



LifeGroups Study Guide

Week #1, January 21, 2018: “Discerning God’s Call”

1. **Connect**

Spend time checking-in with each other, sharing your highs and lows, joys and concerns, etc.

2. **Pray**

Pray with and for each other, remembering to lift up the highs and lows that were shared. Central to what LifeGroups is about is an intention to be a caring community for the sake of others, the community of Christ called to care for one another, grow in faith, and seek God’s guidance together.

3. **Embrace the Word**

Read the story/book of Jonah in the Old Testament. Share with each other what you hear in this reading – what catches your ear?

4. **Engage the Theme: Discerning God’s Call**

(Copies of the sermon are available at the Information Center and at www.oslchurch.com.)

Share with each other what you heard in the sermon for the week. Did anything in particular grab your attention? Did anything surprise you? If you could ask the preacher anything about the sermon, what would it be?

5. **Discuss**

- Have you ever longed for a clear sign from God when you were in the process of making a big decision or trying to figure out a particular problem? How did you express that longing? Do you feel like God responded to you? If so, how?
- Have you ever had a ‘Jonah’ moment in your life when you sensed God calling you to do something? Share what that was like. How did you know that it was God’s voice? How did you respond?
- In the movie, Michael acts on what he believes was God’s direction with passion and good intention. How do you explain the series of setbacks he and his congregation encountered as they acted in good faith? Where was God in all of that?
- Michael took a risky leap of faith by listening to and obeying God’s voice. What do you think God might be calling you to do in your daily life? How will you discern whether or not it is God’s voice that you hear, and how will you respond?

6. Take Action (personal growth steps for the coming week)

- Reflect on the story of Jesus calling his disciples as it's found in Mark's gospel (1:14-20)

¹⁴Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, ¹⁵and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near, repent, and believe in the good news."

¹⁶As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea — for they were fishermen. ¹⁷And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people." ¹⁸And immediately they left their nets and followed him. ¹⁹As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. ²⁰Immediately he called them; and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men, and followed him. (New Revised Standard Edition)

- Where do you hear Jesus inviting you to follow him?
- Is there anything holding you back from following him?
- Turn over all of this to God in prayer this week and ask for guidance, wisdom, faith, and clarity of vision.
- Before Week 2, watch the movie *All Saints*.

7. Planning for Next Week

- Next week will look different – you'll be going on a field trip! Take time this week to plan how you will organize your 'social experiment'. (see study guide for Week #2)

8. Wrap-up

- Pray as a group in a way that best fits the group's personality and preferences.
- Share a sign of peace with each other before you leave.