

# In Community

AN EAU CLAIRE AREA ELCA SERIES ON  
WHAT IT MEANS TO BE CHURCH TOGETHER  
AND WITH ALL OF GOD'S CREATION



## In Community with Those on the Margins

The Bible teaches us to serve and treat strangers and those in need as neighbors, particularly those on the margins who might otherwise be neglected. The Hebrew Scriptures Jesus grew up with set a high standard for how a person should treat his or her neighbor, teaching, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Leviticus 19:18).

## Luke 10:25-29

The text precedes the famous parable of The Good Samaritan. In this dialogue Jesus doesn't want us to just think about who our neighbor is, but also how we respond to the needs of others. It's easy to come to the assistance of a person we like, but how easy would it be to assist someone when we are put at risk? With that kind of thinking, we suddenly understand the dilemma of the priest and the Levite. Yet that is the kind of risky love and mercy to which Jesus calls us. Being a neighbor is a full-time call.

## Activity

Fill the glass a third full with water. Then add oil to fill another third of the glass. Stir the two together, and then watch while the two separate out. Oil and water—like people who don't get along—do not mix together. Add some dish soap to the mix and stir again. Notice that the liquids no longer separate. Dish soap is like the love Jesus wants us to have for those we are separated from, not just our friends. The soap brings the oil and water together, like Jesus' love brings people together.