

## Small Group Curriculum • Love Local

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### Love Local • Week 3 • Love the “Locals”

What if real change doesn't start with big ideas but with simple, everyday actions right where you are? In a time when the world feels more divided than ever, *Love Local* is an invitation to rediscover the love that makes a difference. This series is about taking bold steps to love where it counts most: here and now. Are you ready to bring hope, connection, and purpose back to your corner of the world?

### REMINDERS

- Join our Coat Drive and Del Mar Fund [here!](#)
- Fill in the blanks with your group. At Awakening our ministry model (aka “Discipleship Pathway”) is our blueprint for how we do ministry. Our four expressions of church life are: \_\_\_\_\_ to know Jesus. \_\_\_\_\_ as a disciple of Jesus. \_\_\_\_\_ in the name of Jesus. \_\_\_\_\_ the love of Jesus. (*come, grow, serve, share*)
- **NOTE:** This is our LAST discussion guide for 2024! Be sure to plan a social gathering around Thanksgiving or Christmas, preparing your group for a break. We will be having small group kickoffs the last two weeks in January, with new, small group discussion guides starting in February alongside our teaching series on Genesis.

### ICEBREAKER

- Who are the hardest types of people for you to love?

### INTRODUCTION

Awakening, our hope is that Jesus' circle of influence expands in The Bay, and yet, we know that this circle won't grow unless our personal circles of sharing Jesus' love expand.

The Apostle Paul who writes in the New Testament, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved” (Romans 10:13)

And so the main question for us is: “*How big is my EVERYONE?*” How big is my circle? Can I truly be in relationship with anyone, to then invite them to a cup of coffee, a meal, or one of our Christmas even services?

### READ

- Read aloud Leviticus 13:45-36— *Anyone with such a defiling disease must wear torn clothes, let their hair be unkempt, cover the lower part of their face and cry out, ‘Unclean! Unclean!’ As long as they have the disease they remain unclean. They must live alone; they must live outside the camp.*

# AWAKENING

- Read aloud Mark 1:40-42—*A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, “If you are willing, you can make me clean.” Jesus was indignant. “I am willing,” he said. Be clean!” Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.*

## DISCUSS

- Based on Leviticus 13:45-46 explain what life must have been like living as a leper?
- Who are today’s modern-day lepers?
- In Mark 1:41, why do you think Jesus was “indignant?” How does this emotion lead to compassion?
- Why do you think Jesus touched the leper when he didn’t need to?
- If you were the leper, how would you have responded to Jesus’s actions?
- How does this miracle point to the heart of Jesus and his coming kingdom?

## RESPONSE

- Why is it hard to love the “unloveables” in your life?
- How do Jesus’ words from Matthew 5:46-47 challenge us?
- What loving act can you make this week towards someone in your network that is hard to love? Would inviting them to our Advent series or Christmas Eve Services be an appropriate step? If not, what would be?
- How would a loving act or invitation reflect the heart and Good News of Jesus?

**Transition:** We desire our small groups at Awakening to regularly experience relational connection, biblical study, and also prayer, taking our praise, requests, and confessions to God.

## PRAYER

Jesus, as a spiritually diseased and sinful people, we want to thank you for reaching out with your healing touch to redeem us back into your family. We thank you that you never knew an untouchable.

And as our faith is a “contact sport,” empower us now to go from here increasing our proximity with those who we typically run from. May we be a people who lead with *praying, caring, and sharing* to those you are calling us to pursue.

Bring to mind someone who is ready for an invite to this upcoming Advent series or one of our Christmas eve services, and give us courage to make an invitation. Amen.