



Lent as a season of invitation

Perhaps the season of Lent, as we follow Jesus from his temptation in the desert towards Jerusalem and his death at Golgotha, doesn't strike you as particularly invitational! Lent, a time of repentance and spiritual disciplines, lacks the joy and energy we consider attractive to newcomers. *Forget Lent! I'd rather invite my friend to Easter service.*

Interestingly, Lent was historically a time of invitation and preparation, as newcomers to the Christian community prepared together for baptism on Easter Sunday. It is a season meant to steep us in the Jesus story, in the teachings we hold central to our faith. It is a season that holds central the call to "come and see".

My work as Growth Animator is focused on helping communities of faith grow their impact by increasing their capacity to invite, attract, retain, transform, and send people into the world. These five activities are the basis of the Lenten-Easter story! Jesus begins his ministry with an invitation to follow him, he enters into deep relationship with those who are brave enough to leave behind their nets, and through that relationship they experience transformation. A transformation which leads them to go into the world and share the Good News.

These next six weeks, I invite you to wonder about how you, and your community of faith, might grow in these five areas. *In what ways can I invite others to "come and see"? How am I showing others Christ through my attitudes and actions? How can I support others on their spiritual journey with Christ? What are some of our stories of transformation and how can we share them? Where is God sending us into the world?*

If your community of faith is interested in having deeper conversations on these topics, please reach out and connect with me. I look forward to discovering with you how the Holy Spirit is calling your community of faith to deep spirituality, bold discipleship and daring justice. You can email me at jcantwell@united-church.ca.

Lenten blessings, dear co-workers with Christ.

Jordan Cantwell

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