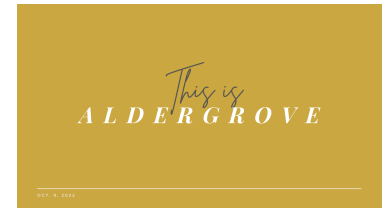


This is Aldergrove: Week #1

October 1st, 2023

Deuteronomy 8:6-18; John 1:14-18; Matthew 4:19



Begin with Prayer

In silence, invite the Holy Spirit to guide you. Then pray: *Empowering God, we pray that you will send your Holy Spirit to move us to understanding; to help us to believe the gospel; to give us strength and wisdom to live by it. Amen.* (Worship Sourcebook Q.3.5.8)

Reconnecting and Debriefing

Take a moment to check in with one another.

1. Take a few minutes to share stories of your experience at Aldergrove so far. *How did you get connected? What has it been like?*

Introduction

Whether we gather in person or online, our goal remains the same: to be a people apprenticed to the life of Jesus. His life and teaching is our example and our source of truth. Remember the commitments we make to each other to foster safety and freedom as we pursue spiritual growth together:

- Whenever possible, please listen to the sermon prior to gathering (Sunday or online).
- While we are meeting (even online), commit to focussing rather than multitasking. Be all here.
- Give every person an equal opportunity to share, even if it takes time to form or finish their thoughts.
- Be respectful and non-judgmental.
- Honour sharing boundaries & Honour sharing boundaries (only what you have permission to share, no gossip) and guard confidentiality (what we share here stays here).
- Don't try to fix, problem-solve or rescue; keep pointing one another to the truths of the gospel for our lives.

Listening to God's Word

The Aldergrove campus of NLCC launched nearly one year ago – it's almost our birthday! We are celebrating the occasion over October 1st and 8th. On October 1st, we reflect on the first two of our four planting statements: being known in community and new people meeting Jesus. Perhaps there are moments, stories, or people that stand out in your memory as you look back on your time at Aldergrove, but it is important that we remember God as the 'hero' at the heart of it all.

Small Group Discussion

- **Read Deuteronomy 8:6-18.** While no church is perfect, it seems like Aldergrove has been brought into 'a good land' (v. 7) over the past months. *What are some of the good things you appreciate at our campus?*
- Considering what we value and appreciate at Aldergrove, *how might we be tempted to say, "we have done this with our own ability" (v. 17)?*
- *What does it look like to instead 'praise the Lord' (v. 10) for all these good things?*
- **Read John 1:14-18. Read just verse 14 and 18 again.** One of our planting statements is "being known in community." God is invisible and yet chose to reveal himself to us in Jesus so that we could have community with Him and each other. *Share your experience of 'being known in community' at Aldergrove. What would it look like if you the next step in making yourself known? What fear might tempt you to keep yourself invisible and unknown?*
- *How can your life group go deeper in your relationships over in the coming weeks and months?*
- **Read Matthew 4:19.** Fishing was a team effort in Jesus' day since they used such large nets to catch fish. When it comes to new people meeting Jesus, it is also a 'team effort' for us as the church. *What are all the things*

that need to happen for someone to meet Jesus for the first time, and how are different people involved in that process?

- *Who are you personally praying for to meet Jesus?*
- *What would it look like for your group to help people meet Jesus at Aldergrove?*
- While we want to take time and celebrate what God has done, we don't want to get stuck in the past. As someone once said, "nostalgia isn't what it used to be." *Reflecting on what you've heard and shared today, how has your faith grown? What are you trusting God for in this coming year, both at Aldergrove and in your own life?*
- ***How do you sense the Holy Spirit calling you to respond to or act on what we have read and discussed?***

Practices – Thankfulness

Read 1 Samuel 7:7-12

God gave Israel a victory, and so they 'raised an Ebenezer.' This was simply a pile of stones they made as a reminder of how God specifically helped them in the past, and to encourage faith for the future.

As we look back over the past year, God has helped us in a great many ways. This is seen in people, things, moments, events, attitudes, and much more. Keeping in mind what you have discussed today, take some time to remember and celebrate how God has helped us. Go around the circle and specifically share where and how God has been good to you as an individual, your life group and us as a whole church. You can use sentences like:

"I am thankful to God for _____."

"God has helped me/us _____."

"God has given me/us _____."

"I/We wouldn't have _____ without God."

"I/We wouldn't be _____ without God."

"God has shown his goodness to us by _____."

Once you have shared, take some time to pray, thanking God specifically for these things.

Caring for One Another

- *Pray for the names you shared earlier.*
- ***Do you or your family have a need that the Life Group can help meet?***

Using **the Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:9-13)** as a guide, based on what you've shared together, spend time listening to God and praying for one another.