

5 Day DEVOTIONAL

Day 1: Created for Connection

Reading: Hebrews 11:32-38

Devotional: Before sin entered the world, God declared something "not good"—man's aloneness. This wasn't simply about marriage; it revealed a fundamental truth about humanity. We were designed for relationship, wired for connection with God and others. Your need for community isn't weakness—it's divine design. The enemy wants you to believe you're meant to carry everything alone, but Scripture repeatedly affirms that isolation is dangerous while community brings strength. Today, recognize that your longing to be known and understood isn't a flaw in your character; it's evidence of God's fingerprints on your soul.

Day 2: The Hiding Place We All Know

Reading: Philippians 1:3-6

Devotional: The first consequence of sin wasn't violence—it was hiding. Adam and Eve covered themselves and hid from God, establishing a pattern humanity has followed ever since. We hide behind success, humor, busyness, and even religious activity. We've mastered the art of saying "I'm fine" when we're falling apart. But notice God's response: He came looking. "Where are you?" wasn't an information-gathering question; it was an invitation to step out of hiding. Psalm 32 reveals that when we keep silent about our struggles, our bodies and souls suffer. But when we stop hiding and confess, we find mercy and relief.

Day 3: The Burden-Bearing Community

Reading: Galatians 6:1-5; James 5:16

Devotional: Paul's instruction to "carry one another's burdens" isn't optional—it's how we fulfill Christ's law of love. Notice the balance: we each carry our own "load" (daily responsibilities), but crushing burdens were never meant to be carried alone. The early church understood this. They didn't just gather weekly; they shared meals, possessions, prayers, and lives. James connects burden-bearing with healing: confession and prayer in community releases God's power. This requires both courage and compassion—courage to share your struggles and compassion to receive others without judgment. The Christian life isn't a solo

journey; it's a family expedition. You need people who will help carry you, and others need you to help carry them. Isolation is the enemy's strategy; community is God's.

Day 4: Acceptance That Transforms

Reading: Romans 15:5-7; Acts 2:42-47

Devotional: "Accept one another as Christ accepted you." Pause and consider how Christ accepted you—before you cleaned up your act, while you were still struggling, in the middle of your mess. That's the standard for Christian community. The early church created a culture where "there were no needy people among them" because nobody suffered alone. They weren't perfect people pretending; they were imperfect people genuinely caring for one another. This kind of acceptance doesn't excuse sin, but it creates safety for honesty. When we know we'll be loved rather than judged, confession becomes possible. The church should be the safest place on earth to struggle, because it's filled with people who know they've been saved by grace, not performance.

Day 5: The Courage to Be Known

Reading: 1 John 1:5-10; John 15:12-17

Devotional: John writes that walking in the light means living in authentic fellowship with one another. When we claim to have no sin, we deceive ourselves and live in darkness. But when we confess and live honestly, Christ's blood cleanses us and genuine community becomes possible. Jesus called His disciples friends, not servants, because He made known to them everything the Father revealed. He invites you into the same intimate knowing. Being fully known and fully loved is the deepest human longing—and it's exactly what Christ offers. But experiencing this requires courage: the courage to stop pretending, to ask for help, to admit you're struggling, to let someone see behind the mask. This vulnerability feels risky, but it's the pathway to freedom.



DEACONS ON CALL

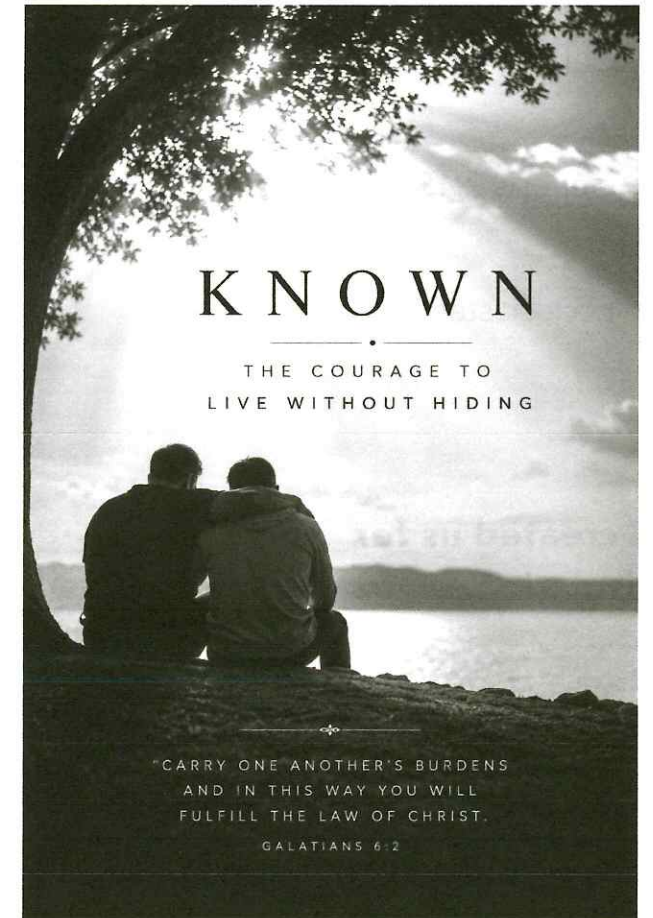
Archie Harris and Brad Friesen

WEEKLY EVENTS

- **WORSHIP:** Sundays at 9:45 AM
- **SMALL GROUPS:** Sundays at 11:00 AM
- **DEEP DIVE:** Resumes AUGUST 19
- **FIRST KIDS:** Resumes AUGUST 19
- **FIRST YOUTH:** See Eric for summer schedule

Welcome

WE'RE SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE!



AUGUST 2, 2026

KNOWN

THE COURAGE TO LIVE WITHOUT HIDING

◆ Galatians 6:1-5 (NLT)

◆ Genesis 2:18 (NLT)

◆ Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 (NLT)

**God created us for _____,
not isolation.**

◆ Genesis 3:7-10 (NLT)

_____ and _____ **move us
into hiding.**

◆ James 5:16 (NLT)

◆ Galatians 6:1-2 (NLT)

**Jesus calls us to walk _____
—not alone.**

◆ Acts 2:42-47 (NLT)

◆ Acts 4:32-35 (NLT)

◆ Romans 15:5-7 (NLT)

**The church is called to be a family, not
just a _____.**

Discussion QUESTIONS

What does it mean to truly carry someone's burden rather than just offering advice or trying to fix their problem? How have you experienced the difference?

Why do you think hiding has become such a natural response to struggle, even within the church? What fears keep us from being fully known?

Paul writes in Galatians 6:2 to carry each other's burdens, yet in verse 5 he says each should carry their own load. How do you discern between burdens meant to be shared and responsibilities that are yours alone?

The early church in Acts 2 shared everything and ensured there were no needy people among them. What would it look like for our church to live out that same radical generosity and care today?

How does the fear of gossip or judgment prevent authentic community? What practical steps can we take to create a culture where grace is truly greater than gossip?

Chris' sermon suggests that healing often begins when hiding ends. Can you think of a time when confessing a struggle or burden to someone led to healing or freedom in your life?

Practical APPLICATIONS

Identify your circle: Jesus had the crowds, the twelve, and Peter, James, and John. Who are the 2-3 people in your life with whom it's safe to stop hiding? If you don't have those people yet, pray and ask God to provide them.

Look for someone to carry: Ask God to show you someone whose burden you could help carry this week. Reach out with a text, call, meal, or offer to pray.