



Mennonite  
Mission  
Network

# Mission Sunday

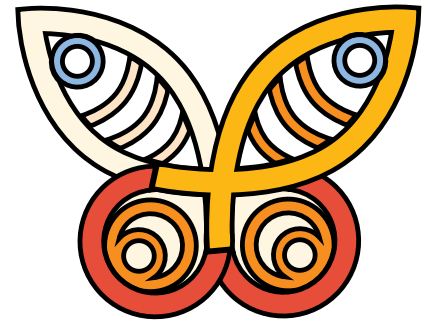
## 2019 resources

November is mission month. Help us celebrate what God is doing in the world and how God calls us to share the good news with others. Here are some tools to plan a Mission Sunday celebration. We hope you'll find them helpful.

### Scripture text

Luke 19:1-10

Written by Joe Sawatzky, Church Relations representative and former mission worker in South Africa.



TRANSFORMED  
BY JESUS

### Introduction

The Gospel text in the *Revised Common Lectionary* for Nov. 3 is Luke 19:1-10. It is a story of mission, showing Jesus on the move, making disciples as he goes (see Matthew 28:16-20). Earlier in Luke, Jesus described himself as “anointed” and “sent” by “the Spirit of the Lord” to “bring good news to the poor” (4:18-19). In Jericho, as he nears completion of his journey to Jerusalem (which began in 9:51), Jesus encounters Zacchaeus, a “chief tax collector” who was “rich.” Will Zacchaeus answer the call to God’s mission from God’s Spirit-anointed Son?

### Worship resources

#### Sermon starters

Below are four sets of observations and questions on the text that may aid you in the preparation of the message.

#### 1. The story moves through four uses of the verb “to come” in reference to Jesus.

- “Having *come in* [‘entered’ NRSV], he was passing through Jericho” (19:1).
- “When he *came to* the place, he looked up ...” (19:5).
- “And seeing it, all were grumbling, saying, ‘he *came in* [‘has gone’] to lodge with a sinful man” (19:7).
- “For the Son of Man *came to* seek and to save the lost” (19:10).

Having come in, Jesus was passing through Jericho, as if he did not intend to stay the night. Yet, after coming to the place where Zacchaeus was, Jesus ultimately decides to come in and “lodge” [“be the guest”] in Zacchaeus’s house. **How would you describe the relationship between Jesus “coming to stay” at Zacchaeus’s house and his “coming to seek and to save the lost?”**

## 2. Jesus addresses Zacchaeus in two statements that include the words “today” and “house.”

- “For *today* it is necessary for me to stay in your house” (v. 5).
- “*Today* salvation has come to this house ...” (v. 9).

In the first statement, Jesus invites himself to Zacchaeus’s house after “looking up” and calling him down from the Sycamore tree, which he had climbed to see Jesus. In the second, Jesus announces salvation to Zacchaeus’s house after Zacchaeus pledges to give “half” his possessions to the poor and “fourfold” to anyone he has cheated in his position as a chief tax collector. **How would you describe the relationship between invitation and salvation in this story?**

## 3. The text refers to Zacchaeus by name three times.

- “And behold [‘there was’] a man, being called by name ‘*Zacchaeus*,’ and he was a chief tax collector, and he was rich” (v. 2).
- “And having looked up, Jesus said to him, ‘*Zacchaeus*, hurry and come down ...’” (v. 5).
- “But standing, *Zacchaeus* said to the Lord, ‘Behold [‘Look’], half of my possessions, Lord, I give to the poor ...’” (v. 8).

The name Zacchaeus means “pure.” **How would you describe the relationship between the man Zacchaeus and the meaning of his name at the beginning and at the end of this story? How does Zacchaeus respond when Jesus calls him by name?**

## 4. The verb “to seek” occurs twice in this text, each time in the context of personal identity.

- “And he was *seeking* to see who Jesus is [‘was’]” (v. 3).
- “And he too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to *seek* and to save the lost” (vv. 9-10).

In the first case, Zacchaeus is the subject of seeking, while Jesus is the object—the one being sought. Zacchaeus wanted to know the identity of Jesus (“who Jesus was”). In the second case, Jesus is “the Son of Man” who “came to seek and to save” Zacchaeus, the one in whose house he stayed and pronounced salvation. The seeker becomes the sought, and the sought becomes the seeker. Even more, by seeking the identity of Jesus, “the Son of Man,” Zacchaeus is identified by Jesus as “a son of Abraham,” one who receives salvation by grace through faith that works. **How would you describe the meaning of salvation in this text?**

## Worship songs and readings

### Key

HWB = *Hymnal: A Worship Book*

SJ = *Sing the Journey*

SS = *Sing the Story*

### Worship songs

- “Blessed Jesus, at your word” HWB 13
- “Oh love, how deep, how broad” HWB 236
- “Filled with the Spirit’s power” HWB 289
- “God sends us the Spirit” HWB 293
- “How good a thing it is” HWB 310
- “Seek ye first the kingdom of God” HWB 324
- “At the name of Jesus” HWB 342
- “For Christ and the church” HWB 416
- “Savior of my soul” HWB 549
- “Jesus calls us here to meet him” SJ 3
- “Lord Jesus, you shall be my song” SJ 14
- “Jesus Christ is waiting” SJ 30
- “In the morning when I rise” SJ 45
- “*Somos el cuerpo de Cristo*” SJ 64
- “Praise the One who breaks the darkness” SS 1
- “Jesus, be the center” SS 31
- “Firstborn of Mary” SS 37
- “When Jesus worked here on earth” SS 38
- “Blessed be the name” SS 75
- “How can I say” SS 117

### Responsive readings, litanies, and prayers

- HWB 669 Gathering
- HWB 677 Gathering
- HWB 683 Praising/Adoring
- HWB 695 Confessing/Reconciling
- HWB 697 Confessing/Reconciling
- HWB 716 Affirming Faith
- HWB 755 Witnessing
- SJ 132 Confessing/Reconciling
- SJ 138 Praying
- SJ 153 Witnessing
- SS 128 Gathering
- SS 143 Praying
- SS 146 Praying
- SS 182 Praying

## Additional resources

*Consider these stories from South Africa as contemporary examples of the processes of grace, repentance, restitution, and reconciliation that we see illustrated in the story of Zacchaeus.*

Adriaan Vlok, former Law and Order Minister under the racist system of White-minority rule known as apartheid, has devoted the remaining years of his life to enacting repentance for his sins. Read [mg.co.za/article/2015-10-05-ds](http://mg.co.za/article/2015-10-05-ds). Watch [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ttL8P3NK4zY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ttL8P3NK4zY).

The mothers of the Gugulethu Seven confront Thapelo Mbelo, who, like Zacchaeus, collaborated with an oppressive regime against his own people. Referring to point #3 above, notice how one of the mothers begins her pronouncement of forgiveness with an appeal to Mbelo's name. The footage is from *Long Night's Journey into Day*, an award-winning documentary about the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The video may be rented at [vimeo.com/ondemand/longnightsjourneyintoday](http://vimeo.com/ondemand/longnightsjourneyintoday), or check your local library for a copy. The story of the Gugulethu Seven begins at the 59-minute mark of the film. *Warning: Some footage may be disturbing to some viewers.*

### Children's story suggestion

Read the new story card about Caleb Siwali, a 9-year-old peacemaker, from our Mission Bank materials on South Africa: [www.MennoniteMission.net/SouthAfricaMissionbank](http://www.MennoniteMission.net/SouthAfricaMissionbank).



### Offering suggestion

In accordance with our mission statement, Mennonite Mission Network partners with ministries in South Africa that “lead, mobilize, and equip the church to participate in holistic witness to Jesus Christ in a broken world.” Consider an offering toward mission that participates in the ongoing work of reconciliation in South Africa—and which witnesses in word and deed to the good news of God’s peace in Jesus Christ. You may download the bulletin insert pictured here from our website at [www.MennoniteMission.net/MissionSunday2019](http://www.MennoniteMission.net/MissionSunday2019) and use it as an introduction to our partners.

