

@ Home Testimony Retreat
Sunday May 31, 2020
Bethesda Mennonite Church

Items to Bring:

- Bible
- Journal
- Something to write and/or color with
- God's Story, Our Story Book
- Blanket
- Two Handouts
 - Timeline Activity
 - Starting My Testimony

11:00 Introduction & Review via Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/247690966?pwd=bkYzRFZVSUIRbFdEU0ZiUUZ1LzcyZz09>

Meeting ID: 247 690 966

Password: 064544

Learn the Story

For the last couple of months we have been talking about God's Story and how it relates to you. Today we are focusing on your story. A testimony is simply put your story about your life. As you tell your story you will also testify about how you have seen God at work in your life or how you desire to see God work in your life.

- This afternoon you will spend some time mapping out your life story – the highs and the lows. You will be invited to embrace and own your story even the more difficult parts of your story.
- We will spend some time alone journaling, to help you contemplate your story and how it connects to God's story.
- We will regather for a time of prayer as we intentionally invite God to join our life story.

These activities will help you to begin to put words to your story. You will even begin handwriting/typing parts of your story that will become pieces of your "testimony".

Review God's Story, Our Story

Saying Yes to Jesus

- So what do I do? (page 120-124)
 - Choosing God's Story as Your Own
 - Receive God's forgiveness and grace
 - Join God's people – Baptism and Church Membership
 - Follow Jesus with Joyful gratitude
- Are you ready to say yes to Jesus and join the church as we seek to faithfully follow him?

12 Lunch

1-5 Afternoon on your own – Working on Two Handouts

- Find a comfortable place inside or outside where you can spend an hour alone
- You are encouraged to have silence during this time
- Bring your Bible, God's Story Our Story Book, Handouts, Blanket (optional) and writing utensil
- Pay attention to God's presence around you.
- Think about the following two questions to share with the group when we regather at 5 pm.
 - What are you thankful to God for from your life story?
 - What is one thing you desire from God?

Own Your Story

Timeline Activity Handout (Minimum of 45 min.)

- *Begin to OWN YOUR STORY. That is, accept the whole of it; the light side as well as the dark. In accepting our dark, shadow side we learn who we are and what God's grace means. It's an "amazing grace" that "saves a wretch like me."*
 - Did you have more high points or low points in your story?
 - Where did you see God helping you? How?
 - Where did you grow in your faith or commit your life to Christ?
 - Where did you struggle with your faith? Why?

Contemplate your story

Starting Your Testimony Handout (Minimum of 45 min.)

- *In order to sense God's working in our stories, we must give time to looking at them. Wondering about our story helps us to see the workings of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Take time to think about your life; about events, turning points, and incidents. Why did things happen as they did? On some cases, we shall never know. But in some ways we may begin to see the leading of God.*
- Begin to write out your answers to these questions in complete sentences on the handout.

Write a Draft of Your Testimony

- You have the remainder of time to draft your testimony which will be due Sunday, June 7

5 pm Regather on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84892643580?pwd=azQvVHJDWjhnYmpuMFdoUjBBdlpmZz09>

Meeting ID: 848 9264 3580

Password: 585778

Pray your story

We will open by Praying our stories. Prayer links your story and God's story. Prayer helps us against the powers of darkness.

- What are you thankful to God for from your life story?
- What is one thing you desire from God?

Share Your Story

- Draft of Testimonies is due June 7 to Pastor Andrea. She will respond by June 14 so you can make changes.
- Share your Testimony as a part of worship on Baptism Sunday

Celebrate your story

- Baptism Sunday: Congregational will gather together to recognize, witness and celebrate your Baptism with a possible welcome social so the congregation wants to “officially” welcome you into the body of Christ and celebrate with you.
- This celebration helps remind all of us of our commitments at baptism to faithfully follow Christ and join his body to share his love with the world and welcome others into the fellowship of believers.