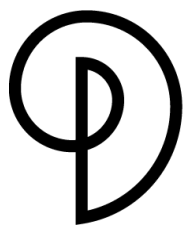


SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



**PRINCE
OF PEACE**
Called to Connect



Dwelling

March 5 & 6, 2022

The Holy Spirit is God's active, ongoing presence in our lives. God dwells in us and we dwell in God through the Spirit. So how does that change the way we see ourselves and live our lives? How do we awaken to the work of the Holy Spirit within and through us? That breath you just breathed is a hint.

SCRIPTURE TEXT: GENESIS 2:7, JOEL 2:28-30, ACTS 2:1-4

Read the scripture text together as a group.

BACKGROUND INFO

As we move through the season of Lent, we'll be focusing on what it means for us to dwell in God's presence, with God, as God dwells in us through the Spirit who gives us life. We call this dwelling the "Incarnation," which is the big, beautiful, churchy word for the central Christian understanding that God became human in the form of Jesus Christ, the Son of God. The incarnation means that the Spirit of God lives within us and through us, gives us each breath as a gift, and acts as the engine that inspires, animates and empowers us to be the physical presence of Christ in the world.

The first Incarnation, or dwelling of God, happened in Jesus. Jesus explained to his followers that when they saw him, they saw God. We know the love and grace of God by looking to Jesus. The second Incarnation, or dwelling, happens in us. On one level, every human being embodies the Spirit, God's life-giving breath within them. If someone is breathing, they're carrying the breath of God in them – whether they know that or not, whether they accept that, or not. That's not up for debate. What we do with that breath is a choice. From a Lutheran perspective, we receive the Spirit at our baptism as a gift of grace and then continually filled with the Holy Spirit throughout our lives. What we do with the breath that empowers us makes all the difference.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- How would you describe "dwelling" to someone? How about in the context of our faith?
- How does this passage from Genesis lay the groundwork for God dwelling within us?
- What layer does the passage from Joel add to deepen our understanding of God's dwelling in us?
- In what way does the passage from Acts continue God's story of dwelling?
- How do we, as individuals and collectively, learn to awaken the work of the Spirit within us?

APPLICATION: This week, spend time in the quiet, focused on your breathing. Ask God to awaken the Spirit within you and tune your awareness to how the Spirit might be at work, dwelling within you.