



Context

Our Christian Education theme for year is “Game On!” We are encouraging people to be fully engaged participants in the ministry of First Presbyterian Church. Throughout this year, the second Sunday of each month will be our “Game On Sundays.” We’ll explore how we play this game as Christians and what we need in order to play it well. This fall, in the remaining weeks, we are going through the Old Testament book of Nehemiah. This book describes events that take place in the Persian Empire and in Jerusalem during the 5th century BC. The nation of Israel was under the rule of the Persians. Nehemiah was an Israelite servant of the king, Artaxerxes. This story is important for us today because it shows the incredible impact one person can have when God gives them a passionate calling. In these coming weeks we’ll explore the calling of Nehemiah and how God used him to change history.

Checking In

Since the last time your group has met, how have each of you experienced God at work? What have you celebrated? What have you mourned?

Introduction

Now that construction on the wall was complete, Nehemiah leads the people to a new way of life. In Nehemiah 10 they make a covenant to live differently than before. In Nehemiah 12 they dedicate the wall with a huge celebration, making a joyful noise that can be heard throughout the land.

Discussing the Text – Nehemiah 10 and 12

1. In chapter 10, the people publically sign the covenant and take an oath to live differently. This reminds me of when we make a public declaration of our faith at baptism, or as a new member joining the church, or as an 8th grader during confirmation, or when we are ordained as a Deacon, Elder or Minister. Have there been significant moments in your life where you have made a public declaration of your faith?
2. As one who follows God, how do you live differently than those around you? The Israelites definitely lived differently than the other people groups living around them.
3. In chapter 12, the people publically dedicate the wall. Do you remember being present any church building dedications, or any other type of celebration in the life of a congregation? What memories do you have of those celebrations and dedications? Tell the group about it.

So what?

1. What have significant moments of faith been in your own life?
2. What benefits come from publically declaring your faith to others?
3. What benefits come from pausing to celebrate and dedicate a new thing in the life of a church?

Prayer

Share something you for which you are thankful and/or something for which you need support. Ask God to help you rededicate yourself to following Him throughout this week. As this is the week before Thanksgiving, lift up in prayer some things for which you are thankful.