

LED TO LEAD BIBLE STUDY

This study is for congregational leaders or for those considering special service in the congregation and beyond. It is for all of those who are moved to be part of the mission of the congregation.

This material can be studied by one person (study and reflection), by a pair of leaders working together (mentoring), or by a small group. It would be particularly helpful to those newly chosen as congregational leaders—teachers, council or task force members, and others. It is well-suited as a foundation study for a leadership retreat.

There is more material here than can be easily done in one or two sessions. It is important that you choose portions and activities that will fit what you are trying to accomplish and your time frame.

For each session:

- ...» Begin with prayer or a brief devotion.
- ...» Choose one or more of the **Focusing Activities**.
- ...» Choose one or more of **Search in the Word** sections to work through.
- ...» Choose one or more of the **Connecting Activities**.
- ...» Close with a prayer, hymn, or blessing.



Focusing Activities

- Write the word **leader** on the board or on a piece of paper. Write all the words that come to mind as you look at the word. Reflect on what you have written and share your list with others.
- Talk about or think about a time when you were a leader. What marked the experience for you? What was negative or positive in the experience? How did the experience equip you or change you? Share your insights.
- God's leaders are chosen. What does it mean to you to be chosen by God? Reflect on the question or share with others.
- Think of a biblical leader with whom you most identify. What about that person connects for you? What can you learn from that person? Share your insights with someone else.
- Interview people you identify as leaders. Find out what makes leading important for them. What does leadership mean for them? Why do they lead? What does God's choosing have to do with their leading? Share your discoveries.

Searching the Word

1. **Leaders:** God's Church is full of leaders. Leaders are not only those who are specially trained or commissioned or ordained. Leaders are all of those who carry out the mission of the church, whether their service is in the kitchen, in front of a group, behind a broom, or in a pulpit. Leaders in the church have something in common. Those who lead in the church or in God's mission are not self-selected or simply come into the task by default. Scripture clearly tells us that **God's leaders are chosen, set apart (consecrated), equipped, and sent.**
 - How would you define a leader in God's church? Read Acts 1:8. Jesus is talking to his sometimes reluctant disciples. What task does he set before them? How are they equipped for the task? How is that also our task?
 - Jesus sends us. What description of that sending do you find in John 10:16? What does it mean to you to be a sheep among wolves? What promise of equipping does Jesus give in John 10:19? What does that promise mean to you?
 - Read Jesus' encounter with the repentant Peter in John 21:15–19. How does Jesus describe Peter's (and our) leadership task? What command does he give? In what way is following Jesus leading? What does it mean for you to be a follower/leader?
2. God's leaders are **chosen.**
 - Read Exodus 3:1–11. What words of choosing do you find? What leadership task was Moses given?



This study helps youth and adults consider what it means to be led to lead.

- Read Jeremiah 1:1–10. What words of choosing do you find? What leadership task was Jeremiah given?
- Read Isaiah 6:1–9. What words of choosing do you find? What leadership task was Isaiah given?
- Read Judges 6:11–16. What words of choosing do you find? What leadership task is Gideon given to do?
- Read Luke 1:16–37. What words of choosing do you find? What leadership task is Mary given to do?
- Jesus said: “You did not choose me but I chose you. And I appointed you to go. . .” (John 15:16). What words of choosing do you find? What leadership task are we given to do? (See also Matthew 28:18–20).
- What does it mean to you to be a chosen leader? See Matthew 25 and John 13:1–17 as you think about leadership.

3. God’s leaders are **consecrated—set apart for ministry**.

- Read Exodus 3:5 again. How was Moses consecrated at the burning bush?
- Read the texts above from Jeremiah and Isaiah. How were these two prophets consecrated—set apart?
- Read Luke 1:16–17 again. How was Mary consecrated—set apart?
- In what way are teachers and leaders in your congregation consecrated or set apart for their task? How is God a part of that consecrating?

4. God’s leaders are **equipped by gift and promise**.

Read again the accounts of the calling of Moses, Gideon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Mary.

- In each case, the chosen one protests. What kind of protests do you see? How are these protests familiar to you?
- In each case, the protest is met with promise. What promises do you find? How is that promise similar to Jesus’ promise to us in Matthew 28:20? What does that promise mean to you as you consider your roles in leadership?

- Read the rest of the story of the calling of Moses in Exodus 3. Moses is equipped for his task with special gifts. List some of them.
- Read 1 Corinthians 12. In what way can we all say that we are gifted? What are the gifts meant for? How do we use our gifts (See verse 7)?
- What special gifts does Jesus promise in John 14:26–27? What do those gifts mean as we lead?

5. God’s leaders are **sent**.

- Read Genesis 12:1–3. Abraham is sent. For what purpose?
- Review again the sending in the stories of Moses, Gideon, Isaiah and Jeremiah. What does their sending have in common? What does God’s will have to do with their sending?
- Read Matthew 28:18–20 and Acts 1:8 again. How are we sent? For what purpose? How do we carry out our sending?
- An early name for the Christians was people of “The Way” (Acts 9:1–2). Why is that a good name for believers? On what way have we been sent? How have we been equipped for the journey? Who goes with us? How do we know when we are on “The Way”?

Connecting Activities

- Write a job description for your leadership in God’s church. What are you called, equipped, and sent to do? Share your description.
- What are some of the ways you can recognize the leaders in your congregation? How can you express your thanks for their leadership?
- What are your special gifts, gifts you can use as you carry out the mission given by Jesus? You might use an inventory such as “Opening your Spiritual Gifts”, available on-line at www.elca.org/christianeducation/programplanners/2005CEProgramPlanner as you consider ways to use your gifts.

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(John 15:16).

