



## DISCUSSION GUIDE

# BEYOND THE WALLS

THE CHURCH'S CALL TO BE IN THE WORLD

Kayla Zopfi and Dr. Jeremy Myers

“

When the only thing at stake in your actions is whether or not you feel good or bad at the end of the day, you can be sure that you are acting inside of your walls. Instead, what would it look like for congregations to wrestle with gentrification in their neighborhoods? To have congregational food pantries engage in policy advocacy that works to eliminate systemic poverty alongside their direct service work? To find avenues of public voice that unequivocally repudiate homophobia and work alongside queer organizations in our communities to repair harm?

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## SETTING THE TABLE

Go for a prayer walk through the neighborhood by yourself or with your group. *Look for places of hope and places of despair. Where was joy or hope? Where was the heartache or grief? What did you notice? Were there any places you avoided or walked past quickly? What delighted you?* Come together and share with each other what you witnessed before you continue the conversation.

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

1. Reflect on the questions above together, naming what you noticing on your neighborhood walk.
2. How have you experienced God in the public square?
3. How would you define the neighborhood in which your congregation/house is located?
4. In what ways are you connected to your neighborhood (as an individual or congregation)?
5. What issues in your neighborhood seem to be most urgent? What do people in your neighborhood care most about? If you don't know what these things are, then what is your plan to learn more about what these may be?

## CLOSING

What is the “low-hanging fruit” step you could take for yourself and/or your congregation in response to this discussion today?

*A low hanging fruit is something you could easily do this coming week.*

Given this theme and your context; what is one “moonshot” you could imagine?

*A moon shot is a giant leap into relationship and connection that would require monumental effort but be totally amazing.*