

# Reflection Guide

## The Way of Love with Bishop Michael Curry: Season 2, Episode 1

### Introducing “The Way of Love Beyond the Church Walls”

#### How to Use This Guide

##### For personal devotion

Listen to the podcast episode one or two times. Next, set aside 20 minutes of quiet time to reflect on the following Scripture and questions. Consider writing your responses to the prompts in a journal. Close your time in prayer.

##### As a group

Before you meet, ask members to listen to this episode. Open your meeting by sharing the Scripture. Next, you may either listen to the episode again as a group or move on to the Questions for Reflection. As a group, discuss your thoughts and answers to the questions. Finally, close your time together with the prayer.

#### Scripture

**Take a moment to read this passage (aloud if possible). What words or phrases jump out at you? What might the Holy Spirit be saying to you through this passage?**

##### Matthew 9:9-13

<sup>9</sup>As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, “Follow me.” And he got up and followed him. <sup>10</sup>And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. <sup>11</sup>When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, “Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?” <sup>12</sup>But when he heard this, he said, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. <sup>13</sup>Go and learn what this means, ‘I desire mercy, not sacrifice.’ For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners.”

#### Questions for Reflection

**Use these questions for personal reflection, group discussion, or both.**

1. This episode opens with a powerful observation from Bishop Vashti McKenzie, that “sometimes we substitute the Church for Jesus Christ,” finding ourselves more in love with the rituals, pageantry, programming,

and traditions of the church than with Jesus himself. However, she goes on to say, “It was the Lord that saved me, and the church is where I live out that salvation...the church is where we are to be refueled and sent back out to do the work.” How do these statements challenge you?

2. The theme of the new season is The Way of Love is “Beyond the Church Walls,” which Bishop McKenzie introduced beautifully when she reminded us, “Jesus is our role model. He met people where they were, he asked them what they needed, and then he led them.” She continued by saying, “a hungry person cannot hear the love of Jesus until you demonstrate that love of Jesus.” If we are to be like Jesus in the world, then we must go beyond our church walls and meet people where they are. Where are the people in your community gathering? Where are the hungry, the lonely, and the forgotten people hanging out? What would it take for you or your faith community to go to them?
3. Hosts Kyle Oliver and Sandy Milien shared stories of what it means to be a young adult in the Church, discussing how they strive to go beyond the walls, offering acceptance, love, authenticity, and mutual respect to everyone, and inviting people to reconsider who Jesus is. A recent study of young adults showed that only 1 in 10 had been invited to church – but most of them said they would go if someone asked. Think back on an invitation you have received that made a difference in your life. How did that invitation change you?

#### Prayer

***A Prayer for the Poor and the Neglected,*  
The Book of Common Prayer, p. 826**

Almighty and most merciful God, we remember before you all poor and neglected persons whom it would be easy for us to forget: the homeless and the destitute, the old and the sick, and all who have none to care for them. Help us to heal those who are broken in body or spirit, and to turn their sorrow into joy. Grant this, Father, for the love of your Son, who for our sake became poor, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.