

Adult Bible Studies

Current Events Supplement April 7, 2019

Call and Mission Matthew 10:1-15

Kayaking with Jeff and Alex is a different sort of church gathering. “Our purpose is to enjoy God’s creation in community, experience spiritual formation and develop bonds with one another over the love for kayaking.”¹ The Reverend Jeff St. Clair of Mandarin United Methodist Church in Jacksonville, Florida, said, “We want to develop a culture of meeting people where they already are because we know that they may never walk into our doors at church.”

Pastor Jeff “opens the group with prayer, scripture and a brief message and has conversations on the water with the kayakers.”² This community began with 15 kayakers in 2016 and now has over 300 members in their Facebook group.³ Pastor Jeff “added that some of the kayakers have never been to church and others have left the church. He is thrilled that he can lead church on the water.”⁴

The student book author writes that Jesus’ purpose in calling and sending the 12 disciples was not to invite people to church but to “go to other places to proclaim that the kingdom of God has come near.”⁵ Jesus sent the disciples to extend what Jesus was doing into more places. He gave the disciples authority to heal people in many different ways. In doing so, they proclaimed that the kingdom of God was indeed among the people, in all sorts of places.

As worship attendance decreases, churches are seeking new ways to reach unchurched people and are offering new worship spaces outside the walls of church buildings. We are not creating anything new. Rather, we are going back to the roots of the early church, of Jesus’ call to go, find the people, and serve. May the Holy Spirit continue to give our faith communities fresh ideas of places to go to proclaim the good news of the love of God in Jesus Christ.

1. In what ways did the disciples heal people, and how was that healing an extension of the ministry of Jesus?
2. How are the ministries of your faith community an extension and continuation of Jesus’ ministry?
3. How might your faith community find a fresh idea to go into new places to proclaim the good news of God’s love in Jesus Christ?

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¹From “Kayaking With Jeff and Alex,” under “Description” ([facebook.com/groups/1543202089331399/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1543202089331399/)).

²From “Kayaking With Jeff,” by Christine Kumar, *Interpreter* (interpretermagazine.org/departments/kayaking-with-jeff/).

³From “Kayaking With Jeff and Alex,” under “Description” ([facebook.com/groups/1543202089331399/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/1543202089331399/)).

⁴From “Kayaking With Jeff,” *Interpreter* (interpretermagazine.org/departments/kayaking-with-jeff/).

⁵From *Adult Bible Studies*, Spring 2019, by Taylor Mills (Cokesbury, 2018); page 41.