



# NEIGHBORHOOD Church



THE PRACTICE OF PLACE

## WEEK 1: A FLESH & BLOOD CHURCH

### HOW THIS PRACTICE GUIDE IS DESIGNED:

Each week will focus on the Scripture passage from this previous week's teaching, walking you through four steps: P.R.A.Y.: Pause, Read & Reflect, Ask, and Yield.

#### **PAUSE:**

We begin with a time of silence, pausing to be still, remembering God's presence, and praying with God's word from a psalm.

#### **READ & REFLECT:**

We will consider the way of Jesus and the truth of Jesus, reflecting on where he inviting us to go with him.

#### **ASK:**

We will consider a question that this practice invites us to consider, wrestling through our resistance and yielding to the freedom and life Jesus intends for us.

#### **YIELD:**

We will end each week with several yielding practices, ways that we can position ourselves to allow Jesus to lead us in our practice of his way and truth each week.

This guide works best in community, with a group of people around you to learn from, challenge, and hold you accountable.

## PAUSE

Take sixty seconds and pause, slowing your breathing and silently remembering God's presence with you today.

Allow this image from the prophet Isaiah to inspire a prayer in you as we begin:

*"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news,  
who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness,  
who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns."  
Isaiah 52:7*

## READ & REFLECT

Read these two passages twice out loud together: John 1:14 | John 20:21

What comes to mind as you read these two verses side-by-side?

On Sunday we discussed three different paradigms for how we imagine church. Which is most familiar to you? Which is most foreign to you?

- *Attractional: The church invites people to come to us.*
- *Missional: The church goes to people to serve and meet their needs.*
- *Incarnational: The church dwells in, among, and with people to show the way of Jesus.*

To be an incarnational church is to be WITH our neighbors like Jesus is with us:

1. **With presence:** staying with us and showing us the way, the truth and the life
2. **With particularity:** communicating in our unique and specific culture, context, and language
3. **With pain:** sitting with us in the pain, grief, and harsh reality of life
4. **With peace:** extending welcome, belonging, and reconciliation with God and others

How has God been with you in one or more of these ways?

What might it look like for you or us to be with our neighbors and our neighborhood in one of these ways?

## ASK

Take a few moments and silently ask God to bring a person or family to your heart and mind he wants you to bless.

- Who is God bringing to mind to bless this year?
- How can you be with them?

## YIELD

We haven't fully understood Jesus until we put his way into practice. Here are two practices to yield our lives to his way this week:

- **First Step:** Fill out the BLESS1 Card with the name of the person God has placed on your heart and mind to reach this year. Put this card somewhere prominent where you will see it and remember to pray for that person or family.
- **Reach Step:** Reach out to the person God's placed on your heart either through a text, a phone call, a card, or some other way of being present in their lives this week.