

## Storyteller Week Four: The Parable of the Prodigal Son

### Discussion Questions:

- 1.) Luke 15:1-2 says, "Now the tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to hear him. And the Pharisees and the scribes grumbled, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them." In September at Central, we will study the Lord's Prayer as a church. In the study book available for the series "The Universe in 57 Words" by Carolyn Arends, she writes on page 18 that one of the ways we can enter into the prayer "Hallowed be thy name" is to pray back the names of God in terms of what they reveal about God's character. Consider how praying the name we discover in Luke 15:1-2, "Friend of Sinners," reflects God's nature and character.
- 2.) Read Luke 15:11-32 and the parable of the Prodigal Son. In the message, Vicar Justin Arnold says that the younger son sought self-gratification in the parable. Vicar Justin shares that ancient Jewish philosopher Philo notes that prodigals destroy themselves and those who enter their sphere because of their self-gratification pursuit. Contemplate how self-gratification wounds the person pursuing it and those in their sphere of influence. Contemplate why following Jesus is the opposite of seeking self-gratification.
- 3.) Vicar Justin reminds us that the elder son in the story is ignored and forgotten in the field while the father celebrates the younger son's return. Eventually, the father goes looking for the eldest son. In Luke 15:31-32, the father says, "Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. It was fitting to celebrate and be glad, for this your brother was dead and is alive; he was lost and is found." Place yourself in the eldest son's shoes. How do you receive the father's words? Reconsider the name of God, "Friend of Sinners". Do you have any feelings as the eldest son experienced in the parable? Spend time in prayer with God about what you discover as you contemplate a different aspect of the prodigal son parable.