

Community Group Leader Guide

For the Week Of December 17, 2023

Sermon Series: Once Upon a Time

Watch the Leader Video and find all your resources online at

<https://clifec.com/community-group-resources/>

Need to watch the sermon? Check out our YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/@CommunityLifeChurch>

Announcements:

Christmas Eve Services

Experience the wonder of Christmas Eve! Check the special service times at clifec.com/christmas. Let's celebrate together!

No Services on January 31, 2023

A reminder that there will be no regular services on January 31st across all campuses. Use this time for personal growth, family, and prayer.

Welcoming 2024: Regular Services Resume

Join us on January 7th, 2024, as we resume our regular service schedule. Start the New Year in fellowship and worship!

There will be NO CG MATERIAL for the week of Christmas or New Year.

Icebreaker:

Christmas music. Love it or hate it? If you love it, what's your favorite song? If you hate it, what's the worst song played during this season?

Quick Review:

We've been making our way through our series 'Once upon a time', focusing on the beginnings of each of the gospels. The Gospel of Matthew focused on the genealogy of Jesus and the Gospel of Mark focused on the beginning ministry work of Jesus. In Week 3 of "Once Upon a Time," we explored Luke's Gospel and his unique narrative style. Luke, who interviewed many eyewitnesses, gives us a detailed account of Jesus' life. From the 12-year-old Jesus teaching in the temple to His humble birth in a manger, Luke emphasizes Jesus' accessibility and relatability to all people, highlighting His role as a savior for every class and culture.

Make It Personal:

1. Have you ever been excluded from something that left a lasting impression on you? Why does being “included” matter so much to the human soul?
2. Discuss the significance of God choosing to reveal the birth of Jesus first to shepherds, a marginalized group in society at the time. How does this choice emphasize God's inclusivity and His message for everyone?

Go Deeper:

3. In what ways does the story of Jesus' birth, especially as told in Luke, challenge traditional religious expectations and exclusivity?
4. The sermon highlights the idea that salvation is a gift available to all and is not based on personal merit or good deeds. How does this contrast with the common societal belief that one needs to earn their salvation?

Action Steps:

1. Actively seek out opportunities to include and welcome individuals from all walks of life into your community without regard to societal status or background. Consider volunteering or participating in initiatives that serve marginalized groups, reflecting the spirit of inclusivity demonstrated in the story of Jesus' birth being first announced to shepherds.
2. Share it! The Gospel is announced to the shepherds and is meant to be *continually* announced to the world around us. Determine as a group who you'll be sharing the good news with this week!

Prayer Requests:

1. Pray for our upcoming Christmas Eve Services across all of our campuses.
2. Pray for those who have felt marginalized or ostracized by religion. Pray that God would lead them somewhere to belong.

Feel free to use this guide to facilitate discussion in your community group. Modify the questions as you see fit.