



Series:	Date: Mar. 5th 2017
Topic: Prepare the Way of the Lord	Speaker: Mark Eikost

WELCOME

This week Mark Eikost a C&MA missionary from Bosnia Herzegovina shares with us what God is doing in Bosnia but also how we can join in the work of preparing the way of the Lord.

For the ice breaker this week, share your answers to the following question: If you were an Olympic athlete what sport would you want to compete in and way?

WORSHIP

Start the worship time by encouraging people to share praises for what God has done in their life this past week. Sing worship songs from the Sunday services or select your own.

WORD

I. Spiritual Objective. At the end of the discussion, members will:

- A. Discuss what it means to prepare the way of the Lord and what can be done to do so.
- B. Talk about what limits the work of the Lord both in circumstances around us and in ourselves.

II. The Sermon Synopsis:

John the Baptism was born for a special reason; he was to prepare the way for the coming of Christ. However, John was not the only one who is called to this work. All Christians are called to prepare the way for the return of Christ. The work that we are called to is the work of the Gospel. In order to prepare the way of the Lord, we are called to make paths straight, fill in valleys, and flatten mountains.

These valleys and mountains are the things that prevent the message of the Gospel from being shared. Sometimes they are external such as a country who is closed to missionaries, or people groups who are forgotten or marginalized. Often, the work that needs to be done is within us. It could be our shame or weaknesses that prevents us from serving, or our pride. All of these things are issues that can prevent us from preparing the way of the Lord.

The Text:

³ He went into all the country around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁴ As it is written in the book of the words of Isaiah the prophet: "A voice of one calling in the wilderness, 'Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.' ⁵ Every valley shall be filled in, every mountain and hill made low. The crooked roads shall become straight, the rough ways smooth. ⁶ And all people will see God's salvation.'"

(Luke 3:3-6 NIV)

Discussion Questions

III. John the Baptist's ministry was to prepare for the coming Christ. This is also our work today. Christ is returning and every Christian is called to the ministry of preparing the way of the Lord. *What does it mean to prepare the way of the Lord? How are you preparing the way of the Lord? What role does Leeward play in this as well?*

IV. Mark talked about the metaphor of valleys being filled with people and opportunities and pointed out how the valleys can be people we overlook when we look past them and beyond. Sometimes this happens unintentionally or maybe even intentionally. *Who are the people in your life that get overlooked? Who are the people in our community that gets overlooked or looked down on? What can be done to change this? What can we do to become more aware of the people God has put in front of us?*

V. Sometimes the valleys that need to be filled in are things within us that prevent us from serving God. It might be shame, or an area of weakness. *What prevents you or makes it difficult for you to join in the work of preparing the way of the Lord? Should these things prevent us from serving? How can we begin to deal with our shortcomings so that we can fully serve the Lord?*

VI. Mark also talked about the mountains around us that prevent the spread of the Gospel. *What are some of the mountains that keep the*



Good News from spreading? What is God doing around us to flatten those mountains? What can we do to help?

VII. Often the mountains that limit what God does in our lives are within us. Mark shared how God revealed the ways that his pride was limiting his ability to serve God. *What are the mountains that we struggle with in our lives? In what ways do they prevent us from serving? How can we address those mountains?*

WORK

- **Pray** and thank God that the Gospel is spreading across the world and that people are being saved. Ask God to reveal how you can help in this work. Also ask God to reveal what in your life prevents you from fully serving Him and ask God to work in your life to remove those obstacles.
- **In addition to the above prayer requests, please also pray for our Building Expansion Project (BEP):**
 - ❖ **Permits.** 1) Continue praying for our re-application to the Bldg. Dept. for the modification to our (CUP) Conditional Use Permit to be approved by accepting the tandem parking plan to meet their 143 parking stall requirement. 2) Also pray that they will issue our grading permit as soon as the CUP is issued. 3) Finally, pray that we will be able to work with our architect, PVA, to help them get ready to apply for our building construction permit.
 - ❖ **Architect.** Continue praying that our architect will work with our contractor in a design-assist partnership and that they will complete enough of the drawings for the BEP committee to review soon.
 - ❖ **Giving, Grants & Guaranteed Loan Commitment.** 1) Pray for the continued generous giving of our congregation toward the 3-year pledge and additional gifts as God provides. 2) Pray that God will grant us favor with the foundation that we are approaching for a grant on 3/20 through our grant writer. 3)

Pray for wisdom and direction as we continue to seek a loan commitment to fund part of the construction costs.

- ❖ **Evaluation Meeting.** Pray for our BEP Committee as we continue to meet with our contractor & architect to find ways to reduce our overall construction costs.

Announcements:

1. **Youth Alpha Series.** The Youth Alpha Series as it ends this Friday and for God to continue the good work He's started in their lives.
2. **River of Life Missions.** This Wed, 3/8 at 5:45 to 8:00pm. Thank you for the donations and for joining in helping serve the needy with a hot meal and presentation.
3. **Hawaii Area Great Commission Women's Spring Conf.** This Sat, 3/11 at 8:00am at the Kailua Community Church. Come hear missionary Kathy Eikost share what God has been doing in Bosnia.
4. **Workday/Car Wash.** This Sat, 3/11 at 9:00am. Come and help wash the cars of the seniors in our community and help maintain our church building and grounds. Includes a fellowship lunch afterward.
5. **Membership Class.** This Sat, 3/11 at 9:00-11:30am. Discover what it means to be a member of Leeward Community Church. Open to anyone 16 years and above.
6. **Xairo.** This Sun, 3/12 at 6:30pm. An evening of Word and worship where the church, young and old, can come together and lift up the name of Jesus. Aimed towards young adults and youth but all are welcome! Also, please see Andrew Arakawa if you're in joining a team to pray for Xairo.
7. **HIM Conference.** Thur-Sat, 3/16-18, HI Convention Center. This year's theme is "Mercy". For more info, go to: <http://himonline.org/him-2017/>. The church office will be closed on Friday, 3/17 because the staff will be attending the conference.
8. **Baby Shower for Aimee Arita.** Sat, 3/18, 2:00pm. Church Fellowship Hall. Call Vera Arita for more details.
9. **PUSH Night of Prayer.** Fri, 3/24, 7:00pm. Come join us for an evening of meeting our God in prayer for the needs the church and individually.
10. **Good Friday Communion Service.** Fri, 4/14, 7:00pm. Save the date.
11. **Easter Sunday Services.** Sun, 4/16. Save the date and invited your friends.



**HOME Group
Study Guide**

Leader's and Member's Copy
