

Renew Your Life: COVID-19 Version

Welcome & Introduction - Hopes & Expectations - Resources

Thank you for taking part in a *Renew Your Life* small group this summer! We hope this experience deepens your sense of the creative, renewable energy of the Holy Spirit in your life and in the community. We are grateful for your presence and participation. You are a blessing to your small group and beyond.

Pastor Kai Nilsen's Introduction to the Summer 2020 Themes:

From the beginning, God's life-renewing Spirit has been present and available in times of isolation and connection, despair and hope, peril and promise. Don't we need it now! This summer, *Renew Your Life* will explore how God's creative energies of grace, possibility, paradox, the natural world, relationships, fruitful work, and rest meet us in our confusion, our loneliness, our despair and invite us to see, experience, and practice a different kind of life – a life that Jesus imagined, experienced, and practiced himself.

Small Group Hopes & Expectations

Small groups typically begin by sharing "what will make this a safe and life-giving experience for all?" Take a few minutes to review this list of "hopes and expectations" and offer your own ideas.

Hopes:

1. ***Discover the creative, renewable energies of God***, opening our lives more fully to God's love and grace.
2. ***Explore new spiritual practices*** that continue to open us to God's creative and renewing Spirit.
3. ***Engage in conversations*** around essential life questions, while building relationships with one another.
4. ***Reflect on the Renew Your Life themes*** and how the themes speak to our lives, individually and as a community, in the context of summer 2020.

Guidelines:

1. ***Offer grace to one another, living out of God's love and grace.*** Respect one another. Encourage one another. Enjoy this small group experience and life together. Watch and listen for the unique gifts and perspectives each person brings with a sense of curiosity.
2. ***Listen to one another without judgement.*** Refrain from problem-solving and giving advice. Be attentive, deep listeners. The purpose of the group is not to come to a consensus, rather to share with one another, deepening faith and understanding.

3. **Be consistent in attending & participating whenever possible.** Others in your group are looking forward to your insights and you will want to hear their ideas and stories. Take part in the faith practices and readings, as much as it is possible for you.
4. **Practice confidentiality** with all that is shared in the group, to create an atmosphere of openness and trust and to honor each person (unless explicitly given permission to share with others).
5. **Talking and listening are both gifts.** Watch the amount of "air time" in the group, so that everyone has a chance to share and the conversation is generally balanced among those in the group.
6. **Start and end on time.** If you're running late, feel free to join the conversation that is already taking place, when you arrive. If you are meeting virtually, try to join a few minutes before the start time, to allow time for any technical difficulties.

Additions from your group:

Your dates and times:

Sermon Themes & Dates

Summer Sermon Series

Here are the dates and themes for the summer 2020 sermons. Listening to the sermons is totally optional and not necessary to take part in a small group. You can listen on-line at: <https://incarnationmn.org/worship/this-sunday/>

May 31 - Pentecost: The Spirit of Life
June 7 - Grace: When is enough, enough?
June 14 - Possibility: New things
June 21 - Paradox: The struggle is real
June 28 - Natural world: Let beauty inspire you
July 5 - Relationships I: We need each other
July 12 - Relationships II: An epidemic of loneliness
July 19 - Fruitful Work: Your daily life matters
July 26 - Rest: Finding a new rhythm

Winter Sermon Series

The RYL themes were also part of a winter sermon series. You can listen on-line at: <https://incarnationmn.org/listentopastsermons/>

January 5 – Renew Your Life
January 12 – Energy of Grace
January 19 – Energy of Possibility
January 26 – Energy of Paradox
February 2 – Energy of the Natural World
February 9 – Energy of Relationships
February 16 – Energy of Fruitful Work
February 23 – Energy of Rest

Other Notes...

- Your group leader(s) may or may not be experts in this area. Their purpose is to guide a conversation where everyone learns from one another. Group leaders are part of an orientation and support process at Incarnation.
- If you are meeting virtually, it is a good idea to keep a cell phone handy and exchange cell numbers with the leader, in case there are technical difficulties.

How to Order Renew Your Life

Amazon order information for Kindle (or app):

https://www.amazon.com/Renew-Your-Life-Discovering-Wellspring-ebook/dp/B015TBK37E/ref=sr_1_1?dchild=1&keywords=renew+your+life&qid=1588520389&sr=8-1

InterVarsity Press order information for e-book:

<https://www.ivpress.com/Search?q=renew+your+life>

Barnes and Noble order information for paperback or Nook:

<https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/renew-your-life-kai-mark-nilsen/1120938822?ean=9780830846047>

If you need a paperback copy of the book and cannot find one, contact Denise Floe at dfloe@incarnationmn.org (limited supply).

This small group guide is designed to be used in conjunction with reading the book *Renew Your Life: Discovering the Wellspring of God's Energy* by Kai Mark Nilsen (InterVarsity Press: Downers Grove, IL, ©2015). Many questions in the study guide come from *Renew Your Life*. This guide has been developed with permission from the author.