

Genesis 18:1-8 (NRSV)

The Lord appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, as he sat at the entrance of his tent in the heat of the day. ²He looked up and saw three men standing near him. When he saw them, he ran from the tent entrance to meet them, and bowed down to the ground. ³He said, "My lord, if I find favor with you, do not pass by your servant. ⁴Let a little water be brought, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree. ⁵Let me bring a little bread, that you may refresh yourselves, and after that you may pass on—since you have come to your servant." So they said, "Do as you have said." ⁶And Abraham hastened into the tent to Sarah, and said, "Make ready quickly three measures of choice flour, knead it, and make cakes." ⁷Abraham ran to the herd, and took a calf, tender and good, and gave it to the servant, who hastened to prepare it. ⁸Then he took curds and milk and the calf that he had prepared, and set it before them; and he stood by them under the tree while they ate.

Discuss the following questions. If you are in a larger group, you may want to divide into groups of three for this discussion. You may then decide to report back to the larger group or to move directly to prayer time.

1. When you have guests at home, either expected or unexpected, what do you do to help them feel welcome? What hospitality do you extend?
2. What hospitality do you see extended in this scripture passage?
3. What hospitality do we extend as a congregation, both on Sunday morning and at other times?
4. How does this scripture challenge us to be more lavish in our hospitality?

Prayer:

Loving God, grant us the capacity of heart and hand to offer lavish hospitality to our guests so that all who participate with us may know that they have been welcome. Let our offerings of hospitality make a kingdom difference in our community, that all may know of Christ's love, as exemplified by our actions. Through Christ we pray. Amen.