WEEK 5
THE MESSINESS OF VOCATION

INTRODUCTION

Throughout this intensive study on living out our vocational callings, we hope you have never heard us romanticize the vocational understanding of life. There is no guarantee or promise here that says, “If you understand your life and purpose in this way... all will be well.” That is simply not a promise any person or life-plan can make. Instead, this week in particular, we claim the promise of the cross of Jesus Christ as the foundation upon which all of our understanding, living and being stands. And the cross is anything but romantic – the cross is brutal, cruel and deadly. However, because of the unyielding love of God, the cross is also merciful, transformative and new, new, new!

Lutheran theologian Gerhard Forde writes extensively on the theology of the cross of Jesus. And the theology of the cross says a lot about our lives as mortals on this earth living in response to the immortal love of God (in other words, vocation). He writes:

The cross insists on being its own story. It does not allow us to stand by and watch. It does not ask us to probe endlessly for a meaning behind or above everything that would finally awaken, enlighten, and attract the exiled, slumbering soul. The cross draws us into itself so that we become participants in the story... Thus the cross story claims us... so the question and the hope comes to us. “If we die with him shall we not also live with him?” That is the end of the story... but it is the beginning of faith.¹

Our lives are many things. Sometimes they are romantic, but most often they are complicated, demanding, confusing, lacking and downright messy. So this week we read from authors who have entered the tension of being a redeemed and loved child of God who still carries grief, anger, failures and questions. We trust that God’s shoulders are broad enough to carry our messiness and that the expanse of God’s arms is wide enough to hold us and all we are. We understand this strength and mercy through the cross of Christ – the cross that should mean death is final and winning – but is made something totally new by the love of God so that the cross means transformation and life eternal with God.

Don’t be afraid to get messy, this is the way of God; it is the way of the cross.

**Scripture Reading**

*The book of Ruth tells the story of three people: Naomi, a widow from Bethlehem in Judah; Ruth, her daughter-in-law from Moab; and Boaz, a gentleman farmer from Bethlehem. Ruth, in a supreme act of devotion, follows Naomi home from Moab and there meets Boaz, Naomi’s close relative. All three characters are struggling to live into their vocation as loyal, faithful family members (is there anything messier than that?). The book is a short four-chapter story that we encourage you to read from start to finish!*

*Within the book there are verses that tell of the pull of vocation in heartfelt and dramatic ways: read with special attention Ruth’s song to her mother-in-law in Chapter 1:16-17 and Naomi’s grief in chapter 1:20-21. Hear the honor of Boaz in chapter 3:6-13, and finally Naomi’s redemption celebrated by her community in chapter 4:14-17.*
The Book of Ruth

In the days when the judges ruled, there was a famine in the land, and a certain man of Bethlehem in Judah went to live in the country of Moab, he and his wife and two sons. The name of the man was Elimelech and the name of his wife Naomi, and the names of his two sons were Mahlon and Chilion; they were Ephrathites from Bethlehem in Judah. They went into the country of Moab and remained there. But Elimelech, the husband of Naomi, died, and she was left with her two sons. These took Moabite wives; the name of one was Orpah and the name of the other Ruth. When they had lived there for about ten years, both Mahlon and Chilion also died, so that the woman was left without her two sons or her husband.

Then she started to return with her daughters-in-law from the country of Moab, for she had heard in the country of Moab that the LORD had had consideration for his people and given them food. So she set out from the place where she had been living, she and her two daughters-in-law, and they went on their way to go back to the land of Judah. But Naomi said to her two daughters-in-law, ‘Go back each of you to your mother’s house. May the LORD deal kindly with you, as you have dealt with the dead and with me. The LORD grant that you may find security, each of you in the house of your husband.’ Then she kissed them, and they wept aloud. They said to her, ‘No, we will return with you to your people.’ But Naomi said, ‘Turn back, my daughters, why will you go with me? Do I still have sons in my womb that they may become your husbands? Turn back, my daughters, go your way, for I am too old to have a husband. Even if I thought there was hope for me, even if I should have a husband tonight and bear sons, would you then wait until they were grown? Would you then refrain from marrying? No, my daughters, it has been far more bitter for me than for you, because the hand of the LORD has turned against me.’ Then they wept aloud again. Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth clung to her.

So she said, ‘See, your sister-in-law has gone back to her people and to her gods; return after your sister-in-law.’ But Ruth said, ‘Do not press me to leave you or to turn back from following you! Where you go, I will go; where you lodge, I will lodge;
your people shall be my people,
    and your God my God.
 17 Where you die, I will die—
    there will I be buried.
May the LORD do thus and so to me,
    and more as well,
if even death parts me from you!’
 18 When Naomi saw that she was determined to go with her, she said no more to her.

 19 So the two of them went on until they came to Bethlehem. When they came to Bethlehem, the whole town was stirred because of them; and the women said, ‘Is this Naomi?’ 20 She said to them, ‘Call me no longer Naomi,
    call me Mara,
for the Almighty has dealt bitterly with me.
 21 I went away full,
    but the LORD has brought me back empty;
why call me Naomi
    when the LORD has dealt harshly with me,
and the Almighty has brought calamity upon me?’

 22 So Naomi returned together with Ruth the Moabite, her daughter-in-law, who came back with her from the country of Moab. They came to Bethlehem at the beginning of the barley harvest.

 2 Now Naomi had a kinsman on her husband’s side, a prominent rich man, of the family of Elimelech, whose name was Boaz. 2 And Ruth the Moabitite said to Naomi, ‘Let me go to the field and glean among the ears of grain, behind someone in whose sight I may find favor.’ She said to her, ‘Go, my daughter.’ 3 So she went. She came and gleaned in the field behind the reapers. As it happened, she came to the part of the field belonging to Boaz, who was of the family of Elimelech. 4 Just then Boaz came from Bethlehem. He said to the reapers, ‘The LORD be with you.’ They answered, ‘The LORD bless you.’ 5 Then Boaz said to his servant who was in charge of the reapers, ‘To whom does this young woman belong?’ 6 The servant who was in charge of the reapers answered, ‘She is the Moabitite who came back with Naomi from the
country of Moab. 7 She said, “Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves behind the reapers.” So she came, and she has been on her feet from early this morning until now, without resting even for a moment.’

8 Then Boaz said to Ruth, ‘Now listen, my daughter, do not go to glean in another field or leave this one, but keep close to my young women. 9 Keep your eyes on the field that is being reaped, and follow behind them. I have ordered the young men not to bother you. If you get thirsty, go to the vessels and drink from what the young men have drawn.’ 10 Then she fell prostrate, with her face to the ground, and said to him, ‘Why have I found favor in your sight, that you should take notice of me, when I am a foreigner?’ 11 But Boaz answered her, ‘All that you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband has been fully told me, and how you left your father and mother and your native land and came to a people that you did not know before. 12 May the LORD reward you for your deeds, and may you have a full reward from the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come for refuge!’ 13 Then she said, ‘May I continue to find favour in your sight, my lord, for you have comforted me and spoken kindly to your servant, even though I am not one of your servants.’

14 At mealtime Boaz said to her, ‘Come here, and eat some of this bread, and dip your morsel in the sour wine.’ So she sat beside the reapers, and he heaped up for her some parched grain. She ate until she was satisfied, and she had some left over. 15 When she got up to glean, Boaz instructed his young men, ‘Let her glean even among the standing sheaves, and do not reproach her. 16 You must also pull out some handfuls for her from the bundles, and leave them for her to glean, and do not rebuke her.’

17 So she gleaned in the field until evening. Then she beat out what she had gleaned, and it was about an ephah of barley. 18 She picked it up and came into the town, and her mother-in-law saw how much she had gleaned. Then she took out and gave her what was left over after she herself had been satisfied. 19 Her mother-in-law said to her, ‘Where did you glean today? And where have you worked? Blessed be the man who took notice of you.’ So she told her mother-in-law with whom she had worked, and said, ‘The name of the man with whom I worked today is Boaz.’ 20 Then Naomi said to her daughter-in-law, ‘Blessed be he by the LORD, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead!’ Naomi also said to her, ‘The man is a relative of ours, one of our nearest kin.’ 21 Then Ruth the Moabitite said, ‘He even said to me, “Stay close by my
servants, until they have finished all my harvest.”

22Naomi said to Ruth, her daughter-in-law, ‘It is better, my daughter, that you go out with his young women, otherwise you might be bothered in another field.’ 23So she stayed close to the young women of Boaz, gleaning until the end of the barley and wheat harvests; and she lived with her mother-in-law.

3 Naomi her mother-in-law said to her, ‘My daughter, I need to seek some security for you, so that it may be well with you. 2Now here is our kinsman Boaz, with whose young women you have been working. See, he is winnowing barley tonight at the threshing-floor. 3Now wash and anoint yourself, and put on your best clothes and go down to the threshing-floor; but do not make yourself known to the man until he has finished eating and drinking. 4When he lies down, observe the place where he lies; then, go and uncover his feet and lie down; and he will tell you what to do.’ 5She said to her, ‘All that you tell me I will do.’

6 So she went down to the threshing-floor and did just as her mother-in-law had instructed her. 7When Boaz had eaten and drunk, and he was in a contented mood, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of grain. Then she came quietly and uncovered his feet, and lay down. 8At midnight the man was startled and turned over, and there, lying at his feet, was a woman! 9He said, ‘Who are you?’ And she answered, ‘I am Ruth, your servant; spread your cloak over your servant, for you are next-of-kin.’ 10He said, ‘May you be blessed by the LORD, my daughter; this last instance of your loyalty is better than the first; you have not gone after young men, whether poor or rich. 11And now, my daughter, do not be afraid; I will do for you all that you ask, for all the assembly of my people know that you are a worthy woman. 12But now, though it is true that I am a near kinsman, there is another kinsman more closely related than I. 13Remain this night, and in the morning, if he will act as next-of-kin for you, good; let him do so. If he is not willing to act as next-of-kin for you, then, as the LORD lives, I will act as next-of-kin for you. Lie down until the morning.’

14 So she lay at his feet until morning, but got up before one person could recognize another; for he said, ‘It must not be known that the woman came to the threshing-floor.’ 15Then he said, ‘Bring the cloak you are wearing and hold it out.’ So she held it, and he measured out six measures of barley, and put it on her back; then he went into the city. 16She came to her mother-in-law, who said, ‘How did things go with you, my
daughter?’ Then she told her all that the man had done for her, saying, ‘He gave me these six measures of barley, for he said, “Do not go back to your mother-in-law empty-handed.”’ She replied, ‘Wait, my daughter, until you learn how the matter turns out, for the man will not rest, but will settle the matter today.’

4 No sooner had Boaz gone up to the gate and sat down there than the next-of-kin, of whom Boaz had spoken, came passing by. So Boaz said, ‘Come over, friend; sit down here.’ And he went over and sat down. 2 Then Boaz took ten men of the elders of the city, and said, ‘Sit down here’; so they sat down. 3 He then said to the next-of-kin, ‘Naomi, who has come back from the country of Moab, is selling the parcel of land that belonged to our kinsman Elimelech. 4 So I thought I would tell you of it, and say: Buy it in the presence of those sitting here, and in the presence of the elders of my people. If you will redeem it, redeem it; but if you will not, tell me, so that I may know; for there is no one prior to you to redeem it, and I come after you.’ So he said, ‘I will redeem it.’ 5 Then Boaz said, ‘The day you acquire the field from the hand of Naomi, you are also acquiring Ruth the Moabite, the widow of the dead man, to maintain the dead man’s name on his inheritance.’ 6 At this, the next-of-kin said, ‘I cannot redeem it for myself without damaging my own inheritance. Take my right of redemption yourself, for I cannot redeem it.’

7 Now this was the custom in former times in Israel concerning redeeming and exchanging: to confirm a transaction, one party took off a sandal and gave it to the other; this was the manner of attesting in Israel. 8 So when the next-of-kin said to Boaz, ‘Acquire it for yourself’, he took off his sandal. 9 Then Boaz said to the elders and all the people, ‘Today you are witnesses that I have acquired from the hand of Naomi all that belonged to Elimelech and all that belonged to Chilion and Mahlon. 10 I have also acquired Ruth the Moabite, the wife of Mahlon, to be my wife, to maintain the dead man’s name on his inheritance, in order that the name of the dead may not be cut off from his kindred and from the gate of his native place; today you are witnesses.’ 11 Then all the people who were at the gate, along with the elders, said, ‘We are witnesses. May the LORD make the woman who is coming into your house like Rachel and Leah, who together built up the house of Israel. May you produce children in Ephrathah and bestow a name in Bethlehem; 12 and, through the children that the LORD will give you by this young woman, may your house be like the house of Perez, whom Tamar bore to Judah.’
13 So Boaz took Ruth and she became his wife. When they came together, the LORD made her conceive, and she bore a son. 14 Then the women said to Naomi, ‘Blessed be the LORD, who has not left you this day without next-of-kin; and may his name be renowned in Israel! 15 He shall be to you a restorer of life and a nourisher of your old age; for your daughter-in-law who loves you, who is more to you than seven sons, has borne him.’ 16 Then Naomi took the child and laid him in her bosom, and became his nurse. 17 The women of the neighborhood gave him a name, saying, ‘A son has been born to Naomi.’ They named him Obed; he became the father of Jesse, the father of David.

18 Now these are the descendants of Perez: Perez became the father of Hezron, 19 Hezron of Ram, Ram of Amminadab, 20 Amminadab of Nahshon, Nahshon of Salmon, 21 Salmon of Boaz, Boaz of Obed, 22 Obed of Jesse, and Jesse of David.

From *Pastrix* by Nadia-Bolz Weber

*In the excerpt from Lutheran Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber’s book, *Pastrix*, she writes of the tension between the pomp and circumstances of our contemporary Easter celebrations and the reality of the rugged cross, steeped in dirt, blood and death. Pastor Nadia tells of the resurrection truth in a very straightforward way, putting the messy cross of Christ where it belongs...at the center of our being. Our reading picks up as Pastor Nadia is preaching at an enormous, outdoor, ecumenical worship service at Red Rocks Amphitheatre in Colorado.*
…As I looked out over the shivering crowd, I suggested that perhaps Mary Magdalene thought the resurrected Christ was a gardener because Jesus still had the dirt from his own tomb under his nails. Of course, the depictions in churches of the risen Christ never show dirt under his nails; they make him look more like a wingless angel than a gardener. It’s as if he needed to be cleaned up for Easter visitors so he looked more impressive and so no one would be offended by the truth. But then what we all end up with is a perverted idea of what resurrection looks like. My experience, however, is that the God of Easter is a God with dirt under his nails.

Resurrection never feels like being made clean and nice and pious like in those Easter pictures. I would have never agreed to work for God if I had believed God was interested in trying to make me nice or even good. Instead, what I subconsciously knew, even back then, was that God was never about making me spiffy; God was about making me new.

New doesn’t always look perfect. Like the Easter story itself, new is often messy. New looks like recovering alcoholics. New looks like reconciliation between family members who don’t actually deserve it. New looks like every time I manage to admit I was wrong and every time I manage to not mention when I’m right. New looks like every fresh start and every act of forgiveness and every moment of letting go of what we thought we couldn’t live without and then somehow living without it anyway. New is the thing we never saw coming - never even hoped for - but ends up being what we needed all along.

“It happens to all of us,” I concluded that Easter Sunday morning. “God simply keeps reaching down into the dirt of humanity and resurrecting us from the graves we dig for ourselves through our violence, our lies, our selfishness, our arrogance, and our addictions. And God keeps loving us back to life over and over.”

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When Michael Meehan heard me preach that sermon, he was certainly not a churchgoer. He was raised Catholic but had never in his adult life felt much need for church. Yet he’d tried to end his life and had gotten it back again despite himself. So when he heard me say that God reaches into the graves we dig ourselves and loves us back to life, he knew that, in his case, this was not actually a metaphor, and the next month he showed up at House for All Sinners and Saints.

There were so many new people that first month after the Denver Post cover story and the Red Rocks Easter service that I barely registered seeing Michael, a nearly fifty-year-old man with a funny walk – one leg too short and a busted hip. But Catherine, a young Episcopalian architect who had been attending House for All for a while, did notice him. During the passing of the peace, a time in the liturgy when everyone shakes hands or hugs one another saying, “Peace be with you,” Michael had seen Catherine hug several of her friends who sat around her. Then she came to Michael and extended her hand.

“But you are a hugger, right?” he asked and then boldly embraced her.

Later he would describe this act as entirely outside of his nature. He also would come to say that in the months before the night he had held a razor in a cheap motel bathroom that he had very systematically disentangled himself from just about everything. His business as a book designer dwindled down to just about nothing. He had no relationship, no money, and his much-beloved dog suddenly took ill and died. So Michael gave up, sold his furniture, and dissolved all connections to his own life.

“Lack of connections is death,” he told me as we sat in Hooked on Colfax, nine months after he’d first visited HFASS. “The opposite of that is being able to hug a perfect stranger.”

Michael found community at House for All Sinners and Saints. He connected there. Appreciated. Wanted. Yet while he says he loves Jesus’ friends at HFASS, he has just explained to me that he feels like a stranger to Jesus himself. (Which strikes me as weirdly opposite to when Gandhi reportedly once said: “I like your Christ, I do not like your Christians,” and I’ve tended to be with the Mahatma on that one.)
Three months after that day in the coffee shop when Michael told me he didn’t feel close to Jesus, and I in turn reminded him of his own story of death and resurrection, he was again in the hospital. This time though, it was for what seemed like progressive-resurrection. Michael got a new hip.

I sat in the waterproof hospital-visitor’s chair and listened to his amazement at what his life looked like now. He hadn’t yet been able to build his business back up to where it was, still lived with his brother, and he wasn’t yet ready to love another dog, but Michael had friends who were friends with Jesus, a place to come and pray, and a brand-new hip. And even if he doesn’t feel particularly close to the dude, Michael understood death and resurrection, the basic idea of Christianity, better than most clergy I knew. And this strangely made me believe even more that this thing is real. This whole Jesus thing.

There are times when I hear my name, turn, and recognize Jesus. There are times when faith feels like a friendship with God. But there are many other times when it feels more adversarial or even vacant. Yet none of that matters in the end. How we feel about Jesus or how close we feel to God is meaningless next to how God acts upon us. How God indeed enters into our messy lives and loves us through them, whether we want God’s help or not. And how, even after we’ve experienced some sort of resurrection, it’s never perfect or impressive like an Easter bonnet, because, like Jesus, resurrected bodies are always in rough shape.
Wendell Berry is a writer who also lives on a small farm in Kentucky. The short passage below is from his novel Jayber Crow, which tells the story of a barber who lives in a Kentucky town. Through the protagonist, Berry writes here about the gap that often exists between the stories we hope about our lives (or even tell about them!) and the reality. Pay attention to the different kind of “paths” that are named in this brief passage. (The first sentences refer to Dante’s Divine Comedy, which begins in the “Dark Wood of Error,” and John Bunyan’s Pilgrim’s Progress, which follows the “King’s Highway.”)

If you could do it, I suppose, it would be a good idea to live your life in a straight line—starting, say, in the Dark Wood of Error, and proceeding by logical steps through Hell and Purgatory and into Heaven. Or you could take the King’s Highway past appropriately named dangers, toils, and snares, and finally cross the River of Death and enter the Celestial City. But that is not the way I have done it, so far. I am a pilgrim, but my pilgrimage has been wandering and unmarked. Often what has looked like a straight line to me has been a circle or a doubling back. I have been in the Dark Wood of Error any number of times. I have known something of Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven, but not always in that order. The names of many snares and dangers have been made known to me, but I have seen them only in looking back. Often I have not known where I was going until I was already there. I have had my share of desires and goals, but my life has come to me or I have gone to it mainly by way of mistakes and surprises. Often I have received better than I have deserved. Often my fairest hopes have rested on bad mistakes. I am an ignorant pilgrim, crossing a dark valley. And yet for a long time, looking back, I have been unable to shake off the feeling that I have been led – make of that what you will.

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Through Grief by Elizabeth Damico

The following is a personal reflection written by Pastor Elizabeth. In this short writing she stands at the intersection of messiness and holiness – the place where God is often at work in our lives. This was written while Elizabeth lived at Holden Village, so you will hear specific references to the worship life of that place. But in all places where we live and worship, our messy lives contain suffering and loss, and yet there is a holy presence throughout that we must claim.

My mother was my first piano teacher, and I started lessons at the age of five. So, for as long as I can remember, the piano has been my primary source of self-expression and creativity, an instrument for music and for mental and emotional processing.

It was also my mother's untimely death that introduced me to grief. This introduction came so long ago that grief, as well as music, has been a lifelong companion. From the time I was a small girl to now I have had many opportunities to look death square in the face and walk away covered in the heaviness and feeling the gaping hole that death leaves. Sometimes this companion of grief can be light and even inspirational...other times it is literally heavy on my body and clouds over my smile, my music, my hope for the future.

And in these times when the heaviness outweighs the inspiration, I find myself in seasons of doubt. It is these times of disbelief that I am more thankful than I can really express that I am a church musician. Because in these times of disbelief my mouth cannot say the words, my heart aches too much to hope, and my mind is overcrowded with questions and cynicism...yet, somehow, my hands believe. When I am playing a hymn, or song or liturgy, there are certain lines that bring a natural crescendo or explosion of sound – because the words demand great noise in the face of grief, disbelief and death.

Yesterday someone asked why is it always during the third verse of the gospel canticle that I suddenly get so loud as we sing, “God comes to guide our way to peace...that death shall reign no more?” And when rehearsing with the Sunday night band, I heard a snicker when I asked the band to drop out while we sang, “there was an empty tomb.” I do these sometimes annoying and sometimes expressive things because this
is the message I need to hit me over the head and lighten that grief cloud. I need to hear over and over again that death shall reign no more, that there is an empty tomb, that the death of young mothers and wives, of dear friends, the destroying of towns, the end of great loves, the killing of precious innocents – that these dark and pain-filled experiences will not get the last word – no, I would rather bang the hell out of the piano so my hands can remind my heart and my faith and my hope that death shall reign no more.

...sweet words from one of my favorite hymns to play:

Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;
The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide;
When other helpers fail and comforts flee,
Help of the helpless, oh, abide with me.

I need Thy presence every passing hour;
What but Thy grace can foil the tempter’s pow’r?
Who, like Thyself, my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, Lord, abide with me.

I fear no foe, with Thee at hand to bless;
ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness;
Where is death’s sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if Thou abide with me.
Small Group Questions

Opening Question:
Relationships, citizen, church goer, employee, neighbor…which realm of your daily living feels “messiest” to you, right now?

1. Recall the reading of Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber. Have you experienced the gritty reality of being raised to new life in the way Michael was? He was quite literally pulled from the grave and is now living the not-so-squeaky-clean life of the resurrection – have you experienced new life? A second chance? Forgiveness? What remnants of pain or brokenness are the hardest to let go of in these situations?

2. Do you see most of your life as “wandering” or “being led?” (phrases from Wendell Berry’s Jayber Crow) What distinguishes the two experiences?

3. The three central figures in the book of Ruth are:
   - Naomi – the widowed and now childless woman, despairing
   - Ruth – the widow, foreigner, looking for direction and belonging
   - Boaz – the helpful man, full of honor, gaining a family through grief and strife

As Christians we believe that our lives are lived at the foot of the cross, which Forde says, “Is the end of the story, but it is the beginning of faith.” Does this change how you understand the messiness (pain, brokenness, grief, complexity) of your daily living? Does this change how you understand God in your daily living?

4. Finally, (final question!) in reflecting upon your own unique “messiness” (or use another word that fits better for your context) do you feel as though God is calling you out of messiness or into it? In other words, is the whole thrust of vocation meant to get us to a “better” place or to better live into the place we currently are? Are we called to clean up all messiness or honor it as holy and as God’s work too?
Closing Ritual

We conclude our Vocation Reader with the “Holden Prayer of Good Courage.” This truth-laden prayer was written for the worshipping community at Holden Village, a remote Lutheran retreat center in the North Cascade Mountains. Nearly every day someone is arriving and someone is leaving this intentional community. These words are spoken or sung for every member of the community as they prepare to leave the mountain and re-enter the rest of their lives...

- Have one member of your group read the closing prayer once.
- Next, read it all together.
- Now, in popcorn style, speak the word or phrase that most spoke to you in this prayer.
- Close by reading the prayer together one last time.

Prayer of Good Courage

Lord God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Works Cited


Notes: