

### OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, as we gather today, we profess that you are always with us wherever we go. Help us to feel your Holy Spirit among us now, guiding us in the way that leads to life. You have commanded us to help people. At times, doing so will require us to sacrifice time, energy, our gifts and resources, yet we know you have given us everything in Jesus. Then, let us offer hospitality to all we meet so that it may lead them to faith and a relationship with you. We raise all this up in Jesus' precious name. Amen.

### SCRIPTURE PASSAGES

#### Luke 14:7-11 (NIV)

*<sup>7</sup>When he noticed how the guests picked the places of honor at the table, he told them this parable: <sup>8</sup>“When someone invites you to a wedding feast, do not take the place of honor, for a person more distinguished than you may have been invited. <sup>9</sup>If so, the host who invited both of you will come and say to you, ‘Give this person your seat.’ Then, humiliated, you will have to take the least important place. <sup>10</sup>But when you are invited, take the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he will say to you, ‘Friend, move up to a better place.’ Then you will be honored in the presence of all the other guests. <sup>11</sup>For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”*

#### Romans 12:14-16 (NIV)

*<sup>14</sup>Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse. <sup>15</sup>Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. <sup>16</sup>Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.*

#### 1 Peter 4:8-9 (NIV)

*<sup>8</sup>Above all, love each other deeply, because love covers over a multitude of sins. <sup>9</sup>Offer hospitality to one another without grumbling.*

# SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE

Week 2 *February 16, 2025*  
“Getting Off the Donkey”

## INTRODUCTION

With the heart of hospitality discovered and the charge to serve like Jesus before us, where do we go next? Like all great initiatives, we move towards how to live out or apply Jesus' teachings. Serving people and offering gracious hospitality is not always something that is done without effort or thought. Most of the time, meaningful hospitality is intentional. We mean to welcome people; we put out coffee and/or tea on purpose; we want people to know where to go for worship, Sunday School, and Youth Group. Let us mean it when we offer hospitality such that, just like God continually invites us, we might invite into a loving and growing relationship with Jesus Christ. Amen?

## QUESTIONS

1. What is your favorite spot in a social gathering? In the middle of the crowd? On the outskirts? By the door, eager to get going? Do you find other people in the same area and how do you relate to them?
2. How do you view making new friends? Is it easy and naturally happens based upon your personality? Is it difficult and nerve wracking? Do you see a missional application to connecting with other people?
3. Having people “meet us where we are” can be some of the most life-giving work we do when we are hurting and lost. How do we live out the task described by the Apostle Paul in Romans 12:14-15 (on page 1), to “mourn with those who mourn and rejoice with those who rejoice”?
4. In 1 Peter 4:8-9 (on page 1), the apostle wrote about how “love covers a multitude of sins” and that we should “offer hospitality to anyone without grumbling.” We all know people who “do good” but do so with a sour spirit or because they feel compelled to. How does the presence of love change our witness and hospitality?
5. As a church, we strive to welcome people into “a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.” How can we better cultivate love to increase our acts of hospitality and witness?

## FINAL APPLICATION

Hospitality is a concept that run throughout the Bible. In Christ, we see the transformative power of intentional hospitality and how it functions in discipleship. Let us offer our best to people from a place of love. Can all of us work together to showcase a community of faith and love for new and long-time followers of Christ?