

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Because God First Loved Us

Week 2: "Two are Better than One"

SMALL GROUP REMINDERS

It doesn't take special training or authority to lead a small group...just willingness to help a group have a conversation together!

- *Read through the discussion questions first. This helps you have a sense of where the conversation may go.*
- *Ask a question and wait for someone to answer. Don't call on people, putting someone on the spot. Invite responses, don't demand them.*
- *Resist the pull to fill the silence! Silence is okay. Some people need it to think before they speak.*
- *If one person talks a lot, say, "what about another voice on this question?" or "does someone else have anything to add?"*
- *Wait to answer a question yourself until others have spoken first.*
- *Have fun! Enjoy the experience of exploring God's Word together!*

OPENING

Begin your conversation by asking each group member to share their name, the first name of someone who's important to them, and one reason why that person is important to them. For this opening, the important-to-them person should be a living person and someone they know personally (so not a long-distance hero they admire, in other words).

SCRIPTURE

Invite a volunteer to read aloud: *Ecclesiastes 4:8-12 (NIV)*. Ask for a different volunteer to read it aloud a second time.

⁸ *There was a man all alone; he had neither son nor brother.*

There was no end to his toil, yet his eyes were not content with his wealth.

"For whom am I toiling," he asked, "and why am I depriving myself of enjoyment?"

This too is meaningless—a miserable business!

⁹ *Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor:*

¹⁰ *If either of them falls down, one can help the other up.*

But pity anyone who falls and has no one to help them up.

¹¹ *Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm.*

But how can one keep warm alone?

¹² Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves.

A cord of three strands is not quickly broken.

UNPACKING GOD'S WORD

What is the man's situation in verse 8? What does he seem to lack? What could he do to change his situation?

What drives you to toil/work? Why? How content are you? What makes your toil/work more meaningful to you? If you could change something about your situation (work, home, school, church) to make your toil more meaningful, what would it be?

Verses 9-12 speak of the benefits of two. What are those benefits? What other benefits can you name?

When do you prefer to be alone? When do you prefer company? How easy is it for you to let someone else help you? Or to let someone know you could use help?

Verses 9-12 are often read in Christian weddings. Why do you think it's a popular choice for a wedding text?

Think of an important relationship you share with someone. If the two of you are two of three "strands" in a cord, what makes up the 3rd strand in your relationship (vs 12)?

How many ways can you use this passage to complete this sentence: "Because God _____, therefore we _____." What do your responses mean for our community at Mount Pleasant Lutheran Church?"

CLOSING

Offer a closing prayer like this:

Lord God, you create us to be in relationship with others, not to face life all alone. We thank you for those who are dearest to us, for the relationships that give us joy. And we pray for people who feel isolated and lonely. Help us to be a community that reaches out and includes all whom you send our way. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.