

Becoming Neighbors: Learning from Scripture and Mister Rogers



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A 5-Week
Lenten
Series:
Wednesdays,
March 4th -
April 1st



Since we can't be together, here is everything you need in order to have your own Lenten devotional at home, including a soup recipe!! How fun it would be if many of us were sharing the same supper from our homes. If you can, purchase the ingredients and make the soup. Then, read the Scripture for the evening together with whoever is in your home! If you are alone, call a friend and do this with them. Then, watch the episode and/or the clips below. Finally, there is a devotion someone can read aloud, followed by questions to discuss. Happy home devotions!!

Theme: Compassion

Scripture: Psalm 77

Episode:

1101 (Death of a Goldfish) If you have Amazon, you can watch it here. It is free with a Prime membership, and only \$1.99 without: https://www.amazon.com/1101-Death-Goldfish/dp/B004BZA5J6/ref=sr_1_1?keywords=mister+rogers+1101&qid=1584457836&sr=8-1

Here are two short YouTube videos you can also watch:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F9E-I7yBwIc> (another song from Mister Rogers!)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LDnDs1Rz4ZQ> (a clip from the full episode above)

Devotion:

In the episode and clips above, Mister Rogers talks and sings, at great length, about the variety of feelings we have as humans: sad, mad, happy, etc. As we know, life is full of unexpected twists and turns. Really amazing things happen to us, but really terrible things happen, too. When we have feelings of worry or fear or sadness or anger, we often keep these things to ourselves. We don't want to burden others, or we don't think our feelings are valid, so we try to ignore them. But then—eventually—they come pouring out of us! Usually in all the wrong ways: we kick something, we yell at someone. Our feelings demand to be felt and to be shared, and when we deny them that expression, they take matters into their own hands.

There is a long tradition in Scripture of sharing mad and sad feelings. Many of the psalms, like the one for today, are what we call lament psalms—meaning that the author is crying out to God in despair or anger or frustration or sorrow. Lament psalms help us give voice to our own deep feelings. They give us words to use when our own words fail us, and they give us permission to cry out to God with whatever it is that we are

feeling. God can handle all of your big emotions, and above all, wants a relationship with you—a real relationship, where feelings are shared.

If we are to be good neighbors, one to another, we need to learn to share our feelings. Especially in this anxious time. Sharing our own feelings will help us feel less overwhelmed and will enable us to let our sadness or anger or worry go in healthy ways. And we need to create space for others to share their feelings! This will help them to feel heard and validated, and will help in building the community we so desperately need.

Questions:

1. In the episode, Mister Rogers talks about how sad he was when his childhood pet died. What is the saddest thing that has ever happened to you?
2. We live in a weird, scary time. It is more important now, than ever, that we share our feelings. Go around and give everyone the opportunity to talk about how the Covid-19 pandemic is making them feel. Go around as many times as you need. There are no right or wrong answers here! And don't judge anyone for the way they feel.
3. Mister Rogers sings a song called "What do you do with the mad that you feel?" which is in the first YouTube video above. What do you do when you feel anger? What are some healthy ways to cope with frustration and disappointment?
4. Does it reassure you that there are parts of Scripture that deal honestly with raw, hard human emotions? Why or why not? What does this say about our God?
5. Make a gratitude list. Even when things feel terrible, there are things to be grateful for. Come up with at least five things, per person, that you are thankful for today. Grateful is a feeling, too!

Prayer:

Dear God, thank you for listening to us and being present for us in all our feelings. Help us to share what we are feeling with others, and to listen as others share their feelings with us. Inspire us to be good neighbors to each other, even in this time when it feels like everything is falling apart. Remind us of your goodness and your presence, and help us to remind others, as well. Amen.

Creamy Chicken Gnocchi Soup

Recipe Summary

Prep:30 mins Cook: 30 mins Total:1 hr

Servings: 6

Ingredients:

- ¼ cup butter
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1 large zucchini, diced
- 2 stalks celery, diced
- 1 yellow onion, diced
- ½ red bell pepper, diced
- 2 carrots, shredded
- 4 cloves garlic, minced
- ¼ cup all-purpose flour
- 3 cups chicken broth, or more as needed
- 1 cup half-and-half
- 1 pint fat-free half-and-half
- 2 cups shredded rotisserie chicken meat
- 1 (16 ounce) package small gnocchi
- 2 cups torn fresh spinach
- salt and ground black pepper to taste
- ½ teaspoon ground thyme
- ¼ teaspoon freshly grated nutmeg

Directions:

Instructions Checklist

- **Step 1**

Melt butter with olive oil in a large soup pot over medium heat. Cook and stir zucchini, celery, onion, red bell pepper, carrots, and garlic in the hot butter and oil until vegetables are soft, 8 to 10 minutes. Stir flour into mixture, coating vegetables; cook 2 more minutes.

- **Step 2**

Stir chicken broth into vegetables, stirring until flour paste combines with broth and soup is thick and smooth, about 5 minutes. Pour in both kinds of half-and-half; bring to a simmer. Cook until slightly thickened, about 5 more minutes. Gently fold chicken, gnocchi, and spinach into soup. Season with salt, black pepper, thyme, and nutmeg.

