner B will write those down in the box above.
8. As before, come to consensus about what values underlie this story.

In Table Groups: Listening for Connections

9. Go around the table, with each person sharing the list of values from their own story. Your Vestry facilitator will write these on newsprint. Every time a value is repeated, add a check mark to it.
10. After you've heard from everybody, take a look at all the values you have on your sheet.
Which values have the most check marks?
Do any of the values go together and can be combined into one?
Are there any values that are outliers that could be crossed out?
(Remember, our goal is to find our **common** values, not to discount any individual's personal values!)
11. When ready, post your newsprint on the wall.

Plenary: Our Values DNA

12. With all the newsprint up, we'll see what common values have emerged among all the groups. Use the box below to write down the common values we have uncovered today.



13. Plenary Discussion:

Do these values seem right? Any surprises?

Does naming these values help other stories emerge for you?

*How might we live even more into these values as a community?
What concrete things might be different?*

Is Annunciation's telling other people about we truly value here?

Week 4 | Going Deeper

Generational Values

Formative Events

Silents 1928-1945	Boomers 1946-1964	Gen X 1965-1980	Millennials 1981-1996	Gen Z 1997-2012

Cultural Trends

Silents 1928-1945	Boomers 1946-1964	Gen X 1965-1980	Millennials 1981-1996	Gen Z 1997-2012

Core Values

Silents 1928-1945	Boomers 1946-1964	Gen X 1965-1980	Millennials 1981-1996	Gen Z 1997-2012

God and Spirituality

Silents 1928-1945	Boomers 1946-1964	Gen X 1965-1980	Millennials 1981-1996	Gen Z 1997-2012

Week 5

Where We Meet God

Individual: Spiritual Type Test *circle one letter for each question*

- At the beach, which sounds most fun?
 - Rent a surfboard and take surfing lessons from a pro.
 - Invite all your friends to take turns surfing on your boogie board.
 - Round up a bunch of kids and teach them how to body surf.
 - Swim out beyond the breakers and float in the gentle, just-forming waves.
- Your idea of a good meeting is one that:
 - includes plenty of time for networking with other people there.
 - there are no good meetings!
 - starts on time and covers everything on the publicized agenda
 - ends with a concrete plan of action
- Which best describes what you like(d) most about school?
 - learning about historical people who have made a difference in the world
 - hanging out with your friends at recess and/or conversations with the teacher
 - the chance to understand yourself more clearly
 - the intellectual challenge
- Your ideal day with friends would include:
 - time to sit quietly and talk
 - a full schedule of planned activities
 - working together on a community project
 - spontaneously deciding on something fun to do
- Which career appeals most to you?
 - college professor
 - community activist
 - cruise ship social director
 - web page designer
- If lost in a jungle, your first impulse is to:
 - be still until you sensed which way to go
 - yell for others
 - study the map
 - take out your machete and start hacking
- Which comes most naturally to you?
 - doing
 - thinking
 - feeling
 - intuition
- During a storm, a huge tree is blown over and smashes down onto your car. You:
 - warn your neighbors to move their cars away from other large trees in the neighborhood
 - think of how you could have known the tree was weakened
 - envision what your new car will look like
 - hug your family or friends and cry
- You're in the 10-items-or-less express lane at the grocery store, when you notice the person ahead of you has at least 50 items in their cart. You are most likely to:
 - tap them on the shoulder and gently suggest they move to another lane
 - see it as an opportunity to browse the magazines in the checkout rack
 - turn to the person in line behind you and start a conversation
 - check the other lanes and mentally calculate if it will be quicker to move to one of them
- You got a new job and you need some wheels pronto. An important feature you'll look for in a car is:
 - reliability
 - color
 - design
 - fuel efficiency

11. You've just met the love of your life. To show how you feel, you surprise them with:
 - A a balloon bouquet
 - B tickets to a charity benefit concert
 - C a long handwritten letter
 - D homemade dinner by candlelight
12. Your ideal restaurant a nice night out:
 - A an inexpensive natural foods café
 - B a quiet and cozy little bistro
 - C an international award-winning restaurant
 - D a trendy and crowded eatery
13. The best part of a church service for you is the:
 - A moments of peace and quiet
 - B announcements about upcoming projects
 - C readings or sermon
 - D the music
14. The best compliment you could receive is for someone to say you are:
 - A charming
 - B patient
 - C honest
 - D logical
15. Which of these best describes you on a really bad day:
 - A self-absorbed
 - B reckless
 - C submissive
 - D cruel
16. Which best describes the state of your desk at work or school:
 - A extremely well-organized; anyone could find anything easily
 - B organized enough that I can find what I need, most of the time
 - C sometimes organized, sometimes messy
 - D messy
17. Which of these roles do you play most often:
 - A leader
 - B peacemaker
 - C reformer
 - D promoter
18. How do you most want to be perceived by others:
 - A genuine
 - B capable
 - C dependable
 - D successful
19. Which characteristic best describes you:
 - A strong-willed
 - B self-confident
 - C diplomatic
 - D organized
20. Which characteristic describes you when you feel overextended at work or school? Do you become:
 - A too serious
 - B too insensitive
 - C too sensitive
 - D too excitable
21. Which of these quotes do you like best:
 - A "The harder you work, the harder it is to surrender."—Vince Lombardi
 - B "It is not enough to have a good mind; the main thing is to use it well."—Rene Descartes
 - C "I believe it's better to be looked over than it is to be overlooked."—Mae West
 - D "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed it is the only thing that ever has."—Margaret Mead
22. If you were "sorted" into a Hogwarts house, which house would that be:
 - A Slytherin, the house known for being resourceful, clever, imaginative, and deep
 - B Hufflepuff, home to students who are happy, loyal, and true
 - C Gryffindor, whose students are willing to fight for what is right and good
 - D Ravenclaw, the wise old house, reserved for those of ready wit and mind

*This quiz is adapted from
MethodX Spiritual Types by Helen Neinst,
published by Upper Room Ministries, 2003.*

Your Spiritual Type(s)

1. Use the Scoring Sheet handout to figure out your Spiritual Type.
Based on the total circled in each column ...

My strongest spiritual type is _____

My 2nd strongest is _____

My 3rd strongest is _____

My 4th strongest is _____

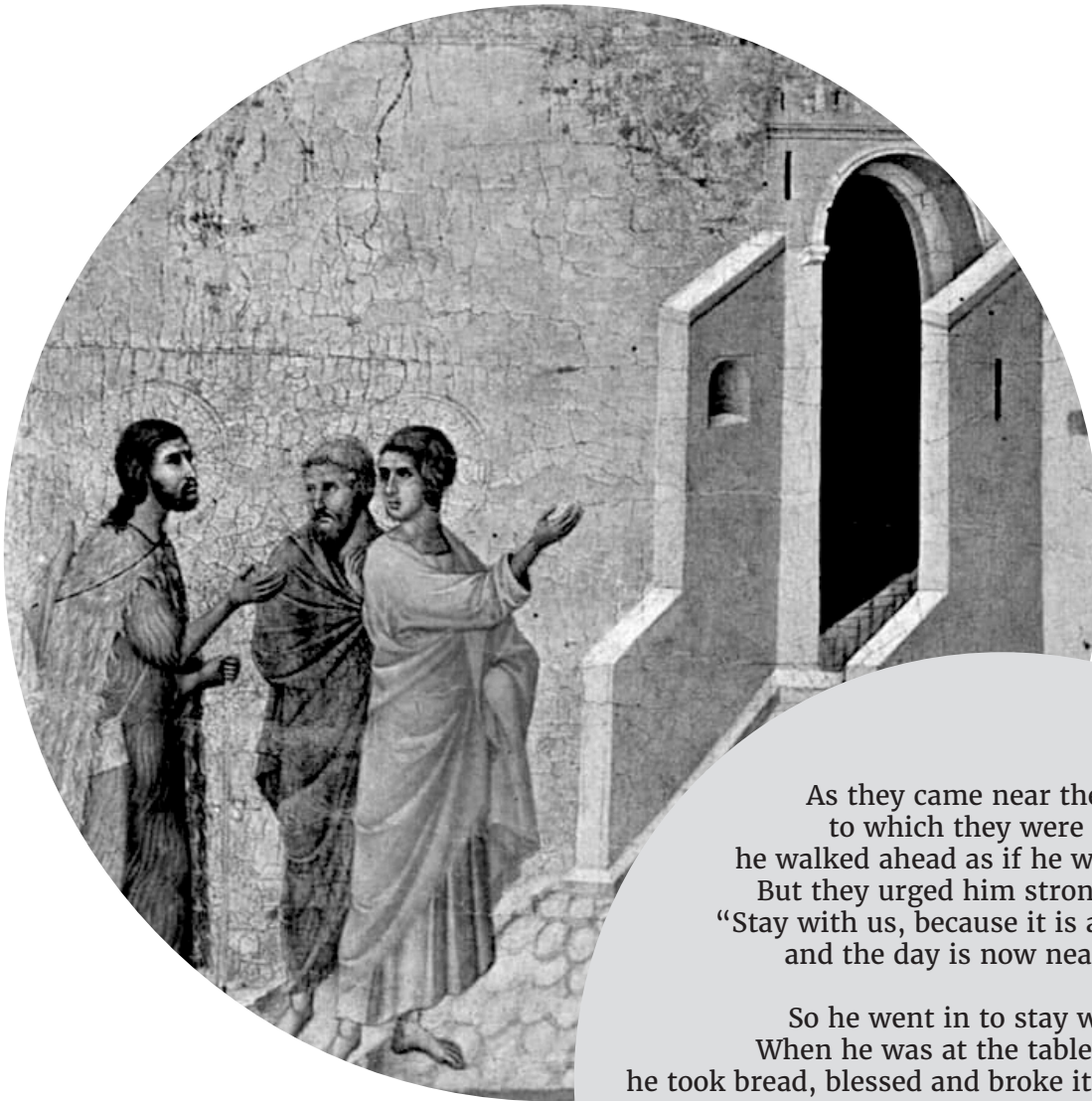
Groups: Identifying Practices

2. We will split into groups based on our strongest Spiritual Types.
3. Your group's Facilitator will read the description of your Spiritual Type.
Group Discussion: *What rings true for you in this description? What doesn't?*
4. The group will then discuss different elements of our liturgy, sharing what sorts of things tend to "work" for you when it comes to "meeting God." Write your own favorite(s) in the box below.

5. Take a moment to individually identify other practices/places where you tend to meet God at Annunciation. Write them below. The group will then gather these together.

Plenary: Hearing From All Types

6. Each group will report on what liturgical pieces and other practices are places where they meet God.
7. Plenary Discussion:
What did you hear today?
What surprised you?
What questions arose for you?



As they came near the village
to which they were going,
he walked ahead as if he were going on.
But they urged him strongly, saying,
“Stay with us, because it is almost evening
and the day is now nearly over.”

So he went in to stay with them.
When he was at the table with them,
he took bread, blessed and broke it, and gave it to them.
Then their eyes were opened, and they recognized him;
and he vanished from their sight.

They said to each other,
“Were not our hearts burning within us
while he was talking to us on the road,
while he was opening the scriptures to us?”

Luke 24:28-32

Tell Out My Soul

The Spirituality of Invitation

“*Evangelism is not what other people say that it is. Evangelism is sharing the faith that is in you and listening and learning from the faith that’s in somebody else. It’s not just about you talking — it’s about listening and sharing; it’s about a relationship where God can get in the midst.*”

Presiding Bishop Michael Curry

“*Will you by word **and** example proclaim the Good News of God in Christ?*”

*Baptismal Covenant,
The Book of Common Prayer*

“*...our failure to commend the faith that is in us, We confess to you, Lord.*”

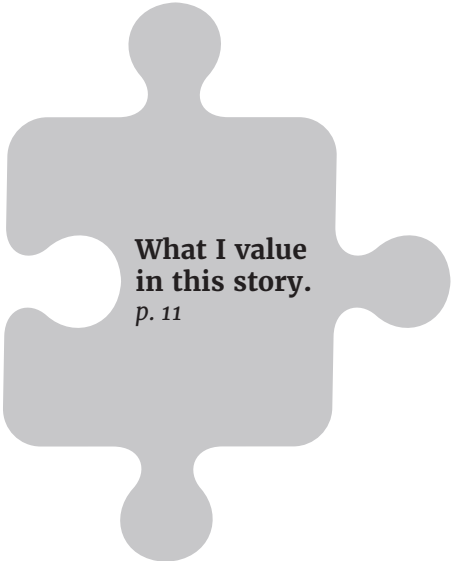
*Ash Wednesday
Litany of Penitence,
The Book of Common Prayer*

Plenary Discussion: Naming Our F-Words

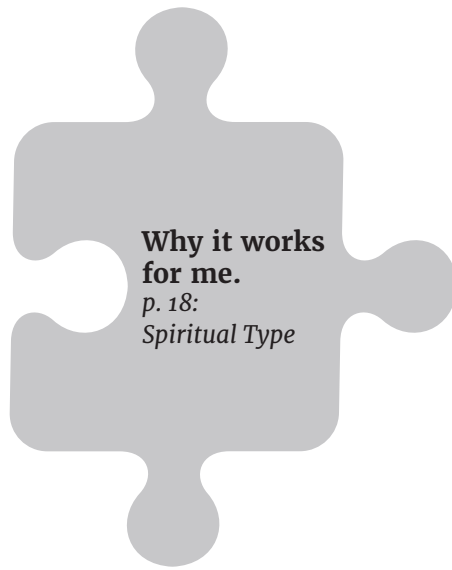
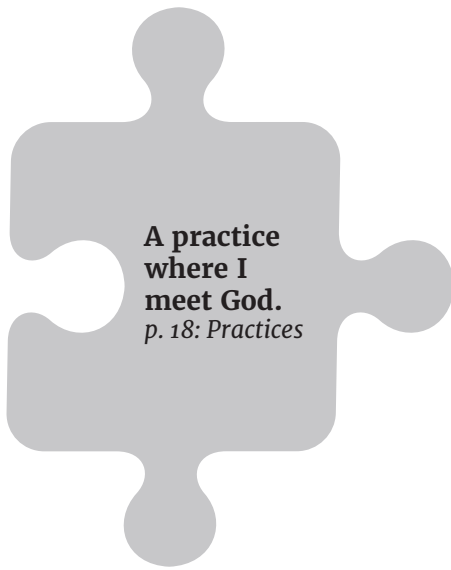


By Yourself: Creating an “Elevator Speech”

OPTION 1



OPTION 2



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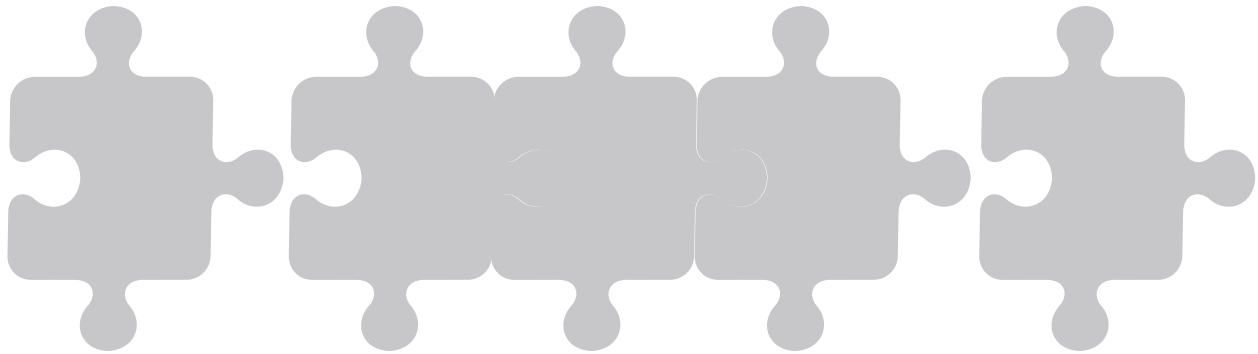
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Table Groups: Share Your “Elevator Speeches”

1. Everyone is encouraged to share their speech with your table, just as you would say it to someone you want to invite.
2. Each table will nominate one person to share their elevator speech with the Plenary.

Plenary: Hearing from Around the Room

Plenary: What Comes Next



Who?

Demographics
Local Dynamics
Personal Needs
Places of life &
places of anguish
Differences from
other churches

Your Invitation

What?

Liturgy
Music
Formation
Projects
...

Plenary: The Soul of this Congregation



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