

## Sermon Reflection Guide

For personal reflection and communal conversation

Fourth Sunday after the Epiphany, 29 January 2017

### Acts 2.43-47

Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

### Matthew 9.9-13

As Jesus was walking along, he saw a man called Matthew sitting at the tax booth; and he said to him, "Follow me." And he got up and followed him.

And as he sat at dinner in the house, many tax collectors and sinners came and were sitting with him and his disciples. When the Pharisees saw this, they said to his disciples, "Why does your teacher eat with tax collectors and sinners?" But when he heard this, he said, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. Go and learn what this means, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' For I have come to call not the righteous but sinners."

### Question for Everyone:

1 = Evangelism is a negative word conjuring up images of awkward encounters and over-zealous religious people. 10 = Evangelism is a beautiful word that reminds me of the day I became a Christian or the time I led another person to Christ. How do you respond to the word "evangelism?"

### A Knock at the Door

"They came to our door to 'evangelize' us." Have you ever had someone come to your door with an agenda to evangelize you? How did you respond? Have you ever shared your faith with someone hoping to bring them to faith? If not, why not?

### Our Mission

We opted to use a simple, succinct statement, without insider language, to describe what it means to be a part of the story that God is writing called

New Cumberland Church of the Nazarene: *“Our mission is to learn the way of Jesus together as we invite others to join us at His table.”*

### **Jesus Invites Matthew to Follow Him**

“Matthew was a member of perhaps the most repulsive group of people in Judea, tax collectors. Think of the slimiest politician you know, coupled with the demeanor of the crankiest DMV person you’ve ever encountered and you’ll get a sense of the kind of persons tax collectors were presumed to be.” What does Jesus’ invitation to tax collectors teach us?

### **Follow Me**

“‘Follow me,’ Matthew. Leave your booth behind and follow me. Leave your old story behind and join my story. Follow me and learn my way of living. . . . This is evangelism.” What does Jesus’ method of evangelism teach us about helping others become Christian?

### **Jesus’ Table**

“Jesus gathered his disciples, sinners and tax collectors together at the same table. He gathered those who were already following His way of life and those who were not. This is evangelism in the way of Jesus.” What is the lesson here?

### **Quarantine**

“The Pharisees’ question assumed that God is pleased when God’s people observe a holy quarantine.” What is the difference between healthy community boundaries and quarantine?