

Reflection Guide

The Way of Love with Bishop Michael Curry: Season 2, Episode 5

Worshipping in Public as Witness

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 about and answers to the questions. Finally, close your time together with the prayer.

Scripture

Take a moment to read and reflect on the Scripture. What word or phrase stands out to you? What might the Holy Spirit be saying to you through this passage?

Acts 2:1-8

¹When the day of Pentecost had come, they were all together in one place. ²And suddenly from heaven there came a sound like the rush of a violent wind, and it filled the entire house where they were sitting. ³Divided tongues, as of fire, appeared among them, and a tongue rested on each of them. ⁴All of them were filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak in other languages, as the Spirit gave them ability. ⁵Now there were devout Jews from every nation under heaven living in Jerusalem. ⁶And at this sound the crowd gathered and was bewildered, because each one heard them speaking in the native language of each.

⁷Amazed and astonished, they asked, "Are not all these who are speaking Galileans?" ⁸And how is it that we hear, each of us, in our own native language?"

Questions for Reflection

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

1. In this episode, Sandy and Bishop Curry talk about the importance of context in the practice of worship. Bishop Curry shares, "You want to be respectful of the people who are there. The message is the same, the Gospel is

the same, but how you communicate it should be affected by the context you are in." When have you worshiped in a context different than your own? How did that feel? What did you notice about your experience or the experiences of others? What cultural languages are being spoken outside the walls of your church? How could your worshiping community begin to learn or speak the Gospel in those languages?

2. Bishop Curry made the beautiful observation, "The depth of my faith leads me to respect and honor wherever God shows up, even in other traditions." What other faith traditions help lead you into the heart of God? Is there one faith tradition or expression that you find enriches your current faith practices?
3. Guest Hugo Olaiz talks about Las Posadas – an Advent celebration common in Latin American culture. Beginning on December 16 and ending nine days later, Las Posadas commemorates the nine months of Mary's pregnancy and involves a procession throughout neighborhoods or communities, with children often dressed as angels and shepherds. Religious figures, images, and lighted candles are also part of the festivities. This celebration helps to remember and honor the pilgrim status of Mary and Joseph and bring into greater focus God's particular love for those on the margins and those who are looking for shelter, food, and comfort. Hugo encourages churches of all kinds to consider celebrating Las Posadas, saying, "Don't be afraid to make mistakes." Hugo also recommends reaching out to local Latino congregations for help beginning or joining with Las Posadas celebrations. Have you ever had the opportunity to celebrate or worship as a guest within another culture? What did you take away from that experience? How did it challenge or shape your view of what is possible in worship?

Prayer

The Very Rev. Dr. Alan Jones,

Dean Emeritus of Grace Cathedral, San Francisco

Gracious God, in your loving heart there is room for everyone — without exception. Give us courage to be so at home in you that we dare make room for others. Let your world be a place of delight and homecoming for all creation.