

All Church Worship Brainstorming
“Now What?! Walking the Pathway to Discipleship”
Spring 2015

Monday, April 20, 2015
 Pastor Mary and Ivan Ivanov’s house
 6:00 pm Cookout/Potluck Dinner
 7:00-9:00 pm Brainstorming for Worship

What does it look like to be a fully devoted disciple of Jesus Christ? In this next series, “Now What?! Walking the Pathway to Discipleship,” we will examine how we are called to be intentional in our walk of faith so that we might become disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Join us at 6:00 pm for dinner. Ivan is grilling ---maybe a delicious Croatian specialty. Please bring a dish to pass.

RSVP’s are helpful but not mandatory. Sign up at church or contact the church office (213-798-2181 or lakeharbor@aol.com). Carpooling is encouraged, but not critical since all the snow should be gone by then. Please read the scripture and message synopses and preview the videos before we gather if at all possible.

Background Information

Intentional faith development happens not only in worship, but also in all the ministries that help us grow in faith outside of weekly worship. VCI prescription #3 calls for preaching a series on the pathway plan. The overall goal is to make the pathway directional without being prescriptive. How do we respond to God’s grace in our lives? What does the movement of grace look like? How do we continue to grow in holiness of heart and life? How does our Wesleyan heritage inform our pathway to discipleship?

Our Pathway model looks like this--- our existing classes have not been filled in:

| Pathway to Discipleship Phases | Bible Study (Information – Head) | Small Group and Elective (Formation – Heart) | Immersion Experience (Transformation – Hands) |
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| Welcome (emerging and renewing faith) | | | |
| Empower by Christ (faith development and growth) | | | |
| Sending (deepening and mission) | | | |

Images for the series: head, heart hands

Ideas for witness: Could we invite people to share each week (3-5 min.) about a class or ministry that helps them to be more fully devoted to Jesus Christ? How has learning or serving in community with others transformed you?

Potential sharers: Lynne Richmond, Jean Burmeister, Ron Zuker, Jim Post, Michael Boersma,

Jean Wasserman, Cyndi Barefoot, Mary Hubbell, Nola Jean Wilson

Spiritual gifts: How can we integrate an opportunity for people to complete a spiritual gifts inventory at some point during this series? Could it be as an offering or as an expression of our commitment to Christ?

Thoughts on discipleship: For another look at walking the road to discipleship see http://www.sharefaith.com/blog/2015/04/10-guidelines-discipling-believers-easter-done/?utm_source=Email&utm_medium=SF-Newsletter&utm_campaign=SF-Mag04.07.

Things to think about: 1) Prevenient, justifying and sanctifying grace. 2) Sanctification is process of becoming holy in one's heart and life. 3) Love of God shed in one's heart. 4) Revival of heart and soul so that the world might be changed. 5) Intellect and emotion.

Additional scripture that speaks to discipleship

II Corinthians 5: 17 (NLT):

¹⁷This means that anyone who belongs to Christ has become a new person. The old life is gone; a new life has begun!

Philippians 2: 5 (TNIV):

⁵In your relationships with one another, have the same attitude of mind Christ Jesus had:

Note from Karen: I am including information for April 12 and 19 worship so that you can see the big picture for this series.

April 12, 2015: "Now What?" (Jimmy Epplert preaching) 2nd Sunday of Easter

Scripture: Matthew 28:16-20 (New Living Translation)

¹⁶Then the eleven disciples left for Galilee, going to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go.

¹⁷When they saw him, they worshiped him—but some of them doubted!

¹⁸Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth. ¹⁹Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. ²⁰Teach these new disciples to obey all the commands I have given you. And be sure of this: I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

Synopsis: Great! Easter is over. He is risen. Death is defeated. Candy is half off. Now what?! What's next? What do we do? Where do we go? Who leads us? When are we done?

Felt need: Commit to taking the next step on the path to discipleship.

Visuals: Head. Heart. Hands. Tomb.

Media: "Our Mission after Easter." Length: 1:41. Cost: \$19.98. The resurrection of Jesus is cause for great celebration on Easter Sunday. However, it's in the days after Easter that Jesus appeared to His disciples and gave the church it's mission. Preview it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/59334/our-mission-after-easter>

Activity:

Music: 369 Blessed Assurance; 2150 Lord, Be Glorified; 2241 The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve

April 19, 2015: “Better Together”

3rd Sunday of Easter

Scripture: Acts 2: 42-47 (Today’s New International Version)

⁴² They **devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship**, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. ⁴⁶ **Every day they continued to meet together** in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷ praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Synopsis: In the Book of Acts, the importance of community is clear. The early church is a picture of people living the life of faith together – learn, eating, praying, sharing. How do we stay connected to one another and live in that same way today?

Felt need:

Visuals:

Media possibilities:

- “Alone in a Crowd.” Length: 1:21. Cost: \$9.98. Church is a community, connected to each other through the person of the Lord Jesus Christ. Loneliness should not be part of the Christian Church. See it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/34788/alone-in-a-crowd-small-groups>.
- “Clear.” Length: 2:00 pm. Cost: \$22.00. It’s rather common for us to complicate the teachings of Christ, but at their core, his teachings are very simple. This opener gets to the heart of being a church. See at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/51975/clear>.

Activity:

Music: Bind Us Together (FWS 2226)

Mission Moment: Community EnCompass (Sarah Rinsema-Sybenga)

April 26, 2015: “Teaching and Learning”

4th Sunday of Easter

Scripture: Acts 8: 26-40 (TNIV) **Philip and the Ethiopian**

²⁶ Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, “Go south to the road—the desert road—that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza.” ²⁷ So he started out, and on his way he met an Ethiopian eunuch, an important official in charge of all the treasury of the Kandake (which means “queen of the Ethiopians”). This man had gone to Jerusalem to worship, ²⁸ and on his way home was sitting in his chariot reading the Book of Isaiah the prophet. ²⁹ The Spirit told Philip, “Go to that chariot and stay near it.”

³⁰ **Then Philip ran up to the chariot and heard the man reading Isaiah the prophet. “Do you understand what you are reading?” Philip asked.**

³¹ **“How can I,” he said, “unless someone explains it to me?” So he invited Philip to come up and sit with him.**

³² This is the passage of Scripture the eunuch was reading:

“He was led like a sheep to the slaughter, and as a lamb before its shearer is silent, so he did not open his mouth.³³ In his humiliation he was deprived of justice. Who can speak of his descendants? For his life was taken from the earth.”

³⁴ The eunuch asked Philip, “Tell me, please, who is the prophet talking about, himself or someone else?” ³⁵ Then Philip began with that very passage of Scripture and told him the good news about Jesus.

³⁶ As they traveled along the road, they came to some water and the eunuch said, “Look, here is water. What can stand in the way of my being baptized?” ³⁸ And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. ³⁹ When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ Philip, however, appeared at Azotus and traveled about, preaching the gospel in all the towns until he reached Caesarea.

Synopsis: God offers us opportunities to share the Gospel and to encourage others on their walk with Christ. Our presence in worship and in community allows God to work through us and to speak to us.

Felt need:

Visuals:

Media:

Activity: Drama for this scripture reading? Ken Lockett is interested in participating.

Music: Baptized in Water (FWS 2248), God of Love and God of Power (UMH 578)

May 3, 2015: Children’s Sunday

5th Sunday of Easter

Scripture: Galatians 5: 22-26 (CEV) Fruit of the Spirit

²²God’s Spirit makes us loving, happy, peaceful, patient, kind, good, faithful, ²³gentle, and self-controlled. There is no law against behaving in any of these ways. ²⁴And because we belong to Christ Jesus, we have killed our selfish feelings and desires. ²⁵God’s Spirit has given us life, and so we should follow the Spirit. ²⁶But don’t be conceited or make others jealous by claiming to be better than they are.

Synopsis: Julie Fuller has a skit in mind.

Holy Communion

Visuals: Julie may ask Harmon to create a bulletin cover.

Media:

Activity: Give bibles to third graders. Recognize Christian Education leaders.

Music: Special music from the kids – “10,000 Reasons” from 2015 VBS video. Solo by Ana.

There will be one service at 10:00 am.

The VCI First Impressions Committee may show the hospitality video again today.

May 10, 2015: “Stranger or Friend?”

6th Sunday of Easter

Scripture: John 15:9-17 (New Living Translation)

⁹“I have loved you even as the Father has loved me. Remain in my love.

¹⁰When you obey my commandments, you remain in my love, just as I obey my Father's commandments and remain in his love. ¹¹I have told you these things so that you will be filled with my joy. Yes, your joy will overflow! ¹²This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. ¹³There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends. ¹⁴You are my friends if you do what I command. ¹⁵I no longer call you slaves, because a master doesn't confide in his slaves. Now you are my friends, since I have told you everything the Father told me. ¹⁶You didn't choose me. I chose you. I appointed you to go and produce lasting fruit, so that the Father will give you whatever you ask for, using my name. ¹⁷This is my command: Love each other.

Synopsis: Today we hear the term "friend" used for how we relate to one another over social media, specifically Facebook. "Friend" has become a verb for connecting to one another – sometimes without much investment. But Jesus proclaims that those who do what he commands are called his friends. How do we claim this relationship – and confirm (make firm) this relationship – daily?

Confirmation

Visuals:

Media possibilities:

- "The Labels We Carry." Length: 2:30. Cost \$22.00. We carry the weight of labels we are given by family, friends, and strangers every day. This short film explores the moment we find the only label that truly matter, "loved." See it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/61587/the-labels-we-carry>.
- "It's Our Nature." Length: 1:34. Cost: Free. This Shangri-La TV advertisement illustrates how there is not greater act of hospitality than to embrace a stranger as one's own. See it at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wZeS0Un3jwk>.

Activity: In honor of Mother's Day, recognize women with a chocolate "Treasure." New mothers: Ashley Boersma (Josiah) and Laura Dean (Tatum)

Music: The bells are playing "Here I Am, Lord" and "He's Got the Whole World in His Hands." What a Friend We Have in Jesus (UMH 526); They'll Know We Are Christians (FWS 2223)

May 17, 2015: "Don't Just Stand There!"

Ascension Sunday

Scripture: Acts 1:1-11 (New Living Translation)

¹In my first book I told you, Theophilus, about everything Jesus began to do and teach ²until the day he was taken up to heaven after giving his chosen apostles further instructions through the Holy Spirit. ³During the forty days after his crucifixion, he appeared to the apostles from time to time, and he proved to them in many ways that he was actually alive. And he talked to them about the Kingdom of God.

⁴Once when he was eating with them, he commanded them, "Do not leave Jerusalem until the Father sends you the gift he promised, as I told you before. ⁵John baptized with water, but in just a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."

The Ascension of Jesus

⁶So when the apostles were with Jesus, they kept asking him, "Lord, has the time come for you to free Israel and restore our kingdom?"

⁷He replied, “The Father alone has the authority to set those dates and times, and they are not for you to know. ⁸But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes upon you. And you will be my witnesses, telling people about me everywhere—in Jerusalem, throughout Judea, in Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”

⁹After saying this, he was taken up into a cloud while they were watching, and they could no longer see him. ¹⁰As they strained to see him rising into heaven, two white-robed men suddenly stood among them. ¹¹“Men of Galilee,” they said, “why are you standing here staring into heaven? Jesus has been taken from you into heaven, but someday he will return from heaven in the same way you saw him go!”

Scripture: Ephesians 1:15-23 (CEV) **Pauls’ Prayer**

¹⁵I have heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all of God’s people.

¹⁶So I never stop being grateful for you, as I mention you in my prayers. ¹⁷I ask the glorious Father and God of our Lord Jesus Christ to give you his Spirit. The Spirit will make you wise and let you understand what it means to know God. ¹⁸My prayer is that light will flood your hearts and that you will understand the hope that was given to you when God chose you. Then you will discover the glorious blessings that will be yours together with all of God’s people.

¹⁹I want you to know about the great and mighty power that God has for us followers. It is the same wonderful power he used ²⁰when he raised Christ from death and let him sit at his right side in heaven. ²¹There Christ rules over all forces, authorities, powers, and rulers. He rules over all beings in this world and will rule in the future world as well. ²²God has put all things under the power of Christ, and for the good of the church he has made him the head of everything. ²³The church is Christ’s body and is filled with Christ who completely fills everything.

Synopsis: We don’t talk a lot about Jesus ascending into heaven. Why does it matter? The Ascension is about Jesus, who is alive and reigns with God, and the Ascension is also about us. It is a moment when we understand who Jesus is and who we are called to be – witnesses to love, power, and grace.

Receive New Members

Visuals:

Media possibility: “Rise.” Length: 2:31. Cost: We own it. Last used 5/24/09. This is a poetic reflection on the ascension of Christ. See it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/1632/rise>.

Activity:

Music: My Hope Is Built (UMH 368); In Christ Alone; Lord, I Lift Your Name on High (FWS 2088)

May 24, 2015: “Helped by the Spirit”

Pentecost Sunday

Scripture: Acts 2:1-21 (Contemporary English Version) and Romans 8:22-27

¹On the day of Pentecost all the Lord’s followers were together in one place.

²Suddenly there was a noise from heaven like the sound of a mighty wind! It filled the house where they were meeting. ³Then they saw what looked like fiery tongues moving in all directions, and a tongue came and settled on each person there. ⁴The Holy Spirit took

control of everyone, and they began speaking whatever languages the Spirit let them speak.

⁵Many religious Jews from every country in the world were living in Jerusalem. ⁶And when they heard this noise, a crowd gathered. But they were surprised, because they were hearing everything in their own languages. ⁷They were excited and amazed, and said:

Don't all these who are speaking come from Galilee? ⁸Then why do we hear them speaking our very own languages? ⁹Some of us are from Parthia, Media, and Elam. Others are from Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, ¹⁰Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, parts of Libya near Cyrene, Rome, ¹¹Crete, and Arabia. Some of us were born Jews, and others of us have chosen to be Jews. Yet we all hear them using our own languages to tell the wonderful things God has done.

¹²Everyone was excited and confused. Some of them even kept asking each other, "What does all this mean?"

¹³Others made fun of the Lord's followers and said, "They are drunk."

Peter Speaks to the Crowd

¹⁴Peter stood with the eleven apostles and spoke in a loud and clear voice to the crowd: Friends and everyone else living in Jerusalem, listen carefully to what I have to say! ¹⁵You are wrong to think that these people are drunk. After all, it is only nine o'clock in the morning. ¹⁶But this is what God had the prophet Joel say, ¹⁷ "When the last days come, I will give my Spirit to everyone. Your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your young men will see visions, and your old men will have dreams. ¹⁸In those days I will give to my servants, my Spirit to my servants, both men and women, and they will prophesy. ¹⁹I will work miracles in the sky above and wonders on the earth below. There will be blood and fire and clouds of smoke. ²⁰The sun will turn dark, and the moon will be as red as blood before the great and wonderful day of the Lord appears. ²¹Then the Lord will save everyone who asks for his help."

Scripture: Romans 8:22-27 (New Living Translation)

²²For we know that all creation has been groaning as in the pains of childbirth right up to the present time.

²³And we believers also groan, even though we have the Holy Spirit within us as a foretaste of future glory, for we long for our bodies to be released from sin and suffering. We, too, wait with eager hope for the day when God will give us our full rights as his adopted children, including the new bodies he has promised us. ²⁴We were given this hope when we were saved. (If we already have something, we don't need to hope for it. ²⁵But if we look forward to something we don't yet have, we must wait patiently and confidently.)

²⁶And the Holy Spirit helps us in our weakness. For example, we don't know what God wants us to pray for. But the Holy Spirit prays for us with groanings that cannot be expressed in words. ²⁷And the Father who knows all hearts knows what the Spirit is saying, for the Spirit pleads for us believers in harmony with God's own will.

Synopsis: When the Holy Spirit comes, it's not necessarily silent or peaceful – at least it wasn't at that first Pentecost day. The coming of the Spirit disrupts and sometimes even disturbs us. But the Spirit also brings transformation, brings us together, and helps us to follow Jesus. We are empowered by the Spirit and sent forth to serve.

Pentecost, Memorial Day weekend

Visuals:

Media possibility: "The Day of Pentecost." Length: 1:38. Cost: \$18.00. Visual liturgy of Acts 2:1-4. See it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/59711/the-day-of-pentecost>.

Activities: Ask people to wear red, orange, and yellow clothing. Have kids run with streamers to illustrate tongues of fire. Use wind sound effects. Consecrate the Memorial gifts.

Music: Spirit of the Living God (UMH 393)

Consider having one service today.

May 31, 2015: "Love Like God Loves" First Sunday after Pentecost - Trinity Sunday

Scripture: John 3:1-17 (the story of Nicodemus)

¹There was a man named Nicodemus, a Jewish religious leader who was a Pharisee.

²After dark one evening, he came to speak with Jesus. "Rabbi," he said, "we all know that God has sent you to teach us. Your miraculous signs are evidence that God is with you."

³Jesus replied, "I tell you the truth, unless you are born again, you cannot see the Kingdom of God."

⁴"What do you mean?" exclaimed Nicodemus. "How can an old man go back into his mother's womb and be born again?"

⁵Jesus replied, "I assure you, no one can enter the Kingdom of God without being born of water and the Spirit. ⁶Humans can reproduce only human life, but the Holy Spirit gives birth to spiritual life. ⁷So don't be surprised when I say, 'You must be born again.' ⁸The wind blows wherever it wants. Just as you can hear the wind but can't tell where it comes from or where it is going, so you can't explain how people are born of the Spirit."

⁹"How are these things possible?" Nicodemus asked.

¹⁰Jesus replied, "You are a respected Jewish teacher, and yet you don't understand these things? ¹¹I assure you, we tell you what we know and have seen, and yet you won't believe our testimony. ¹²But if you don't believe me when I tell you about earthly things, how can you possibly believe if I tell you about heavenly things? ¹³No one has ever gone to heaven and returned. But the Son of Man has come down from heaven. ¹⁴And as Moses lifted up the bronze snake on a pole in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, ¹⁵so that everyone who believes in him will have eternal life.

¹⁶"For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life. ¹⁷God sent his Son into the world not to judge the world, but to save the world through him.

Synopsis: Nicodemus was someone who knew God's Law. He was a leader, but he wanted to know more about Jesus. Their conversation becomes one of the most powerful in Scripture as Nicodemus listens to and learns from Jesus and is transformed in the process. How does Nicodemus help us to understand what it means to walk the pathway of discipleship – to keep learning, to be challenged, and to be changed?

Graduation

Visuals:

Media possibilities:

- “You’re Thinking Physically, When You Need to Be Thinking Spiritually.” Length: 1:38. Cost: \$20.00. A man on death row is visited by a preacher who explains to him what it means to be born again using the people Jesus encountered in the third and fourth chapters of John. See it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/62110/youre-thinking-physically-when-you-need-to-be-thinking-spiritually>.
- “Nicodemus by Night – Born Again.” Length: 1:44. Cost: \$15.00. An artist’s chalk depiction. See it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/62110/youre-thinking-physically-when-you-need-to-be-thinking-spiritually>.
- “Nicodemus.” Length: 4:08. Cost: \$19.98. He was a Pharisee, but one that wanted to hear what Jesus had to say. Watch as Nicodemus retells the conversation with Christ that helped him focus on how less really could be more. See it at <http://www.sermonspice.com/product/61515/nicodemus>.

Activity: Drama based on this passage?

Music: Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee (UMH 89); Lift High the Cross (UMH 159); Holy, Holy, Holy (UMH 64)

June 7, 2015: Brad Hilleary preaching

Scripture:

Synopsis: Annual Conference weekend

Holy Communion – Gil Boersma and John Thompson will officiate

Visuals:

Media:

Activity:

Music: