

APRIL, 2018 - Dwelling in the WORD

1) Setting the context of the reading: *(5 minutes)*

Imagine that a Human Resources Team is in the process of selecting a new leader for the people of Israel, someone to lead God's people from Egypt to the Promised Land. They are considering a man named Moses. The Human Resources team names his strengths:

- 1) He was raised in the palace of the Pharaoh of Egypt, was highly educated and learned administrative skills to oversee Pharaoh's slaves and military and construction projects.
- 2) He has now lived for a time in the wilderness and has learned survival skills in such adverse conditions. He is ably qualified to administer an exodus through the wilderness of Sinai.

When the Team is asked about the weaknesses of Moses, in honesty they have to say, "He is a fugitive, accused of murder." But here is another instance where God's first choice may not be our first choice, unless we see as God sees, both in terms of the priorities for what's next and the skillsets needed. In this passage as well, Moses sees something curious in the desert. He turns aside to gaze upon it. In a similar way, we use this time to turn aside, to gaze and listen to what God is saying is needed in our church and the skillsets necessary to help make that happen.

2) **Dwelling in the Word** - Exodus 3:1-17 *(25 minutes)*

(Hand out Bibles so all can follow along. Appoint two different people to read, once with a male voice and once with a female voice. After the lesson is read ask the following questions)

- a) Where did you find yourself stopping? What words, phrases or ideas stuck out for you?
- b) What is the importance of these words/ phrases/ideas that stuck out?

(Have the passage read a second time)

- a) There is one main priority that God has for what's next in this reading – to bring God's people out of slavery in Egypt. From the list of priorities that you discerned from last month's Dwelling in the Word – what would you say is God's main priority for our synod in the next 1-6 years? *Note: this is not just for the bishop, but for the whole synod ministry.*
- b) What skillsets/experience/characteristics would be necessary in a leader *(bishop and others)* to help carry this out?

3) **Close with Prayer** *(discuss what thanksgivings and what concerns need to be lifted up in your congregation at this time. Conclude with prayers for the discerning process using these or similar words).*

O God, as your church throughout the ages used conversation and prayer to discern your priorities and call forth new leadership, bless your church at this time and place as we discern your priorities for us and as we call forth new leadership. We pray this in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Prayerfully take a few moments to think/talk about (up until convention time) possible leaders who may possess some of these skillsets/experience/characteristics and could qualify as a bishop that God would choose for us.