



Liturgy Notes for the week of February 4, 2018

Liturgy: The Work of the People

Friends and strangers, passionate believers, hopeful skeptics: All are welcome as full participants or thoughtful observers.

If you are visiting, you'll find a card in the pew pocket explaining our liturgy. Fill out the back side and drop it in the basket to keep in touch.

This Week's Reading: Acts 11:1-18

Now the apostles and the believers who were in Judea heard that the Gentiles had also accepted the word of God. So when Peter went up to Jerusalem, the circumcised believers criticized him, saying, "Why did you go to uncircumcised men and eat with them?"

Then Peter began to explain it to them, step by step, saying, "I was in the city of Joppa praying, and in a trance I saw a vision. There was something like a large sheet coming down from heaven, being lowered by its four corners; and it came close to me. As I looked at it closely I saw four-footed animals, beasts of prey, reptiles, and birds of the air. I also heard a voice saying to me, 'Get up, Peter; kill and eat.'

But I replied, 'By no means, Lord; for nothing profane or unclean has ever entered my mouth.' But a second time the voice answered from heaven, 'What God has made clean, you must not call profane.'

This happened three times; then everything was pulled up again to heaven. At that very moment three men, sent to me from Caesarea, arrived at the house where we were. The Spirit told me to go with them and not to make a distinction between them and us. These six brothers also accompanied me, and we entered the man's house. He told us how he had seen the angel standing in his house and saying, 'Send to Joppa and bring Simon, who is called Peter; he will give you a message by which you and your entire household will be saved.'

And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as it had upon us at the beginning. And I remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said, 'John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.' If then God gave them the same gift that he gave us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could hinder God?"

When they heard this, they were silenced. And they praised God, saying, "Then God has given even to the Gentiles the repentance that leads to life."

See You Throughout the Week

- Super Bowl of Chili – tonight at 5pm
- Family Meeting – Sunday evening, February 11
- Ash Wednesday Lament Liturgy – February 14



Practicing the Way of Jesus for North/Central Austin

AustinMustardSeed.org

Community Group Discussion Guide

Community Groups are "Families on Mission."

Learn more at AustinMustardSeed.org/CommunityGroups.

Use this guide to facilitate discussion in your group and in personal reflection.

Check-in

Always begin by checking in. This is a time for everyone in the group to speak briefly. You may choose to always use the basic check-in question "what was one high point and one low point from your past week?" or come up with an "icebreaker" of your own.

Sermon Synopsis

We seek opportunities to expand beyond a fellowship of sameness to reflect the breadth of God's kingdom.

Jesus recognized that all humans are created in the image of God, so he continually directed attention to those who were on the margin, those overlooked and unseen by others. We look for and celebrate voices that are not like our own because we recognize that every human offers a fuller way of seeing and understanding who God is and how God acts.

Discussion Questions

1. Read Acts 10:1-33 together. How would you compare Cornelius and Peter's visions? Why did God need to speak to them in different ways?
2. Peter was one of Jesus' closest disciples, and yet he still needed a jarring vision from God in order to go visit Cornelius. What ways has God used to get your attention in order to have you see things differently?
3. Share about an experience where you learned from someone who you didn't think had anything to teach you? Why did you think that person didn't have something to teach you?
4. What is an experience you have had where a team or community was better because many different perspectives were heard?
5. While people naturally tend to want to be around those who are just like them, this story pushes us to do otherwise. What are some practical steps you would need to take to develop relationships with people who are different from you?

Our Shared Blessing

Close your time together by reading together this blessing:

Austin Mustard Seed, may we long to experience God's work of renewal with those who are not like us.

May we form a more complete understanding of who God is as we see the fullness of God's image on humanity.

May we see our own biases so that we can be aware how they affect our interactions with others.