



**ALREADY ONE** | Connection Group Discussion Guide | Week 6

### **Connect (5 to 10 minutes)**

***Come together to build relationships through fellowship and sharing about this week's worship.***

- Take a few minutes to share your thoughts about worship this week.
  - What aspects of worship did or did not connect with you?
  - What story or illustration made an impact on you?
- If you could live anywhere in the world for a year, where would it be and why?

---

### **Context (30 to 40 minutes)**

***Dig deeper into the videos and scripture for this week through questions and discussion.***

***Watch the Connection Group video.***

- Have you ever done something specifically to challenge yourself?
  - What challenges you in your life? How do you typically face challenges? Do you see challenges as positive or as difficult?
  - Are there different ways of thinking about how we can face challenges? Have you seen someone face a particular challenge and admired them for it?
- In Scripture we see that Jesus spoke to everyone, not simply to specific individuals. His message is for all of us. How can we be open and receptive to Jesus' words in scripture?
  - How can we be open and receptive to others?
  - What are ways in which we can be open to broadening our conversations with others and learning new perspectives and ideas from them?
- Do you agree that our experiences in life are diminished when we separate ourselves from one another? What are some examples you have seen of that?
  - What were your educational experiences like? Are you happy with the education you received or do you wish any aspects of it had been different?
- We're better together than we are apart - in what ways have you seen that in your own life?
  - What are some ways you have seen people cultivate relationships that bring and keep people together?

- Jennifer and Nerissa talked about how God tries to bring people together and people often create our own divisions and barriers. What scriptures do you think reflect God's desire to bring people together?
  - What kinds of divisions and barriers do we intentionally or unintentionally create in our relationships?
  - How can we address or remove those barriers?
- In a world that seems divided, it is a comfort to know that we probably have more in common with other people than we often realize. Have there been times in your life when you thought you were completely different from someone else, only to later realize you actually had things in common?
  - How do we find our commonality? Do we have to agree with each other to find common ground?
- Read Luke 24:13-35. This passage is the story of the Walk to Emmaus. Even if you're not familiar with the scripture passage, you may have heard of a popular Christian retreat with the same name. The story takes place after Jesus' death and resurrection. In the story, Jesus encounters two grieving disciples who were going to the village of Emmaus. The disciples didn't recognize Jesus at first and how they grieved his death and hoped that Jesus would one day redeem Israel. They had heard the women's reports about Jesus' resurrection, which they called a "vision." Once Jesus interpreted things for them and broke bread with them, their eyes were opened. They recognized him as he disappeared.
  - What is your initial impression of this story? Do you identify with the disciples?
  - One of the themes we see in this story is how Christ shows up in unexpected places. How have you experienced that in your life?
  - Have you ever participated in a spiritual retreat, such as the Walk to Emmaus? What was your experience?
- Read 1 Corinthians 12:12-13. In this passage, Paul talks about the church, describing it as one body with many members. He uses the illustration of a body, saying that a body is made up of different parts but is still one body. Similarly, even though members of the church are separate individuals, we are one body in Christ. Does Paul's analogy of the body of Christ being a physical body resonate with you?
  - How should this knowledge that we are baptized into one body affect how we live?
- As this Connection Group series comes to a close, what have you learned from the videos? What about from your discussions with the members of your Connection Group?
  - How can we as Christians best live out our unity in Christ?

## Call (10 minutes)

***We believe that God not only shows us who God is but invites us to participate in God's ministry by answering unique calls in our own lives. Join together in discovering how we can actively respond to scripture and God's presence.***

- Take some time to challenge yourself to be more open and receptive to others. What would that look like in your life?
- How can we work through our differences with others and find common ground? Spend some time in prayer and reading scripture this week and reflect upon the ways God is calling you to be in relationship with others.

## Closing (5 minutes)

***God calls us into community by sharing our joys and concerns together in prayer and supporting one another in our walks with Christ. As we share testimony and stories of our lives, let us listen to where God is working within our community and how we can build each other up in Christian love.***

- Share joys and concerns with one another.
- Close in prayer, either by inviting a group member to pray or by using the prayer provided below.

### Closing Prayer

Gracious and loving God, we praise you and give you thanks. We thank you for the church and the ways in which it builds us up. We thank you for our education and the ways in which we can spend a lifetime learning. Open our hearts and minds to know you better, O God, and give us an open spirit that seeks to strengthen our relationships. As we end this Connection Group series, help us to remember our unity in you and to find ways to live into that every day. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.