

# Week *Two.*

A STORY TO SHARE

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It's easy to drift away from the church, especially with the disruption that COVID forced on our normal routines. We don't need to go; we can watch online. We won't be missed. We unconsciously adopted a new normal with reordered priorities and church has fallen down on the list. But church is essential.

The Bible teaches that it must be a high priority in our lives, or we will miss out on some very important benefits that will affect both our spiritual life and our quality of life. God wants to meet us in the gathering of his people, where he will sustain us, strengthen us, teach us and give us a story and a purpose for our lives. We are better together!

# Introduction.

Church is a place where our story intersects with God's story – where our story takes on new meaning and eternal significance. We've been entrusted with the story of all stories and commissioned by God to share the message of finding hope in Jesus. Our story helps those around us connect to Jesus' story. Together we find our place, our role, in the greatest story ever told.

## Starter Questions

None of us would be here together if it weren't for our lives intersecting with someone else's. Share the story of who introduced you to Fairhaven or to this group.

What's one idea from this week's sermon that impacted you or how have you responded to the Call to Action?

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# *Into the Word.*

## 1. READ ACTS 7:48-50, 58 AND ACTS 17:22-25

In Acts 7, Stephen preaches a powerful sermon and we are introduced to a man named Saul who later becomes Paul. Can you identify the similar words in Acts 17? Did you see Stephen's very words repeated by Paul years later? Stephen's story had such an impact!

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## 2. READ JOHN 1:35-42, MARK 2:2-5 AND MARK 8:22

Why is it that people who have met Jesus often bring their friends and family to meet Jesus? Have you ever done the same by sharing your story of meeting Jesus with a friend or family member?

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# *Into the Word.*

## **3. LOOK UP JEREMIAH 9:23-24 AND READ ALOUD**

What does this passage say relative to a believer's story? How is this different from the way the world defines a success story?

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## **4. READ PHILIPPIANS 3:20 AND HEBREWS 12:1-2**

How do these verses mentioning heaven, citizenship and a cloud of witnesses influence our story of faith and help us find hope?

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# Application.

1. As we've said, when our story intersects with God's story, things are never the same. It was true for Stephen and for Paul. How has your story changed as you've become aware of and committed to God's story?

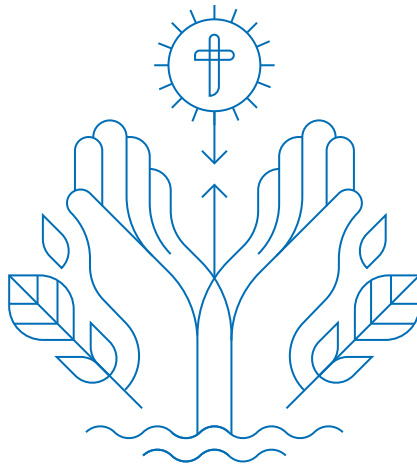
2. Share with the group the name of one person that you'd like to bring to meet Jesus. What can you do to help that person's story intersect with God's story?

3. At some point in our story, you and I have boasted about things other than our relationship with Jesus. What were those things? Are you in a place now where you can "boast" about knowing and understanding Jesus? Why or why not?

4. Your story has not ended and is still being written. What would you want the next chapter of your story to look like? What changes need to happen for that chapter to become reality? If you've never made a commitment to Jesus Christ, is that your next right step?

## *Closing Prayer.*

Father God, we are grateful that you are writing our story, that you love us and chose each one of us. You rescued us and brought us to yourself and our lives now intersect with Jesus' life, death and resurrection. We have a secure future and an eternal hope. You have entrusted us with the greatest story ever told. Help us to be willing to share it with the people you put in our paths and in our lives every day. Remind us we are better together as we remember your promises and rehearse your story of faithfulness throughout all generations. All because of Jesus, Amen.



# Through the **Week.**

## **Morning Prayer**

Heavenly Father, thank you for the gift of this new day and an opportunity to love and serve you as I interact with those you gave me, in my home, my workplace and my neighborhood. Help me to see people as Jesus sees them and give me a heart of compassion to notice others and act with love towards them. Remind me that my words matter and enable me to share my story with encouragement and hope. Remind me that my story is still being written and grant me the grace to live in the light of Jesus' story. For Jesus, Amen.

## **Evening Prayer**

Gracious God, your love for me and your purpose for my life influenced my story today. Thank you for those moments when I was connected to you, aware of your presence and careful to do your will. I know that at other moments I was distracted from you and your story of grace and forgiveness. Thank you for working all things together for good in my life. I am more than the sum of my faults and failures. You have a plan for me to prosper me, to give me hope and a future. As I end my day, my soul is at rest in you alone. Amen.

