

# CHRISTMAS 2025

## *All is Calm, All is Bright*

### Life Group Connection Guide

Seeks to help you dig deeper into God's Word on your own and aid in your discussion in a Life Group during the week. Follow the simple prompts below in a journal or together in a small group setting. If you would like to join a midweek Life Group, please contact: [jon@neighborhoodchurch.com](mailto:jon@neighborhoodchurch.com)



### Dec. 14 — *The Calming Joy of Embracing God's Promises (Luke 2:8-21)*

- **Welcome & Ice Breaker:**
  - *Have you ever won something before? A raffle? Tickets? Sweepstakes? Called into a radio station? What did you win? How did you get chosen? Were you able to bring people with you or share the winnings with someone? Did you have to go in-person and redeem the winnings? What did that entail? How did this bring you joy?*
- **Important Dates:**
  - **Christmas Eve Services** Thursday, December 25 • Cypress Campus @ 4PM & 6PM • Los Alamitos Campus @ 4PM
- **Opening Prayers:**
  - **Hold yourself before the Lord // Psalm 139:23**
    - *What emotions are you feeling as you come to Life Group?*
    - Hold all of yourself out to Him and sit quietly • Allow God to come close to you & care for you in prayer right now • Listen for His voice/presence/leading
  - **Hold what you are holding before the Lord // Psalm 90:17**
    - *What are you dealing with, working on, preparing for?*
    - Hold it out to Him and sit quietly • Allow God to come close to you & establish the work of your hands • Listen for His voice/presence/leading
  - **Return • Recommit • Repent • Reattach to the LORD who is with you // Psalm 139:24**
    - *Draw near to God as He draws near to you*
    - *"...I acquiesce to You Abba Father, to work and pray and seek Your own through me"*
- **Scripture Passage: Luke 2:8-21**
  - Begin by reading the passage out loud; even a few times if it is a shorter passage in order to let it settle down inside you.
  - As the Scripture is being read, pay attention to any word, phrase, or feeling that the Holy Spirit may be highlighting to you.
  - Then share what you noticed and/or write down your observations as the Spirit leads.

- **Discussion/Personal Reflection**

- What challenged you, or stood out to you during your devotional time with the Lord Jesus this week?
- If you were able to hear it, what did the Holy Spirit point out to you personally from Sunday's sermon?
- Read James 2:5. Shepherds during the 1<sup>st</sup> Century were usually considered ordinary, in the background, often even overlooked and unconsidered. What do you think God's choice to reveal Jesus to the shepherds tell us about God's heart? Where might God be revealing His purpose to you in ordinary or unexpected places? How can humility open you to His calming joy?
- Read Jeremiah 29:13-14. What do you notice most about the shepherds in the Nativity story (Luke 2:15-17, 20)? Would you have responded in the same way? How do you think the shepherds' eagerness to "go and see" model the kind of seeking that leads to settled joy? What does actively seeking God look like in your life right now? How has obedience to God's leading brought deep peace even in confusing or trying times?
- Read Psalm 77:11-12. What do you think it means that Mary "*treasured up all these things, pondering them in her heart?*" (Luke 2:19) How do you think Mary's treasuring and pondering might have brought on deep, sustaining joy to her family? What spiritual practices help you "treasure and ponder" God's work in your life? How might slowing down deepen your experience of calming joy?

- **Closing in Prayer:**

- Consider those who the Holy Spirit may be placing on your heart to pray for • Hold them up to the Lord for His intervening love in their lives • Allow Him to care for them through your prayer right now.
  - "*Lord, who are You putting on my heart today? Who needs a special touch from You in their life? Who can I hold up to You in prayer?*"