

COMMUNITY GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

Spring 2025 - Signs - "The Glory of His Presence"

Monday, Mar. 30 - Sunday, Apr. 6 (Week 9)

EMPHASIS FOR THE MONTH: **Going Deeper Through Vulnerability**

This month, we're focusing on what it means to go deeper: not just in our discussions, but in our relationships with one another. Depth doesn't happen without vulnerability, and vulnerability starts with us as leaders. When we open up first, we create a safe space for others to do the same. Whether it's sharing a personal story, being honest about struggles, or asking questions that move past the surface-level, let's model what real community looks like. Depth takes courage, but it also leads to the kind of growth and connection we long for in our groups. Let's be the first to go there. Let's create a culture where people are known, seen, and loved. I'd love to hear how you're encouraging deeper connection this month, feel free to share stories, wins, or ideas!

ICE BREAKER: If you could have witnessed any of Jesus' miracles firsthand, which one would you choose and why?

CAB ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1. Celebrate the hope and joy of Easter with us! We invite you to our Good Friday service on April 18 at 5:45 PM (Childcare: Nursery - Pre-K 4) and our Easter Sunday services on April 20 at 9:15 & 11 AM (Childcare: Nursery- 5th grade). Come as you are and bring your family and friends... we can't wait to worship with you!
2. We're excited to invite you to the BergenKIDS Family Easter Party on Saturday, April 12, from 10–11:30 AM! Join us for games, crafts, food, story time, and an Easter egg hunt. This event is for children ages 2 through 5th grade, and we ask that you bring a basket or bag for egg collection. It's also a great opportunity to invite friends and family to join you. Please email info@churchatbergen.org to let us know you're coming by Wednesday, April 2. We can't wait to celebrate Easter with you!
3. We hope you will join us every Tuesday evening at 6:30 PM for our weekly corporate prayer gathering.
4. ATTENTION PRIMETIMERS! (50+) - For a Christian, a Passover Seder brings together the Old Testament and the New. For thousands of years Jews have celebrated Passover, as commanded in Scripture, to teach the next generation about God's mighty works. Then later, Jesus takes the matzah and wine of His last Passover and teaches us that they represent His Body and Blood. Join us for an authentic Passover meal on Friday, April 11 at 7 PM at Church at Bergen; Cost: \$20/person. For proper planning please SIGN-UP by Friday, April 4 by emailing info@churchatbergen.org. Please contact Jeff and Susan Burkes if you have any questions - jrbdds@aol.com.

PRAYER FOR DISCUSSION: Leader or Co-Leader prays for the discussion time. Pray that the The Holy Spirit would assist in the conversing, processing, and listening of the discussion.

SERMON DISCUSSION TIME: Have someone read the passage: John 6:16-21, and then read this sermon summary to jog everyone's memory:



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Pastor Mike's sermon focused on the theme of the "glory of Jesus' presence," as revealed through the account of Jesus walking on the sea in John's Gospel. He highlights that the miracles, referred to as "signs," are not merely acts of power but deeply significant displays meant to point to Jesus' divine nature and glory. Pastor Mike contrasts the prior miracle of feeding the 5,000 with this event, emphasizing the disciples' feelings of solitude and fear as they found themselves in the midst of a dark and stormy sea without Jesus. He draws parallels between their experience and our own moments of feeling God's absence in our lives, emphasizing that these feelings are part of the normal Christian journey. Throughout the sermon, Pastor Mike reassures us that though they may perceive God as distant or absent during trials, He is always near and will come to provide support and comfort. He reminds us of God's promise to never leave nor forsake us, grounded in Jesus' character and the sacrifice of the cross. By illustrating that Jesus can walk on the chaos of life, Pastor Mike invites listeners to trust in Jesus during turbulent times, affirming that hardships may be a means to experience deeper truths about God's presence and love. Ultimately, the message is one of hope, calling us to hold on to Christ, ensuring that as we navigate life's storms, we are never truly alone.

- Share a time when you felt like you were in a stormy season of life. How did you seek or experience the presence of Jesus during that time and what was the outcome?
- Reflect on your current spiritual disciplines. Is there a discipline you feel you've been neglecting that might help you draw nearer to Jesus? How can we as a group support you in re-establishing this practice?
- Have you ever felt like Jesus was absent from your life despite your efforts to seek Him? How did you navigate that season, and what did you learn about your faith through it?
- The sermon mentioned secret sin as a barrier to experiencing Jesus' presence. Is there an area of your life where you feel you need to confess or seek accountability? How can we pray for you in this?
- How do you hold onto the promises of Jesus' presence during times of doubt or fear? Share a promise from Scripture that has been particularly meaningful to you in difficult times.

PRAY TOGETHER: Spend time taking **and recording** prayer requests and then pray together as a group (*I strongly encourage you to send out the prayer requests weekly to your group to keep everyone informed and in the loop on how to pray for one another throughout the week. This also makes it easier to check-in with people who have shared requests to see how the Lord has been working in their lives*).



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