

Surprise the World!

Week Three: Eat with People

Read Chapter 3 from *Surprise the World* by Michael Frost

Get Connected: What is one of your most memorable meals and why?

Bible Study:

You are invited to engage with scripture each week using an ancient practice called *lectio divina*. Read the scripture once. Allow a minute of silence following, and then each person answers the first question. Read the scripture aloud the second time, followed with a minute of silence, and then each person answers the second question. Read the scripture a third time, hold a minute of silence, and then answer the third question. It is most helpful that everyone have the scripture in front of them so they can underline phrases and make notes regarding the question. The other important practice to this form of engaging with the scripture is holy listening. Each person listens deeply to the other's response without interruption or dialogue. At the end of the three rounds, if the group would like to enter into dialogue and conversation with the scripture that is the appropriate time. A person can certainly pass answering a question at any time. Listen for what the Spirit seeks to share with you in this living encounter with the Word.

Romans 12: 9-16

Love from the center of who you are; don't fake it. Run for dear life from evil; hold on for dear life to good. Be good friends who love deeply; practice playing second fiddle. Don't burn out; keep yourselves fueled and aflame. Be alert servants of the Master, cheerfully expectant. Don't quit in hard times; pray all the harder. Help needy Christians; be inventive in hospitality.

Bless your enemies; no cursing under your breath. Laugh with your happy friends when they're happy; share tears when they're down. Get along with each other; don't be stuck-up. Make friends with nobodies; don't be the great somebody. Don't hit back; discover beauty in everyone. If you've got it in you, get along with everybody. Don't insist on getting even; that's not for you to do. "I'll do the judging," says God. "I'll take care of it."

Our Scriptures tell us that if you see your enemy hungry, go buy that person lunch, or if he's thirsty, get him a drink. Your generosity will surprise him with goodness. Don't let evil get the best of you; get the best of evil by doing good.

What is the word or phrase that captures your imagination?

Where have you discovered beauty in someone this past week?

What is God inviting you to do, change or be through this passage?

Video: show week three with Rev. Mark Miller on eat

Discuss:

- 1) Who have you blessed this week? Any blessing stories?
- 2) What makes a great mealtime experience?
- 3) "Eating with others can be perceived as a profoundly *theological* practice." Does this ring true to you? As you think about meals you've shared with others, what do they show and tell you about God?
- 4) "The table is the great equalizer in relationships." How so? How have shared meals enriched your relationships?
- 5) Where have you experienced true hospitality? What made it so? What would it look like for Christians to be inventive in hospitality?
- 6) What kinds of things might stop you from developing the habit of regularly eating with others and how can you as group overcome those barriers?

Action Step: Who can you eat with this week? If you are at work, break the habit of eating lunch at your desk and join your co-workers for a meal. If there is there someone you know who would welcome a home-cooked meal, invite them over. At a fast food restaurant, could you be so bold as to ask to join someone sitting alone? Invite a friend to join you at church for the Wednesday night dinner if your congregation has one. What would be a sustainable habit for you in seeking to eat with people?

Share Your Stories: Take pictures with who you are eating with this week, and post them on social media with the hashtag **#surprisetheworld**. Include the food pictures too!

Conclude: Join hands and go around the circle, with each person saying what they thank God for, and what they ask God for, and then all join in the Lord's Prayer.

If you are using the Michael Frost videos that can be found at <http://www.crossover.org.au/surprise-the-world/>, begin the session with Minnesota Annual Conference video, follow by the Get Connected Question, and then use the Michael Frost video after the bible study.