

Learning More About Christianity

Adult Formation at St. James'

Adult formation is learning about the faith and being formed by the triune God through the following:

- 1) study of religious sources [Bible, Prayer Book, tradition, etc.]
- 2) prayer [contemplation, lectio divina, centering prayer, examen, etc.]
- 3) meaningful conversation [honest, open, focused, non-judgmental, shared, helpful, respectful, etc.]
- 4) participation in the life of a faith community [learning groups, St. James', The Episcopal Church, etc.]

Course Book

The Heart of Christianity: Rediscovering a Life of Faith, by Marcus Borg [\$10 paperback/\$10 Kindle]

"In *The Heart of Christianity*, world-renowned Jesus scholar and author of the bestseller *Meeting Jesus Again for the First Time* argues that the essential ingredients of a Christian life—faith, being born again, the kingdom of God, the gospel of love—are as vitally important today as they have always been, even during this time of conflict and change in the church.

Borg wants to show us, as today's thinking Christians, how to discover a life of faith by reconceptualizing familiar beliefs. Being born again, for example, has nothing to do with fundamentalism, but is a call to radical personal transformation. Talking about the kingdom of God does not mean that you are fighting against secularism, but that you have committed your life to the divine values of justice and love. And living the true Christian way is essentially about opening one's heart—to God, and to others. Above all else, Borg believes with passion and conviction that living the Christian life still makes sense."

Session Dates and Conversation Chapters

Jan 14 & 16	Preface	What Does It Mean to Be Christian Today?
Jan 21 & 23	Chapter 1	The Heart of Christianity in a Time of Change
Jan 28 & 30	Chapter 2	Faith: The Way of the Heart
Feb 4 & 6	Chapter 3	The Bible: The Heart of the Tradition
Feb 11 & 13	Chapter 4	God: The Heart of Reality
Feb 18 & 20	Chapter 5	Jesus: The Heart of God
Feb 25 & 27	Chapter 6	Born Again: A New Heart
Mar 4 & 6	Chapter 7	The Kingdom of God: The Heart of Justice
Mar 11 & 13	Chapter 8	Thin Places: Opening the Heart
Mar 18 & 20	Chapter 9	Sin and Salvation: Transforming the Heart
Mar 25 & 27	Holy Week	[No Chapter Conversations]
Apr 1 & 3	Easter Week	[No Chapter Conversations]
Apr 8 & 10	Chapter 10	The Heart of the Matter: Practice
Apr 15 & 17	Chapter 11	Heart and Home: Being Christian in an Age of Pluralism

Learning Groups

The primary purpose of learning groups is to facilitate participants in getting a deeper understanding of Christianity, its roots, its story, and its role in our current culture.

Sunday Learning Groups, 9:15 and 11:45 in Reception Room (Childcare for 5 years and younger)

Tuesday Learning Group, 10:30 in Reception Room

Home Learning Group Form your own group of two or more; meet in your own space.

Online Learning Group Join the St. James' Adult Formation Facebook group.

Learning Group Conversation Norms

Honest, open, focused, non-judgmental, shared, helpful, and respectful

Learning Group Creed

I am beloved of God. I am on a faith journey with Jesus Christ that touches my heart, and I am grateful to be walking in faith with companions along the way. I don't need to be right; I do want to be faithful.