



OCTOBER 2026



Mass Production Discipleship



Recently, I had a thought-provoking conversation with my spiritual direction supervisor. He offered me some new lenses through which to consider how the Church typically approaches discipleship. In the process, he gave me a bit of a history lesson.

In the 19th century, some of the first automobiles were made. Hundreds of individuals were involved in creating tailor-made vehicles. Eventually, mass production changed the way automobiles were made. Instead of creating each vehicle individually, manufacturers developed standardized processes that allowed them to produce large numbers of vehicles.

Something similar happened in our educational system: mass production. Somewhere along the way, we became very good at mass-producing things. We mass-produced automobiles. We mass-produced education. We even began to think about caring for people and making disciples in ways that could be organized, packaged, and reproduced. We created courses, binders, programs, and processes.

Isn't it interesting that Jesus, God Almighty, chose to disciple twelve individuals? Yes, there were others who were considered disciples. Jesus also preached to large crowds. But he chose to pour deeply into the lives of twelve people.

Continued

When a person, whether a baby or an adult, is baptized, it is done one person at a time, even if several people are baptized on the same day. Yet, when it comes to discipleship, we often approach it through a mass-production model.

The Compassionate Way offers most of its ministry experiences in small groups, with no more than twenty people. These small gatherings allow individuals to know and be known by those who meet together. Generally, the conversations are real and meaningful.

This is not to negate the fact that Jesus preached to large gatherings and performed miracles in front of crowds. Rather, it is to highlight the significance of meaningful relationships. Transformation often occurs through relationship. We need people who know us, walk alongside us, listen to us, encourage us, and help us recognize the movement of God in our lives.

Mass production has a place. But discipleship is ultimately relational. Perhaps we don't need to disciple hundreds of people. Perhaps we simply need to pour into the lives of one, two, or three people and allow the Holy Spirit to work through us.

Who is God placing in your life?

Getting the Word Out

The Compassionate Way is thrilled to share its ministry with congregations. Our missionary leader, Candace Adams will be at Maine Presbyterian Church at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, October 11 to lead worship. On the following Sunday, October 18, she will be at First Presbyterian Church in Lismore at 7:45 a.m. and First Presbyterian Church in Edgerton at 10:30 a.m. She will be present an overview of the missional movement.

On Sunday November 8, Rev. Dr. Adams will be at Ebenezer Presbyterian near Renville at 10:00 a.m.



Prayer

There are many ways to pray. Often, we make prayer more complicated than God ever intended. There are times when sitting in silence is the most powerful prayer. At other moments, we desire to speak to God but simply don't know what to say.

One form of prayer that I have recently used with both older adults and children is called the Alphabet Prayer. It is a simple prayer in which you walk through the alphabet, offering prayers of thanksgiving or intercession for people or circumstances that begin with a particular letter.

Sometimes, when I cannot sleep at night, I pray the Alphabet Prayer. Since I have a large family, I have most letters covered by the name of a family member or dear friend!

Perhaps God is inviting you to try the Alphabet Prayer. You might be surprised by the people, places, and things that come to mind as you move through the alphabet.

One thing I know is that with God, the most important thing is to show up. God loves to connect with us. Prayer is simply one way we open ourselves to that connection.

Here is a sample of some of the words that have been lifted up in prayer:

B – beauty, blessings, belief, Bible

F – freedom, food, faith, friends, forgiveness, family

M – music, memories, mothers

R – rest, renewal, reading

Y – youth, you!

Perhaps today you might begin with the letter “A” and see where the Holy Spirit leads you.

Spread Compassion

Who has God put on your path? Where is God inviting you to spread compassion? There are so many people yearning to know that they matter, that they are seen, and that someone cares. Take time this week to notice those God places in your path and share God's love with them.

A kind word. A listening ear. A simple act of compassion. Love in action can make a difference.