

Discussion Guide #5 for 5G Groups
2022 “A 5G Connected Faith” Lenten Journey
The G of GATHER
Pastor Miriam

*Let us think about each other and help each other to show love and do good deeds. You should not stay away from the church meetings, as some are doing, but you should meet together and encourage each other. Do this even more as you see the day coming. **Heb 10:24-25***

*When they arrived in Antioch, they gathered the people of the church together and told them about all that God had done with them and how he had opened the way for the Gentiles to believe. **Acts 14:27***



- THANK YOU, friends, for making time to be part of what God is doing in our “A 5G Connected Faith” series.
 - Thank you, group leaders, for pulling this 5G Group together.
 - Thank you, staff and worship teams, for providing for us and nourishing all of us through your creative and meaningful videos and discussion guides.
- These 5G worship/discussion midweek gatherings have been a blessing.

Let’s Get Started!

Share your name and share an example of a family gathering you enjoyed as a child.

Opening prayer:

Thank you, God, for gathering us together for these fun and holy times.

We know our world feels pretty DISCONNECTED at times. Thank you for your gifts to help us feel more CONNECTED to you, our families, each other, our sense of purpose, and the world.

In Jesus’s name, Amen.

Discuss:

1. This week, the final “G” is gather or gathering. Do you recall another “G” word that would have been a candidate for the final “G?” How might one of those candidates been a meaningful choice to strengthen our connection to faith in our daily lives?
2. In his Wednesday video devotional, Karl Dietmeyer shared his belief in the power that singing has within our worship gatherings. He shared the repeated invitations to sing within the Bible. He shared the power of singing in our lives. It has been said that we (Lutherans) are a "singing church." Karl reminded us of that. We follow the advice of the apostle Paul in Colossians 3:16, to “teach and admonish one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”
 - If you had a chance to watch the video and hear Karl’s passionate view of worshipping together, share your thoughts and reactions.
 - Whether worshipping in the Contemporary Worship or the Traditional worship, how does singing with one another help tune our hearts for worship, Word, and the Meal?

3. In her sermon, Pastor Miriam provided some ideas of how we gather with others, from the viewpoint of our “5 G” perspective, such as: gathering in Gift **GROUPS**, or gathering with others to put your spiritual **GIFTS** into action, or intentionally gathering with one or more to practice **GRACE** and forgiveness. All our “G’s” so far have brought about **GROWTH** during these weeks of Lent.

Pastor Miriam also celebrated that people gather for all sorts of events, such as: parties, lectures, concerts, holidays, cookouts, rallies, sports events and so on.

- What does worship have in common with other types of gatherings?

4. Jesus said, “*Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.*” (**Matt. 18:20**). As the body of Christ, we cling to that promise as we worship, and to Jesus’s words that we hear in communion—that the wine and bread we consume are the body and blood of Christ.

Jesus is certainly with us always as individuals, but he is also present in intentional ways as we gather together in community at worship. Gathering for worship, we are fed through the Word of God in scripture, preaching, singing, and the liturgy itself, which is based on the Bible.

- How would you describe that our community is fed and nurtured by Jesus’s presence at worship?

BONUS DISCUSSION IDEA (No specific question to answer is provided.)

Only four times in Christ Our Shepherd’s 45+ years has the church called a pastor – Pastor Weber, Pastor Russey, Pastor Beecher, and Pastor Wiese. When the distinctive gathering of worship happens at COS, the “Ministry of Word and Sacrament” is core in our understanding of gathering or “meeting together.

For your reflection, following is the official language of a portion of the congregation’s new pastor’s “**Letter of Call.**”

*“We (the congregation of Christ Our Shepherd Lutheran Church) call you to exercise among us the ministry of **Word and Sacrament*** which God has established and which the Holy Spirit empowers:*

- *To preach and teach the Word of God in accordance with the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions;*
- *To administer Holy Baptism and Holy Communion;*
- *To lead us in worship;*
- *To proclaim the forgiveness of sins; to provide pastoral care; to speak for justice on behalf of the poor and oppressed;*
- *To encourage persons to prepare for the ministry of the Gospel;*
- *To impart knowledge of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and its wider ministry;*
- *To endeavor to increase support given to our congregation to the work of our whole church;*
- *To equip us for witness and service; and*
- *To guide us in proclaiming God’s love through word and deed.*

In accepting this call, you hereby promise to fulfill this pastoral ministry ...”

Word and Sacrament* *from the Living Lutheran in 2017: By calling word and sacrament means of grace, we are saying: “This is how and where grace happens.” When the good news is preached, when someone is baptized, when we receive the Lord’s Supper, grace happens. This means that worship is vitally important for Lutherans. It forms our identity as Christians.*

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Closing Prayer: Dear Lord, thanks again for these holy moments together with my friends in Christ. Thanks for your provision of our fifth G of connection, GATHER. Thank you for preparing the feast of your love and sacrifice and gathering us around your table. In Jesus’ name, Amen.