



GROW WIDE

GROW WIDE: EXTEND YOUR REACH!

SEPTEMBER 10:	OUR WELCOME TO ALL
SEPTEMBER 17:	OUR WELCOME OF THE OUTCAST
SEPTEMBER 24:	OUR WELCOME TO THE CROWD
OCTOBER 1:	SPREADING OUR WELCOME

TODAY'S SCRIPTURE LESSON: MATTHEW 9:35-38

Then Jesus went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom, and curing every disease and every sickness. When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest."

A COMPANION SCRIPTURE: PSALM 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. The Lord makes me lie down in green pastures; the Lord leads me beside still waters; the Lord restores my soul. The Lord leads me in right paths for the sake of God's name.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley, I fear no evil; for you are with me; your rod and your staff — they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies; you anoint my head with oil; my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord my whole life long.

PRAY DAILY

Jesus, my shepherd: when I am in need, when I feel broken, when I feel lost, you call me to you. You open your arms, enfold me in, and soothe my soul. With you, I am chosen, called, welcomed. You guide me, protect me, and provide for me: I am safe in your love.

Through you, and through my safety in you, I can feel compassion for the crowd. I can feel my heartbreak and not be destroyed by it. Because of you, I can open my heart to others. You and our church have enough room and love to go around. Help me to open the door for others who need you, even more than I do. Amen.

FOR MEDITATION AND DISCOVERY

- § Do crowds tend to make me feel excited or scared? If scared, why?
- § Am I afraid of getting lost, of feeling overwhelmed? Or of not being seen, not mattering?
- § Jesus saw the crowds and felt compassion, because he could see each person in them. How might I focus on one person at a time, letting myself feel compassion for that one stranger?
- § When I look at the crowd, who breaks my heart? When does my heart burst with joy?
- § How might my heartbreak and my heartburst lead me to act compassionately with God's people?

OUR CHALLENGE — TO GROW OUR WELCOME WIDER THAN WE CAN IMAGINE: KIN(G)DOM-SIZED