

St. John the Evangelist Episcopal Church
Formation in Faith Lectionary
2017

October 1

The Call to Abraham

Genesis 12:1-9

Even after the fall, after the disobedience of Adam and Eve and of Cain, God does not give up on humanity. In the midst of a world that has now fallen into sin, God calls Abram, later to be named Abraham, to be the founder of a new nation of people who will walk in faithfulness with God. From now on, Israel will walk in covenant relationship with God.

Questions for Discussion:

God asked Adam and Eve not to touch the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil, and they disobeyed. What does God ask of Abram? How does Abram respond to God's command? Have you ever felt that God was asking you to do something new? What did you do? How did it feel?

God's very first words to Abram are a command to get up from where he is living and go to a new land. Do you know anyone who has immigrated to California from another place or another country? What brought them here? Do you think it was easy or hard for them to move? Have you ever had to move and live in a new place? How did that feel? How do you think Abram may have felt?

God asks Abram to leave his "kindred and his father's house." Abram will leave his family and set out to as an immigrant to a new country, where he will start a new family, build a new nation, and even be given a new name, "Abraham" (Genesis 17:1-9). Have there been times when you have been asked to do something new? How does it feel when you have to face something new? A new home? A new school? New friends?

Abram makes a long journey to live in a new land, trusting in God to show him the way. What are the risks in taking a long trip through the desert? What risks may God be asking you to take in order to follow him?

October 8

The Promise to Abraham

Genesis 18:1-16

In the midst of his travels, God appears to Abraham in the form of three visitors at the Oaks of Mamre. Abraham quickly welcomes his guests and shows them tremendous hospitality. In response, the visitors make a stunning promise to Abraham and his wife Sarah about their future and the future of Israel.

Questions for Discussion:

The story tells us that “the Lord appeared to Abraham” in the form of three men standing near him, and that he instantly recognized them. In what ways does God appear to you? Does it ever feel like God is speaking to you through the people who enter your life?

Abraham had been resting in the heat of the day when the men appear. How does Abraham respond to the appearance of the visitors? Was this the most convenient time to receive guests? How does he greet them? What greeting do you give when people come to visit you?

What hospitality does Abraham show his visitors? What does he bring them? Have you ever welcomed a visitor to stay in your home? What did you do to welcome them?

The visitors respond to Abraham’s hospitality with a blessing, the promise to Abraham and Sarah that they will soon have a son. Do you feel blessed by welcoming others and being kind to them?

Throughout history this story has been considered a model for how Christians should show hospitality to others. In what ways can you and your family (and even your church) show hospitality to others? What can you do to be of help to those in our community who need help?