



# STORIES **AND** RITUALS

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## *Meaningful* **MENTORING**

### LESSON 5

#### **Stories & Rituals: Meaningful Mentoring**

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by the Episcopal Diocese of Pennsylvania

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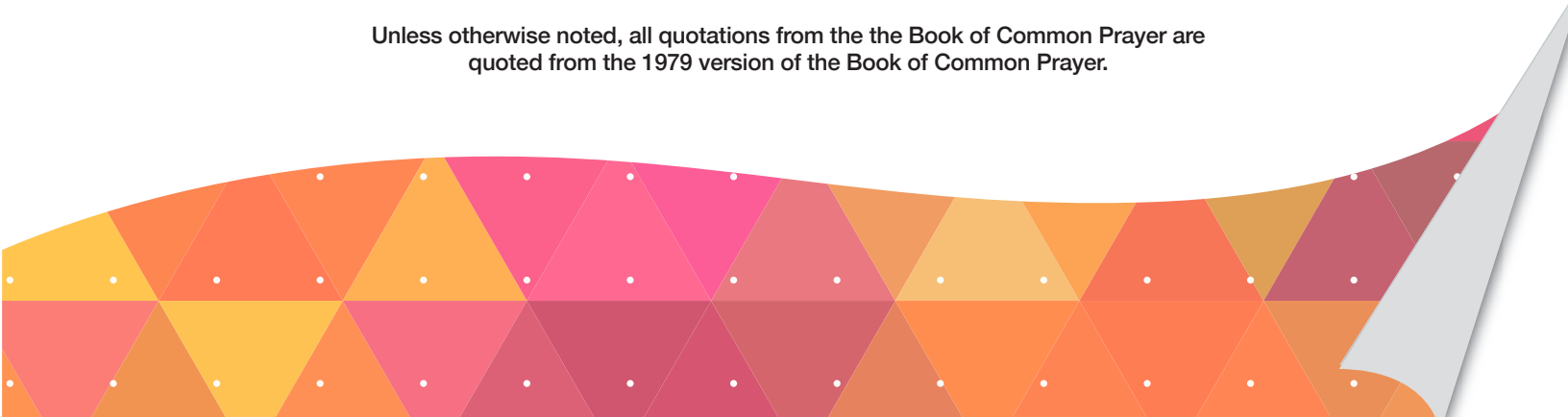
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# MEANINGFUL MENTORING

## Expanding the Boundaries of our Faith

**Lesson Focus:** Leaving Comfort Zones (Joshua 1:9)

**Lesson Goal:** To find the presence of God in a different church community.

**Activity:** Visit another church with your mentee.

**Duration of Lesson:** Two hours minimum *(will vary depending on length of service)*

## Materials Needed

- Lesson Sheet 5.1 (*Church Visitation Questionnaire*)
- Pencils or pens
- Camera or phone with the ability to take pictures (*optional*)

# LESSON OVERVIEW



## The Story and the Ritual

This lesson will invite both you and your mentee to explore the stories and rituals of other church communities. By visiting another faith community, you will be invited and encouraged to seek the presence of God in a new and different church community.

After participating in a worship service at a different church, you and your mentee will complete the Church Visitation Questionnaire. The goal of this questionnaire is to provide an opportunity for you to reflect on the experience of visiting another church, and to look for the differences and similarities between this new faith community and your own.



## What's the Focus?

As Christians, we can find ourselves in comfortable places with comfortable faces, feeling safe in the place that we worship. It would be easy for a young person to think that “The Church” is your own church. This lesson provides the opportunity for you to expand the horizon of your mentee. This lesson will encourage them to step out of their “comfort zone.”

As you visit a new place and meet new people, there may be moments of discomfort or uncertainty. Any time we remove ourselves from our known surroundings, we heighten our senses and we become more aware of our natural environment. Your mentee will look to you in this unfamiliar church for guidance and confidence. Let them know that you will get through this and learn from it together. And, through all of these new experiences, we should not fear because God will still be with you and guide you (*Joshua 1:9*).



## What's the Point?

Saint Paul tells us that the Body of Christ is made of many members joined together to make one Body (*1 Corinthians 12*). Your mentee may have grown up in your congregation and may not know that there are other churches that exist outside of your faith community. The first time that they experience a new church shouldn't be when they are in college, or if they move, but when they are surrounded by the support of a trusted mentor.



## Preparing for Your Lesson

Arrange to attend a different church service with your mentee. Ideally, you should pick a Christian church that is outside of your denomination to attend. This experience is also very eye-opening if you select a service that has a liturgy or order of worship the opposite of your own. In picking your location, remember that the point of this lesson is to force both you and your mentee out of your comfort zones. Set up a date, time, and location for the two of you to meet.

Make two copies of Lesson Sheet 5.1 (*Church Visitation Questionnaire*) and to bring with you. Look over the sheet and familiarize yourself with the material.

# THE LESSON

- Meet with your mentee on your designated date and time. If you are travelling to your worship location together, follow all necessary Safe Church policies and procedures (*see the Suggested Safe Church Guidelines supplement for sample policies and procedures*).
- Attend the chosen church service together. Before the service begins, have your mentee take a mental note of the following things:
  1. **How is their worship space laid out?**
  2. **What is the atmosphere like in the church? How is it similar to your church? How is it different?**
  3. **How do people greet you at the door (or do they greet you)?**
  4. **What kind of worship books or bulletins does the church use?**
  5. **Does the church have a set liturgy they use for worship? How is it similar to your church? How is it different?**
- Invite your mentee to think about the following things during the service:
  6. **How do people in the church create community with each other?**
  7. **If there is a sermon, what does the preacher talk about?**
  8. **What similarities are there between this church and yours? What differences do you see?**
- If possible, find a clergy member or parishioner to talk to after the service. Ask any questions you might have about their faith community. Some questions you can ask (*but are not limited to*):
  1. **Why do you like this church? Why is it your faith community?**
  2. **What things does this church do outside of worship (education, outreach, fellowship, etc.)?**
  3. **What is your favorite program at this church? Why do you like it so much?**
  4. **What is the history of this church?**
- After you have explored the church, find a well-illuminated, visible, quiet place for you to complete Lesson Sheet 5.1. Give one copy of the Lesson Sheet to your mentee, and keep the other for yourself.
- Invite your mentee to fill in their answers on the questionnaire. Fill in your answers (*without sharing them*).
- After you have both completed the questionnaire, share and compare your answers.
- If possible, plan the next date and time you will meet and write these times in the space provided on Lesson Sheet 5.1. Also set a date that can serve as a “Plan B,” or backup, meeting (*just in case something happens and you can’t meet on the first date you picked*).
- If you want to document your time together, take a photo of you and your mentee before you leave your meeting. Be sure to take the photo in a respectful location and manner.
- If you are transporting your mentee home, follow all necessary Safe Church policies and procedures.

# WRAPPING UP

Take a few moments to reflect on your mentoring experience. Ask yourself the following questions. You may wish to write your answers down in a journal.

1. How did your mentee answer the questions on the questionnaire?
2. Was your mentee able to step outside of their comfort zone for the activity?  
How comfortable were you visiting the church?
3. Were there particular moments in this mentoring session that impressed you or surprised you?
4. Where did you see God during your session?
5. Based on your conversations and experience, do you have any new insights on your mentee? What are these insights?

If necessary, report any new insights, issues or concerns to church leadership.

# LOOKING AHEAD

Your next session will be participating in an outreach or service ministry through your church. With your mentee, identify a service project or outreach opportunity in which both of you can participate together. Ideally, your mentee should make contact with the organizer of the event in order to plan your visit. If your church does not have any outreach or service projects coming up, find another local organization with which you can volunteer.

# LESSON SHEET 5.1

## Church Visitation Questionnaire

### YOUR CHURCH EXPERIENCE:

List three differences you noticed between this church and yours:

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List three similarities you noticed between this church and yours:

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List three adjectives that describe the liturgy you just experienced: \_\_\_\_\_

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### LIKES/DISLIKES:

List three things that you liked:

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List three things that you didn't like:

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## WHAT DID YOU THINK?

Did you feel welcomed by the parishioners? YES NO

What gave you this feeling? \_\_\_\_\_

Did you feel comfortable? YES NO

Did you feel uncomfortable? YES NO

Why? \_\_\_\_\_

Would you visit this church again? YES NO

Would you visit another church? YES NO

## WHAT I SAW:

Using the below bullet points, summarize and describe what you saw:

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## Next meeting:

Date:

Time:

Location:

## “Plan B” meeting:

Date:

Time:

Location: