



I ♥ MY CHURCH



Small Group Study and Personal Devotional Guide

INTRODUCTION

Have you ever been so passionate about something that you just couldn't contain your enthusiasm?

Maybe it was a new movie release, and you somehow managed to work references to it into just about every conversation. Maybe it was your newborn grandchild, and you showed pictures of him or her to every willing (or unwilling) listener. Maybe it was a new fitness regimen, and you eagerly looked forward to hitting the gym every morning.

As exciting as movies and workout routines are, we are also passionate about what God is doing here at Reynoldsburg UMC. And just like you can't seem to control showing off your

grandchild, we want our enthusiasm for our church to be contagious as we share it with others! This month, we will celebrate the ways God has redeemed us as His people and called us to be a distinct community on the east side of Columbus. Each week, we invite you to reflect upon and participate with us as a church in a specific practice: worship, spiritual growth, service, and sharing. All of these practices make up what we love most at Reynoldsburg UMC.

We don't just show up as a church—we also live as the church. What's not to love about that?



BONUS

Let's share what we love most about Reynoldsburg UMC with people outside of our church walls! To help you connect others to Jesus and make His love known, we're providing a "Fall Block Party Kit" this month for small groups. Kits will be ready for groups to pick up at the Connection Center starting Sunday, October 13 so groups can host a party in conjunction with their neighborhood's Trick or Treat night. Please email Christina (cbohn@rumc.org) to reserve your kit.





WEEK 1 WORSHIP



DEVOTIONAL

READ

Psalm 63

REFLECT

We can feel the desperation the psalmist has for God's presence. Was there a particular word, phrase, or idea that especially stood out to you while you were reading? Have you ever felt this strong sense of urgency to worship God?

RESPOND

Prayer of Examen

For 5 to 15 minutes, use the prompts below to prayerfully reflect over the last week. Consider journaling in a notebook or on your phone.

- Ask the Holy Spirit to open your eyes to His working presence in your life today. Ask Him to fill you with a spirit of worshipfulness.
- Recount your week by looking for God's goodness in the simple, mundane things.
- Look for times when you were aware of God—as well as times when you were distracted or unaware of Him. There may have even been times when you were resistant to Him.
- Pray for the grace to be more fully available to God—who loves you fully.
- For the last couple minutes, transition to wordless, silent contemplation—enjoying God and resting in Christ's presence.



SMALL GROUP

OPENING QUESTION

What conditions or practices especially draw you into God's presence (e.g., being in nature, art or song, enjoying the company of family or friends, serving, etc.)?

Slowly read through this weekend's Scripture: Psalm 63

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- The preface before the psalm mentions the song was composed while David was in the "Desert of Judah." This was a particularly dark time period for David because he was hiding in the wilderness from King Saul's murderous intentions. Yet, it is during this difficult time David earnestly sought God's presence. Has a challenging circumstance ever propelled you to worship God intently? Share with the group as you are comfortable.



- In verse 2, David remembers the times he encountered God’s presence in God’s sanctuary. For David, this past encounter was not enough—he wants more. Why do you think it’s easy for us as believers to attend a worship service at church each week and then become complacent about encountering God the other 6 days?
- For David, worshiping God wasn’t confined to music or even a sanctuary. David resolved to worship God “as long as [he] lived” (v. 4). How can worship be a lifestyle?
- How are you currently “clinging” to God (v. 8)? What would it look like for you to earnestly seek God? Are there certain practices or rhythms that would need to change in your daily or weekly life?
- Discuss your weekend worship experience with your group. Would you describe your experience as Spirit-filled, or lacking? Why? What aspects are already helpful in making the experience Spirit-filled? What components would be even more helpful to enhancing the experience? If you’re comfortable, write down your group’s discussion points on this topic and email your thoughts to worship@rumc.org.

CLOSING PRAYER

Use Psalm 63:1 to open in prayer, then allow a minute or two for silent prayer before closing.

OPTIONAL

Discuss the Fall Block Party Kit. Are the members of your group interested in hosting a party in one of the member’s neighborhoods? Whose neighborhood would be the most strategic? How would each group member like to contribute? Make some tentative plans together, and pick a date based upon the neighborhood’s Trick or Treat night. Please email Christina – cbohn@rumc.org – if your group decides to participate.

