



**Study Guide for Defining Discipleship Presentation 3:  
*Risk-Taking and Discipleship*  
with The Rev. Nurya Love Parish**

[Click here to access the Defining Discipleship video presentations via YouTube.](#)

**Notes:**

**Risk-taking in Jesus' life and ministry**

- Jesus' life was a life of great risk, and not of prudence or caution; Jesus experienced appearing foolish to others, being betrayed by his friends, and many thought he had failed in his mission
- Risk-taking is an integral part of our lives as disciples; it is part of what we signed up for in making our baptismal promises.
- *“To laugh is to risk appearing the fool; to weep is to risk appearing sentimental; to reach out for another is to risk exposing our true self; to place our ideals and dreams before the crowd is to risk loss; to love is to risk not being loved in return; to hope is to risk despair; to try is to risk failure; and to live is to risk dying.”*  
-attributed to William Arthur Ward

**Nurya's story of discipleship and risk-taking**

- Nurya felt deeply called to start an Episcopal farm ministry, which became [Plainsong Farm](#) in Michigan, a place where young adults would feel comfortable showing up and practicing Christian faith in a way that would also care for the earth.
- Genesis 12: God calls Abraham to leave everything that is familiar to him, without giving him a clear destination
- Jesus teaches about faith the size of a mustard seed; what we have to give may not seem very large, but it is enough for God to get started!
- Nurya quickly realized that she couldn't answer this call alone; she needed community, and to learn new skills such as fundraising.
- Nurya also talks about taking a calculated risk: she calls this “the edge”: out of her comfort zone, but not wildly irresponsible.
- Looking back, Nurya remembered how scary it was to answer this call: her career, her finances, her reputation if the farm failed. But taking this risk has led to the

creation of a vibrant ministry with young adults practicing their faith in the community and caring for Creation.

### **Questions:**

- Do you sense God calling you to take a risk in any area of your life?
- When was a time when your congregation or faith community took a risk for the sake of the gospel? What happened? What did you learn from that experience?
- How can we better support the risk-takers in our congregations and faith communities, and in our dioceses?
- What are the risks of playing it safe and sticking with the status quo in our own lives and in our communal lives as disciples of Jesus?

### **Going Deeper:**

- Read and discuss Nurya Love Parish's book [\*Resurrection Matters: Church Renewal for Creation's Sake\*](#) (Church Publishing, 2018).
- Read and discuss [\*Signs of Life: Nurturing Spiritual Growth in Your Church\*](#) by Jay Sidebotham (Forward Movement, 2<sup>nd</sup> revised edition 2026).
- Learn more about the new ministries in your diocese, and those who are leading these efforts. How might you offer these risk-takers your support?