

Santa Cruz Fellowship
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125 Mission Street, Suite #2
Santa Cruz, CA. 95060

SUMMER 2022

Friends,

If you have spent any time on the *Santa Cruz Fellowship* website, santacruzfellowship.com, you have likely noticed the prominence of the weekly gospel readings. Centering our time in the scripture each week around a single gospel passage (we use the gospel passage from the common lectionary) has been a very grounding spiritual practice in both of our lives for over 30 years now. This practice has enabled us to respond to one of Jesus' first invitations to his would be followers, "*Come and see.*" (*John 1:39*)

As we, "*Come and see,*" each week, we can't help but notice how Jesus goes out of his way, to get in the way of people who are on the outside, to get in the way of people on the margins, to get in the way of people who feel they don't belong, to get in the way of people who are 'not allowed'. All the while, he is inviting these same 'outsiders' to 'come in', bringing them the good news of the kingdom. The good news that they are loved, they are seen, they are valued and that they belong in God's kingdom.

The second invitation that Jesus offers comes shortly after the first, "*Come and follow,*" (*John 1:43*). The invitation to "*Come and follow,*" is more challenging than simply coming and seeing, especially when we recognize who it is that Jesus is "getting in the way of." We need real life models and examples of what this might look like for us, in our communities, and in our spheres of influence.

This summer we have both been reading and rereading Gregory Boyle's newest book, *The Whole Language*. Like his 2 earlier books, *Tattoos on the Heart* and *Barking at the Choir*, *The Whole Language* chronicles Father Boyle's ministry to and among gang members in East Los Angeles. All three of his books model the **how** of transformation in our present day context; the power of transformation which Jesus first modeled for us.

As Jesus did before him, Father Boyle primarily teaches us through stories, stories of those on the margins that he has dared to stand with. "*You stand with the least likely to succeed until success is succeeded by something more valuable: Kinship. You stand with the belligerent, the surly, the badly behaved until bad behavior is recognized for the language it is; the vocabulary of the deeply wounded and of those whose burdens are more than they can bear.*"

We hope that you will join us this summer in reading, *The Whole Language* and then talking with us and with others about Jesus' invitations to "*Come and see*" and "*Come and follow.*"

Paul & Jayne