



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE ONE “The Frontier”

Ice-Breaker Question

Rev. Newman says when faced with challenges sometimes we’re afraid, sometimes we feel like fighting. When you are challenged, what is your default action: flight or fight?

Watch VIDEO #1: THE FRONTIER

Digging In

1. Rev. Newman uses historical evidence to support each of his points. What piece of LCMS or Northwest history was interesting or surprising to you? Why?
2. Newman says, “*The LCMS was an inclusive movement, not an exclusive movement... they had their arms wide open to include people of all kinds.*” What steps has your congregation taken to include people of all kinds in its history? How could your congregation include people in its life in new ways going forward?



3. Newman says, *"The majority of [the LCMS's] history is all about tackling this frontier with joy and the grace of God, seeing Him do His marvelous work."* Have a couple people share a time where you have seen Him do something good in the "hard ground" of someone's heart. What did that look like? How did God break through the hard ground of that person's heart?

4. Newman quotes Rev. Edward Doering as saying about the frontier in the 1800s: *"I find people everywhere, i.e., Germans, former Lutherans, backsliders, doubters, distressed, and spiritually indifferent. The soil is hard, very hard."* What is some of the hard soil you encounter in your community?

Getting Traction in Scripture

- *Re-read together the passage that Rev. Newman shared at the beginning of his presentation: 1 Peter 2:9-12.*

- Go around the circle and share one thing you heard in this passage that jumped out to you. Why?

- Then go around again and connect that one thing to your daily life. What could this look like behaviorally as you live it out?

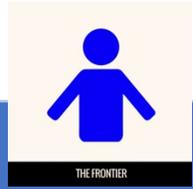
Monthly Action Step

Think through the group discussion so far. What is one new way your congregation can realistically be a blessing to your community? In next month's installment you will be asked to reflect on the steps you have taken as a congregation to turn this potential into a reality.

Closing Action and Prayer

Go around the circle, and share one person in your life who does not know Jesus who might need a little more active kindness from you. After sharing, pray out loud for the person to your right to be able to actively love this person this week.





SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT **Leadership Team Guide**

“The Frontier”

This additional study accompanies the small group discussion guide. It is designed for leadership teams as a process to discuss a strategic ministry plan connected to their mission and local community. The Leadership Team Guide is a focused group process that leads to specific action steps with progress checks at future meetings.

DISCUSS

- 1. What are some ways your congregation has traditionally reached out into the community?**

- 2. What group/s of people do these outreach methods primarily focus on (i.e. children, seniors, family, homeless, missionaries, etc.)?**

- 3. Think back to the discussions your group had in the small group portion of this guide.**
 - a. With those discussions in mind, take five minutes on your own and write down some ideas of new ways your congregation might begin helping groups in your community.**
 - b. The group leader will bring everyone back to discuss what you wrote down.**
 - c. Discuss, and then together choose a *new* way to begin helping a group of people that you don't typically reach out to.**
 - d. Describe this group that you chose together and what methods you will take to connect with them so they know that you are FOR them.**



PLAN

4. **“Teamwork makes the dream work... !” It’s time to get more people involved. Take some time to discuss possible people in your congregation who could be helpful in initiating this plan. As a group, nail down at least three people you all agree need to be part of the next step (of course you can have more than three!):**

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IMPLEMENT

5. **Don’t move on without doing what you can to identify the answers to the next three questions –**
 - a. *Who* will talk to these next leaders about the new plan?
 - b. *What* is the next tangible step we need to take?
 - c. *When* will we meet to take the next step?

PRAY

6. **As a team, pray for your team members by name as well as the new people you have identified. Ask God to provide His strength and ability to help you grow as His people sharing His Good News and His love.**

EVALUATE

7. **When your leadership team gathers again, be prepared to use the next discussion guide together. It will include a “check-in” on how you did implementing your plan.**

