***Small Group Session:* Week of Lent 1**

"Ordinary lives can be holy.”

**Opening**

*Leader:* We are on a reflective journey together during the Lent season with the book *Good Enough: 40’ish Devotionals for a Life of Imperfection* by Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie. In our Lent 1 worship, we were reminded that "ordinary lives can be holy.”

 Here is an excerpt from the scripture:

*Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led by the Spirit in the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing at all during those days, and when they were over, he was famished. The devil said to him, “If you are the Son of God, command this stone to become a loaf of bread.” Jesus answered him, “It is written, ‘One does not live by bread alone.’” - excerpt from Luke 4: 1-13*

We find ourselves hungry for many things that we believe will bring us satisfaction. In today’s Gospel, the devil lays a bet that Jesus will jump at the chance for glory, fame, and the quick fix. Who wouldn’t? But Jesus keeps up the pithy one-liners long enough that the Tempster just has to slink away. What are the temptations that catch your ear, singing out promises that your life should be more special than it is? What if ordinary life is already holy–as is?

Let us light a candle, take a deep breath, and pray:

**Holy One, Our Refuge and Shelter,**

**we call out to you,**

**sometimes in praise, sometimes in distress–as life goes.**

**Whether we perceive it or not, you are there.**

**Open us this day to your presence**

**in the smile of a friend, in the call of a bird–**

**in the simple and good enough moments that fill our days.**

**Amen.**

**Sharing**

*Leader:* In our conversation, everyone is invited to share, but sharing is not required. Please make room for all voices, keeping your contribution to a respectful time limit so everyone has a chance. Whatever is said here stays here – not because we are telling secrets but because we honor that what a person says here is their story to share.

I invite you to share something from the devotions in the book you read so far that resonated with you, hit you as truth in your own life and faith, was funny or painful, or made you think about your own experience. What struck you this week as “good enough?” These are just suggestions… feel free to share whatever is bubbling up around this topic.

*[after all have shared who want to…]*

*Leader:* A question for the group–does it feel hard to accept mediocrity or the idea that our lives might not fit the popular definition of “extraordinary?” What influences try to convince you that you must work to be a kind of “exceptional” defined by society?

**Closing**

*Choose one of the blessings from the devotions in the book to read as a closing.*

*Then read this benediction, taken from our weekly worship, together…*

**And now, may the God who loves all of creation, especially the ordinary bits,**

**and Jesus, our companion along this crooked path called life,**

**and the Holy Spirit, who loves to improvise in surprising ways,**

**go with you, dwell among you, and give you joy. Amen.**