

Gathering@Home Guide: Feb 9, 2026

1. Welcome

- Decide when during the meeting to eat and share communion together
- Links to ALL resources related to this meeting:
 - <https://www.knexionschurch.com/discussion-tools>

2. Start with Gratitude moment and prayer

- talk about importance of gratitude relating to joy and connection to God
- Ask people to reflect on a recent event this week that they're grateful for
- the leader and/or participants share a gratitude if they are comfortable
- pray, including any shared gratitudes and for peace, focus from distractions as you continue

3. Worship together

- live music if applicable
- Youtube videos otherwise
- Suggested playlist available on web page and Youtube

4. Announcements

- Church at the hotel, 10:30.

5. Kids (If there are families with kids in group)

- play video for kids; link found in discussion tools on Knexions web site
- whole group participates in any activities suggested in video (support for families and kids)

Gathering@Home Guide: Feb 9, 2026

6. Discovery Bible Study (DBS)

1. Overview of Reading Matthew 8 and 9

- Chapter 8 takes place right after the Sermon on the Mount. From there we move into Jesus interacting with people. (Vs. 1)
- We see a few healings, the man with leprosy, the Roman Officer's servant and Peter's mother-in-law (Vs. 2-15)
- Jesus casts out an evil spirit (Vs. 16-17)
- Jesus talks about the cost of following Him (Vs 18-22)
- Jesus calms a storm when He and the disciples are crossing the lake. The disciples are amazed at his authority (Vs. 23-27)
- After crossing the lake, he heals two demon-possessed men. However, the people of the nearby town, upon hearing the news, beg Jesus to leave. (Vs. 28-33)
- Chapter 9 begins with healing a paralyzed man (Vs. 1-7)
- Jesus asks Matthew, a tax collector, to follow Him, and Matthew does (Vs. 9-13)
- Jesus responds to people asking why his disciples do not fast as others do (Vs. 14-18)
- Jesus raises the daughter of a synagogue leader from the dead. (Vs. 18-26)
- Jesus heals two blind men (Vs. 27-31)
- Jesus casts out another demon, however the Pharisees accuse that he can cast them out because he is empowered by the devil (Vs. 32-34)
- At the end of Chapter 9, we see that Jesus is travelling around the area, teaching, announcing the Good News about the Kingdom, and healing (Vs 35-38)

2. **Pray** - for minds to be open to know God/Jesus better and to be transformed

3. **Read Matthew 8:1-13** — encourage everyone to read along on phone or tablet

- Try and imagine yourself in the story
- Think about what concerns, surprises or amazes you.
- Look for one of the three different reactions
- options
 - have one person read
 - have multiple people read
 - listen to the passage being read in Bible app

Gathering@Home Guide: Feb 9, 2026

4. Re-tell highlights

- Jesus came down the mountainside, and large crowds were following him
- A man with leprosy kneels down before him and asks Jesus if he is willing to heal him
- Jesus touched him and said he was, and the man's leprosy disappeared
- Jesus told him to tell nobody, but to go present himself to the priest so he could be examined, and that would be the testimony of his healing
- A Roman officer tells Jesus of his sick servant, and Jesus says he will come heal him
- The officer says that he is not worthy of having Jesus come to his home and speaks about the authority he has over his soldiers, and that Jesus has even more
- Jesus is amazed at his faith and says he has not seen this kind of faith in all Israel, and that some Gentiles will enter the Kingdom before some Israelites
- Jesus told the officer to go home, and the servant was healed.

5. **Share** - what was amazing, concerning or surprising about the reading?

6. **Context** - things that might help understand the reading better

- At the end of Chapter 7, the crowd is amazed at the authority that Jesus taught. They are now witnessing His authority through healing, as well as how he heals
- Notes on leprosy in the Bible: Many scholars write that leprosy in the Bible can refer to various skin diseases and that it did not necessarily mean Hansen's disease, which is typically referred to as leprosy today, although Hansen's disease would have been included.
- Michael Wilkins writes that it would include many skin disorders such as Dermatosis, psoriasis, lupus and ringworm.
- People suffering from these skin disorders were separated from the greater community and would have to announce that they were unclean to others, so others would keep their distance. It was thought that these afflictions could be contagious, as well as making others ritually unclean
- The skin condition has become a metaphor for the rejected or the cast aside. It would have been seen as a curse from God over something they or someone in their family has done.
- Important notes:
 1. Jesus touched the man. This would have been a compassionate act. As we see in the following story, Jesus did not need to touch him to heal. This would have changed a perspective. It was thought that an unclean person made

Gathering@Home Guide: Feb 9, 2026

others unclean; however, as Jesus touched the man, the man was made clean.

2. Then Jesus instructs the man to present himself to the priest, which is the lawful way laid down in Leviticus for restoration. As a result, the man could reenter life and community. The healing was more than a bodily healing; it was communal restoration.

The Roman Officer

- The Roman officer would have been seen as the enemy. He is the symbol, as well as the arm, of the oppressive regime. When Jesus tells them to love their enemies in the Sermon on the Mount, this would have been understood to include Roman officers.
- This story is best understood with prejudices in mind. The African Bible commentary notes that the Jewish people looked down on the Gentiles, and the Romans looked down on all those they conquered
- Roman troops were hated by most of the Jewish people, not just because of oppressive practices but also because they brought other gods and religions into the sacred areas, such as Jerusalem, with emperor worship being one of the biggest offenses.
- Important notes:
 1. The officer pleads with Jesus. When he very likely could have ordered Jesus to heal.
 2. The officer recognized Jesus's authority and showed him respect and honour by not having him come to his house. In healing, the officer recognizes Jesus's authority over sickness; Jesus simply has to say the word, and it is done. When it comes to respect and honour, when a Jewish person enters the home of a Gentile, they would become ceremonially unclean. The African Bible commentary adds that it seems that the officer was helping Jesus avoid that.
 3. Jesus is impressed by the Officer's recognition of Jesus's authority. Jesus says that he has not seen this kind of faith in all of Israel. He also speaks to how the Kingdom of God will include Gentiles and that some will enter the Kingdom of God ahead of some Israelites. The African Bible Commentary notes that this would have been considered both unthinkable and unbelievable.

7. Answer questions

- (1) What does this chapter say about the character of God/Jesus?

Gathering@Home Guide: Feb 9, 2026

- (2) In these stories, Jesus reaches out to people who were pushed aside or seen as enemies. What do you notice about how Jesus treats them, and what does that show us about how God sees people?
- (3) Before healing the man with leprosy, Jesus touches him. Why do you think that matters, and where do people today still need dignity and human connection, not just solutions?
- (4) The Roman officer would have been seen as an enemy, yet Jesus responds with respect and amazement. What might loving our enemies look like if we start by seeing their humanity instead of their labels?
- (5) After hearing these stories, where might Jesus be inviting you to see someone differently this week, or to take a step toward restoring dignity, connection, or compassion in a relationship?

8. Reflection and Application

- Based on today's reading and discussion, what is one practical step that I can take this week to live this out?

9. Prayer

- Ask people to share needs if comfortable and then take turns praying for needs
- Leader wraps up in prayer for unity in our community and for opportunities to Bless and share with family, friends and neighbours

6. Ending the Meeting

- let the meeting end naturally
 - If the last thing is prayer after the DBS then that is a natural ending point. People may want to continue to talk or switch conversations to something else
 - if the last thing is eating together then let the conversation continue. Be mindful of the host home. Confer with them if the meeting needs to end at a specific time
- remind everyone of the next time we meet