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“We must learn to live each day, each hour, yes, each minute as a new beginning, as a unique opportunity to make everything new.”

[Henri Nouwen]

ENGAGE & CONNECT

Share about a time recently when your spiritual growth has been a challenge for you.

BEGIN WITH PRAYER

Spend a moment praying this passage, beginning your time together in humility and gratitude!

“Let your roots grow down into him, and let your lives be built on him. Then your faith will grow strong in the truth you were taught, and you will overflow with thankfulness.”

[Colossians 2:7]

BIG IDEA

The result of a church that reaches new people, cares for current people, and empowers people to serve is growth.

PASSAGE

- Slowly and prayerfully, have someone read Acts 6:1-7 aloud. Ask, “What word or phrase captures your attention or grabs your heart?” *(answers DO NOT need to be shared aloud)*
- Have someone read the passage aloud again (possibly in a different translation). Ask, “What longing in your life is God speaking into today?” *(answers DO NOT need to be shared aloud)*
- Have someone read the passage aloud a final time. Ask, “What invitation from the Lord do you sense? What might He be saying to you? Offer these to God in surrender and joy.” *(answers DO NOT need to be shared aloud)*
- Ask, “Is there something anyone would like to share from this experience?”
- Say, “If you enjoyed this way of reading Scripture, consider adding it to your spiritual ‘toolbox’. I will share this resource with you this week.”
 - [HERE](#) is the lectio divina process!

DISCUSSION

1. What does the passage display about the character of God?
2. What does the passage tell us about who we are meant to be?
3. In the sermon we heard, *“Empowering people to serve and lead is a part of God’s plan to reach more people and to care for more people.”* How have you been impacted by someone empowering you to serve and care for people in our church? How is God inviting you to do that for someone else?

4. In the sermon we heard, *“Prayer was an important ministry strategy.”* How has prayer been an important part of the ministry God has called you to? How could you incorporate prayer more or differently?
5. What other questions or connections to your own life do you see in this passage?

STEP OF OBEDIENCE

Let’s go back to our big idea for today: the result of a church that reaches new people, cares for current people, and empowers people to serve is GROWTH! If we want to be this kind of a church for our community, it will take each of us doing our part to accomplish this Gospel-focused goal!

Based on the Spirit’s prompting, what is a step of obedience that you can take today? Here are a few questions to help you take a step of faith ...

- How is God inviting you to reach new people in our community?
- How is God inviting you to care for and build up the people in our church?
- How is God inviting you to encourage and empower someone to begin serving or leading?

PRAYER FOCUS

The Result of Sharing Our Stories

- Father, we come before you with grateful hearts, seeking guidance and blessing as we strive to reach new people with the Gospel. Grant us the wisdom and compassion to care for each person we encounter, reflecting Your love in all we do.
- Empower us, Lord, to inspire and equip others to serve in your church, that together we may grow in faith and unity. May our efforts glorify your name and bring many into your family.