

09-08-24 FOR THE JOURNEY THIS WEEK

“We erect walls and borders and designations to separate ourselves from our neighbors, but our relationship with God demands that we see one another as persons with needs.”

Roy L. Heller



Mark 7:24-30

Questions for Reflection —

- What would help to open your eyes to the needs of people you encounter in daily life in your workplace and your neighborhood? What would it mean for you to respond to those needs with the compassion and radical love of Jesus? What does it look like to approach God on behalf of others? How might you more actively seek the well-being of those around you who need help and care?

- Where or under what circumstances have you ever felt like an outsider? Who might currently feel like an outsider in your neighborhood or workplace? What can you do to promote more inclusive relationships in those settings? Who might feel like an outsider in our congregation? How can we be as inclusive as possible in our mission and ministry? How might God be calling us to a larger vision of mission that more fully embraces the outsider, the stranger, and maybe even those perceived as “enemies”?

- What are some of the invisible borders and barriers that divide and separate people today? What do you need in order to better understand others’ points of view? When/how have your eyes and ears been opened to new perspectives on controversial issues? In what ways does your Christian faith challenge you to see the world and current issues with a new set of eyes? What does it mean to deeply love others, even if disagreeing with them on significant issues? How can we as a congregation create opportunities for people to listen and connect across differences?

Daily Household Prayer

O Lord, open my eyes that I may see the needs of others; open my ears that I may hear their cries; open my heart so that they need not be without succor; let me not be afraid to defend the weak because of the anger of the strong, nor afraid to defend the poor because of the anger of the rich. Show me where love and hope and faith are needed, and use me to bring them to those places. And so open my eyes and my ears that I may this coming day be able to do some work of peace for thee. Amen.