**Words of Life**

Week One: “Serve”

*To be done in groups of no more than four people. Each group should choose a facilitator to keep time and lead the discussion and response.*

**Exploring the Text** (5 Minutes)

*Sit comfortably. Take a few deep breaths, then read the following scripture as a group, with one person each reading a line slowly and clearly. Pause for a moment between each section. Read through this passage three separate times with a longer pause before each re-reading.*

**Mark 9:33-37 (NRSV)**

33Then they came to Capernaum; and when he was in the house he asked them, “What were you arguing about on the way?”

34But they were silent, for on the way they had argued with one another who was the greatest.

35He sat down, called the twelve, and said to them, “Whoever wants to be first must be last of all and servant of all.”

36Then he took a little child and put it among them; and taking it in his arms, he said to them,

37“Whoever welcomes one such child in my name welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes not me but the one who sent me.”

Responding in Prayer

*Choose one word phrase in this passage that you find to be the most meaningful to you in this moment.*

*Share this word with God in silent prayer.*

**Narrative Circles** (12 minutes for each group member)

Each person in the group will be invited to share their response to the story prompt. Be sure to focus on one storyteller at a time during each set cycle of 12 minutes.

**Story Prompt:**

*Think of a person in your life who you think to be a great servant. What are the things they do? How have their actions impacted you?*

**Telling:** (Up to 4 minutes)

The storyteller shares their story in response to the prompt.

**Responding:** (Up to 4 minutes)

Listeners take turns contributing their responses to the story.

Responses should be brief (one or two sentences), using the guided phrases below. The focus should remain on the one telling their story (do not share your own story or opinions). Do not respond based on your own curiosity. Do not give advice. Your response should be in invitation for the story teller to reflect and find more meaning in their story.

 I noticed…

 (things to think about…)

* Where is love? Where is love absent?
* Where is energy in the story?
* When did the tellers’ eyes light up?
* When were there sighs or tears?

 I appreciated…

* What you learned or discovered through the others’ story.

 I wondered…

* What could I ask to help the person explore this deeper?

**Retelling:** (Up to 4 minutes)

The storyteller describes what they are discovering about their story

**Pausing:** (Up to 1 minute)

After everyone in the circle has had an opportunity to tell their story, the group will share a time of silence to honor what has been shared.