



All Are Invited



GROUP TALK

This week, write down the church groups and/or communities in which you've been involved.

Which experiences were the most satisfying? Which communities were the most diverse? How was God revealed in each group?

What does it mean to pray to a God who is living and active throughout the whole created world? With what kind of ears does God hear our prayers? Jesus's sneak preview of judgment contains a clue. Read Matthew 25:31-46. In this familiar text Jesus tells his disciples that when the Son of Man comes in glory he will say to the righteous, "Just as you [fed, welcomed, clothed, cared for, visited] one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

The resurrected Jesus lives in suffering people. Two thousand years ago God looked into people's hearts through Jesus's eyes. Today these same eyes look into our hearts from jail cells, ghettos, refugee camps, and hospitals. Though most people try to stay away from places like these, God is pleased to call them home, and from them to hear and work out answers to our prayers.

Praying is like going to a big meal in God's house. We sit down at the table together with everyone from the "greatest" to the "least" of God's family. Anyone who is tempted to tell another, "You don't belong here," must remember that God invited each one. Our prayers go hand in

hand with how we treat our neighbors who are suffering. May our prayers and sharing keep drawing us together into closer communion with God who is among us.

—Duane Ediger

RESOURCES

CONFRONTING THE IDOLATRY OF FAMILY: A NEW VISION FOR THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD BY JANET FISHBURN. ABINGDON PRESS, 1991.

PEOPLE OF A COMPASSIONATE GOD: CREATING WELCOMING CONGREGATIONS BY JANET FISHBURN. ABINGDON PRESS, 2003.

"PRAYING TO GOD AMONG US"
PEACE FACTORY DEVOTIONS