

**“WON’T YOU BE MY NEIGHBOR?”**  
**“Serving As Neighbors”**

This week we finish our sermon series, “Won’t You Be My Neighbor?” Upon being interviewed about his opening song, “Won’t you be my neighbor?” Fred Rogers said, “Well, I supposed it’s an invitation. It’s an invitation for somebody to be close to you.” As we conclude our series, we also are celebrating Labor Day weekend. Our focus will be on work and service as called people of God. How does neighboring look as a person of faith? Sometimes our work is called vocation which comes from the Latin word *vocare*, which means to call, and the work to which an individual is called. Often, the struggle for us, is how to discern the will of God and how our work and service can point to God. Frederick Buechner once wrote that our call and vocation is “The place God calls you to is the place where your deep gladness and the world’s deep hunger meet.” May these words reflect our work and our neighboring this week. Pastor Cindy

Things I’d like to remember from today’s sermon: **“Serving as Neighbors”**

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**Prayer for the Week**

*God of Connection, Open our eyes to discover your treasures hidden among our neighbors. Open our ears to listen deeply to their stories. Open our hands to receive the giftedness they bring into our lives. God of Creativity, Stir our minds with curiosity about this wondrous world. Lead our feet forward, moving only at the speed of trust. Free our hearts to join the work you are already doing in our neighborhoods. God of Compassion, Plant the seeds of patience among us, as we learn to love our neighbor as ourselves. Plant the seeds of grace among us, so failure leads us to your love. Plant the seeds of community, that we would discover your kingdom among us. Amen.*  
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## Study Guide

### **Monday, September 3, 2018 Matthew 5:1-12**

These verses are often called the “Beatitudes” which begin with either the word Blessed or Happy depending on the translation. In this beautiful sermon by Jesus, he invites people to recognize they are blessed. This is not an instruction on how to become blessed, or how to bless someone else. This is about how to recognize blessedness, period. In terms of neighboring, this connects with abundance. Everyone is blessed: those who are without hope, those who grieve, who are humble, who long holiness, who are merciful and peacemakers, to name a few. Jesus is celebrating the people where they are in that moment. Today, is a three day weekend for most. *How are you celebrating being blessed on this day? How will you share that celebration with others?*

### **Tuesday, September 4, 2018 Ephesians 4:11-13**

Paul has encouraged the church in the first part of this chapter, “to live worthy of the call” which they have been given. Being called, there are tasks in which we participate: apostles, prophets, evangelists, teacher and pastors. In the twelfth chapter of First Corinthians, Paul goes into greater detail. Jesus notes all are blessed in life’s ups and downs and that blessing becomes a calling to be part of God’s work in the world. The purpose of the many gifts is to build up the community until all “reach the unity of faith and knowledge of God’s son.” Unity is not uniformity, unity is growing into the likeness and fullness of Christ with the gifts each of us has been given. In neighboring, we are encouraged to see our gifts and find ways to share them in our communities: at work, school and at home. *How does God equip you to share your gifts with others? Where are you most challenged to live out this call? What one thing will you do today to answer God’s call in your life?*

### **Wednesday, September 5, 2018 Ephesians 4:14-16**

The challenge is to grow in “every way into Christ, who is the head.” How does the church and our neighborhood become more Christ like? How is it built up with love? Being the neighbor Jesus talks about is a challenge for each of us and for each generation. Mr. Rogers sings “you are special” and “It’s you I like, it’s not the things you wear....It’s you yourself.” As Christians and neighbors, it isn’t about what we look like, or where we come from, it is the love and grace we have received in Christ and how we share it that creates the community of faith. *Today, think about where and how you have seen God at work. How did you participate in those God moments? Challenge yourself to find a way be more Christ like in all your encounters today and the rest of the week.*

### **Thursday, September 6, 2018 Matthew 5:13-15**

Earlier this week we read about how we are blessed, period. We are blessed in all things. Here, Jesus uses the metaphors of salt and light. Salt and light can bless everything they touch. For Jesus it wasn’t enough to be blessed, out of being blessed the challenge is to bless others. Faith is made real through those who shine light in darkness and flavor the world around them. Salt and light once incorporated, change the whole of what they are a part of and can no longer be unincorporated. (Think what happens when a dish is over salted!) So followers of Jesus are called to change what they are part of: family, church, community, work, and neighborhood with light, color and flavor. *How do you radiate Christ’s love in your neighborhood? Does the light you share change lives and transform communities? Find one way today, to bring light into a situation that is filled with darkness.*

### **Friday, September 7, 2018 Matthew 5:16**

“Let your light shine before people, so they can see the good things you do and praise God who is in heaven.” Our light and salt is to change the world into the reign that Christ has promised. Our works and words are to point to God. Light shines on the just and unjust, and the Light that comes from God shines on all people. As followers of Jesus, we are called to be the neighbors that share the love, grace and joy that God offers to everyone. *How will you celebrate your calling as the light of the world and the salt of the earth? Find someone to share that light with today.*