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**A Daily Devotional  
Eastbrook Church**

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**The Being of God  
in the Life of the Church**

**A Daily Devotional by the  
People of Eastbrook Church**



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# Introduction

Unity is one of the most popular words about human relationships, yet one of the most elusive realities of human existence. This devotional and corresponding sermon series explore unity from both theological and practical angles. We will begin with the nature of God before moving into the positional and developmental unity of the church, the place of prayer in unity, and the ultimate vision of unity for the church. Along the way, we will also talk about practical guidance for living in unity.

As you work your way through this devotional, it may seem a bit different from what you are used to. Much like our previous devotionals at Eastbrook Church, this devotional is broken up into weeks. And much like the other devotionals in the Eastbrook 365 series, each week will begin with Sunday, where you (or your family/small group) will reflect on the worship service from that morning. Each Sunday you will find the same questions and prompts to help us together remember what we are studying. We hope that this will encourage you to continue to engage with corporate worship this year, even as many of us are not able to be physically together for corporate worship.

What makes this devotional different, however, is what we will be asking you to do from Monday through Saturday of each week. Each week, we will be studying one or more passages of scripture for ourselves for the entire week. While yes, the preacher each Sunday offers their own observations and takes on the passage, we know that the beautiful thing about the Word of God is that it *can* and *will* speak to each of us in varying shades, words, and images. As the author of Hebrews writes, *"...the word of God is alive and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart"* (Hebrews 4:12). This devotional is an opportunity for you to experience the living Word of God for yourself.

We believe that as you engage in deep study of the Word each day, we will all start to see the fullness of the Word of God as we journey together on this pilgrimage called "faith." It is through these independent times of engaging with the text that we will begin to see the varying shades of God's truth coalesce us together into a single shining light, unifying us around Him and His work in us.

Jesus' own prayer over Christians in John 17 says, *"[I pray] that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you."* This is our prayer for this devotional as well. We are excited to travel along with you, independently yet together, as we allow God to make us one.

## About Eastbrook 365:

Due to the uncertainty of the season we find ourselves in, we at Eastbrook are writing and producing a year of daily devotionals that we are calling "Eastbrook 365." These devotionals will align with our sermon series from September 2020-August 2021 and will help Eastbrookers near and far grow deeper in their relationship with Jesus, while also continuing to pilgrimage together as a Church.

You can read these devotionals in a variety of ways.

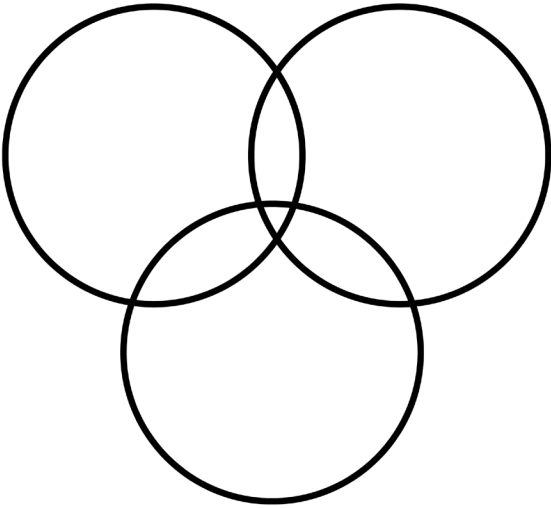
- Download the Eastbrook App for your phone and read each day ([eastbrook.org/app](http://eastbrook.org/app))
- Download individual PDFs of each devotional to read at home or print out at home ([eastbrook.org/devotionals](http://eastbrook.org/devotionals))
- Sign up for the Eastbrook 365 Devotional email to be delivered to your inbox each morning ([eastbrook.org/email](http://eastbrook.org/email))
- Pick up a paper copy at church as each devotional begins (limited copies available)

We pray God's blessings on you as you spend time with Him each day.



## How to Use this Devotional:

1. Plan a 30-minute window each day when you can thoughtfully do the daily reading and study. Set a time, create a pattern, and stick to it for all five weeks.
2. Decide whether you want to invite your friends, family, or small group to join you.
3. Each day of this devotional will be a little bit different. Be sure to read the instructions carefully each day.
4. Use the online version of the devotional readings to reach out to friends online and around the world. Invite them to follow along with you during this year of devotionals from Eastbrook, which we are calling "Eastbrook 365." Find the online version at [eastbrook.org/devotionals](http://eastbrook.org/devotionals). Use Eastbrook's Facebook page ([facebook.com/eastbrookchurch](https://facebook.com/eastbrookchurch)) and other social media outlets such as Twitter and Instagram ([@eastbrookchurch](https://twitter.com/eastbrookchurch)) to share ideas. Post your comments, thoughts, and questions in the online version. Read others' comments. This is a great way to learn from the perspective of others.



## Sunday

### Week 1 Worship Response

After participating in the worship service this week, whether in person or online, spend time discussing or responding to the following:

1. What did God say to you this week?
2. Name the attributes that the musical worship highlighted about God. Spend time thanking God again for these attributes.
3. Did the sermon reveal anything to you? Is God asking you to grow in some way as a response to what you've heard or experienced? Write those things out.
4. Name 1 or 2 things you are going to do this week as a response to the worship service. Share it with someone.

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# Monday

## The First Reading

**Start with prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

**Slowly read the passages below.** Read them out loud if possible.

Deuteronomy 6:4-5:

*<sup>4</sup> Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. <sup>5</sup> Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. <sup>6</sup> These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts.*

Matthew 3:16-17:

*<sup>16</sup> As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. <sup>17</sup> And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."*

**Read the passages out loud one more time.**

Read it once more, this time **noting** (by circling, highlighting, or underlining) those words or phrases that stand out to you. Mark them here on this page, or in your Bible.

Spend five minutes **meditating** on those words or phrases.

That is all for today.

**End in prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

# Tuesday

## The Return Reading

**Start with prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

**Read the full chapters of Deuteronomy 6 and Matthew 3 today.**  
Read slowly and out loud if possible.

Read both chapters again, this time **noting** the phrases that stood out to you yesterday through the passages.

**Spend some time answering the questions below.**

1. Is there a recurring pattern in the words, phrases and themes that stood out to you? And if so, how many times do they reoccur?
2. Are there themes that emerge from both of these passages?
3. What do these themes mean to you? Why are they important, why do you think they stood out?
4. Write out a prayer below, asking God to continue to reveal what these words/themes/Scripture passages mean for your life.

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**End in prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

# Wednesday

## Further Reflection

**Start with prayer.** Ask God to impart to wisdom your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

**Slowly read this week's passages.** Read them out loud if possible. You will find them printed on page 8.

**Spend some time journaling/responding to the following prompts.**

1. What do these passages say about the essence of God? How does a close reading of these two passages illuminate the Trinity?
2. Why is it important that God is triune (three persons in one)?
3. How does the unity of the three persons of the Trinity inform (or how should it inform) our unity as believers?
4. Where can we find other passages in the Bible that point to the importance of God's unity and our reflection of that unity?
5. Are there places in your life where true unity exists? What are they? Describe them here.
6. Are there places in your life where unity doesn't exist? What are they? Describe them here.
7. Compare and contrast the unity among the Triune God with the unity we experience here on earth.
8. Spend time listing the implications of adopting an attitude of unity within your relational circles.

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**End in prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

# Thursday

## A Devotional Response

A couple years ago, I worked at Camp Timber-lee in East Troy playing drums in their summer band. Being right out of college, I was so excited to play drums and be at camp all summer. About a month before campers came, we as a staff had two weeks of training. For those two weeks, a speaker came who would lead us through a passage of scripture and spiritually shape our summer of ministry. That summer I remember the speaker read Deuteronomy 6:4-5, which is known as the *Shema*; the phrase "Hear O Israel," which is the first passage we read today. The *Shema* is part of the Jewish morning and evening prayers, twice a day they pray, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one."

As we went through these two weeks together in scripture, we as a camp staff would recite the *Shema* at our morning and evening sessions together. At first, I thought it was really repetitive and did not really have much of an impact at all. But then as we started to do it more, I began to see how powerful it was that 100 of us staff members were all saying the same words, at the same time, in the same room. It may me feel unified with my Jewish brothers and sisters who for centuries have recited those powerful words.

In our passage from Deuteronomy this week, we are invited to be one with so many other believers and recite the *Shema*. But in our passage in Matthew we are invited to see that when Jesus was baptized we see every element of the Trinity represented; Jesus Christ being baptized, the Holy Spirit illuminating Jesus' face, and God the Father saying, "*This is my son, with whom I am well pleased.*"

In our divided times in our nation and in our hearts, let us appreciate the fact that our God is one, and all unity falls under His unity within Himself.

*by Gabriel Douglas*

## Friday Your Turn

**Start with prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

**Slowly read this week's passages.** Read them out loud if possible. You will find them printed on page 8.

You have spent the week deeply pondering, studying, learning about, and meditating on two key passages that connect to the Triune God. Prayerfully, they have worked their way into your mind and are beginning to reveal areas in which you are being called to surrender, grow, stretch or change. Unity is not a simple overnight choice, it is a long hard work, in a single direction with those around you.

We are asking you to do what Gabriel did yesterday. He spent time working through the passage, pondering, praying, meditating, etc. and then he wrote the piece you read yesterday. Today it's your turn to create a response.

What would you create (a story, piece of art, music, etc.) if you were going to explain what you are learning with someone? A devotional is simply a reflection on what you are learning or what you have learned. It doesn't have to be long and flowery, it doesn't have to be well-written, or even have words. But what are the things God is teaching you? How would you explain those to someone else?

This can be personal, or you could share it with us! We'd love to know what God is teaching you so we can join in praying with and for you. Use the space on the next page to write or feel free to write it elsewhere. If you want to send it in feel free to email to us at [info@eastbrook.org](mailto:info@eastbrook.org).

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**End in prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

# Saturday Collect

Today, spend some time thinking back through the week. Journal your responses below, or share your responses to these questions with another person in your family or small group.

Where did you experience God this week?

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Where did you feel God was absent?

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In what ways did God empower you this week?

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What did you learn?

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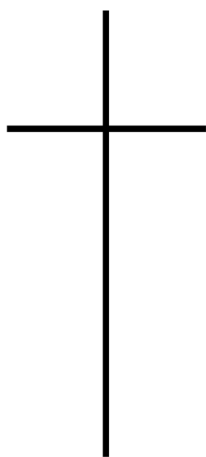
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## Close in prayer:

*God of might, giver of every good gift, put into our hearts the love of your name, so that, by deepening our sense of reverence, and, by your watchful care, keep safe what you have nurtured. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. AMEN.*





# Sunday

## Week 2 Worship Response

After participating in the worship service this week, whether in person or online, spend time discussing or responding to the following:

1. What did God say to you this week?
2. Name the attributes that the musical worship highlighted about God. Spend time thanking God again for these attributes.
3. Did the sermon reveal anything to you? Is God asking you to grow in some way as a response to what you've heard or experienced? Write those things out.
4. Name 1 or 2 things you are going to do this week as a response to the worship service. Share it with someone.

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# Monday

## The First Reading

**Start with prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

**Read the passages below, slowly, out loud if possible.**

Ephesians 2:11-20:

*Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (which is done in the body by human hands)— remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.*

*For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.*

*Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.*

Ephesians 4:1-6:

*As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were*

*called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.*

1 Corinthians 12:

*Now about the gifts of the Spirit, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. You know that when you were pagans, somehow or other you were influenced and led astray to mute idols. Therefore I want you to know that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus be cursed," and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.*

*There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work.*

*Now to each one the manifestation of the Spirit is given for the common good. To one there is given through the Spirit a message of wisdom, to another a message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he distributes them to each one, just as he determines.*

*Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.*

*Now if the foot should say, "Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. And if the ear should say, "Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body," it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. If they were all one part, where would the body be? As it is, there are many parts, but one body.*

*The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.*

*Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it. And God has placed in the church first of all apostles, second prophets, third teachers, then miracles, then gifts of healing, of helping, of guidance, and of different kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all have gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? Now eagerly desire the greater gifts.*

*And yet I will show you the most excellent way.*

### **Read the passages out loud one more time.**

Read it once more, this time **noting** (by circling, highlighting, or underlining) those words or phrases that stand out to you. Mark them here on these pages, or in your Bible.

Spend five minutes **meditating** on those words or phrases.

That is all for today.

**End in prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their Words.

# Tuesday

## The Return Reading

**Start with prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

**Read the full chapters of Ephesians 2, 4, and 1 Corinthians 12 today.** Read slowly and out loud if possible.

Read all three chapters again, this time **noting** the phrases that stood out to you yesterday through the passages.

**Spend some time answering the questions below.**

1. Is there a recurring pattern in the words, phrases and themes that stood out to you? And if so, how many times do they reoccur?
2. Are there themes that emerge from both of these passages?
3. What do these themes mean to you? Why are they important, why do you think they stood out?
4. Write out a prayer below, asking God to continue to reveal what these words/themes/Scripture passages mean for your life.

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**End in prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

## Wednesday

### Further Reflection

**Start with prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

**Slowly read the passages again.** Read them out loud if possible. Return to pages 18-20 to re-read Ephesians 2:11-20, Ephesians 4:1-6, and 1 Corinthians 12.

**Spend some time journaling/responding to the following prompts.**

1. What do these passages say about the Gospel?
2. What is unity in light of that?
3. How is unity fundamental to the church, what is this unity leading towards?
4. Jesus is as the center of this unity we are called to, how do we strive towards that unity according to these passages?
5. How does the unifying Gospel impact your view on church, family, and society?
6. How do the gifts described in Corinthians unify us?
7. What are some attributes of a person or community that is working towards unity?

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**End in prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their Words.



# Thursday

## A Devotional Response

At the start of Ephesians 4, we see Paul begin to encourage us, the body of Christ, to focus on what unites us in the church: one body, one spirit, one glorious hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God to establish our connection with Christ.

While unity is important in other places of our lives, this is calling for unity in the church and we cannot ignore our differences because unresolved conflict leads to division. It is okay to not feel unified or connected to things of this world because as Pastor Matt recently spoke about, we are part of something that is not "worldly," we are a part of the Kingdom of God. Not only is Paul calling on the members of the church body to resolve conflict but also the leadership in the church. It is easy to say in today's world to blame "the other side," but as members of the Church, we are called as Paul mentions to be humble and gentle, to be patient all because of your love.

Paul continues by providing an image for the church. We are all part of the church, the bride of Christ, and therefore are different parts of the body with different gifts. This body is unified with Christ, who makes the whole body fit together perfectly. All this is easy to say but how do we live this out as Christians?

In 1 Corinthians 12, Paul writes to the church of Corinth trying to teach believers how to live in a society that doesn't model Christ. He writes that spiritual gifts are given to us by the Holy Spirit to serve the Lord but to also support one another. Pastors who are gifted with the ability to teach are different than a doctor who can heal; each of us have different gifts that are all important to the body. But spiritual gifts are not the only way in which we are called to serve. We are called to serve in the church and in the world. Whether in the church in children's ministry or somewhere outside the four walls of the church, we as Christians, as the body of Christ, are called to serve.

We can only resolve conflict, find unity, and serve in this self-sacrificial way if we take our love for each other seriously. One chapter later, in 1 Corinthians 13, Paul teaches us how we ought to love as Christians. If we serve but do not love, we gain nothing. Love is patient and kind, it does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, and it keeps no record of wrongs. In this election year, as the unified church, we must learn to love each other, no matter our differences. We are called to love as Christ loved us (Colossians 3:1-17).

*by Ryan Steffen*

**Friday**  
**Your Turn**

**Start with prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

**Slowly read the passages again.** Read them out loud if possible. Return to pages 18-20 to re-read Ephesians 2:11-20, Ephesians 4:1-6, and 1 Corinthians 12.

As with last week, we are asking you to respond to this week's passages. What would you create (a story, piece of art, music, etc.) if you were going to explain what you are learning with someone? What is God teaching you? How would you communicate what you are learning to someone else?

This can be personal, or you could share it with us! We'd love to know what God is teaching you so we can join in praying with and for you. If you want to send it in feel free to email to us at [info@eastbrook.org](mailto:info@eastbrook.org).

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**End in prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

# Saturday

## Collect

Today, spend some time thinking back through the week. Journal your responses below, or share your responses to these questions with another person in your family or small group.

Where did you experience God this week?

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Where did you feel God was absent?

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In what ways did God empower you this week?

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What did you learn?

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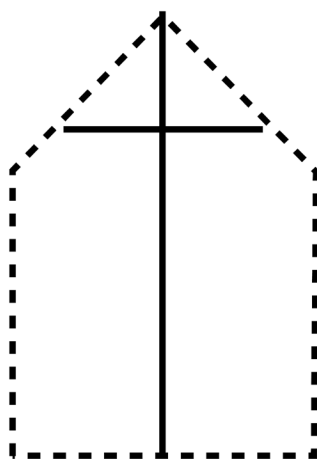
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### Close in prayer:

*God of might, giver of every good gift, put into our hearts the love of your name, so that, by deepening our sense of reverence, and, by your watchful care, keep safe what you have nurtured. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. AMEN.*



*Sunday*

## Week 3 Worship Response

After participating in the worship service this week, whether in person or online, spend time discussing or responding to the following:

1. What did God say to you this week?
2. Name the attributes that the musical worship highlighted about God. Spend time thanking God again for these attributes.
3. Did the sermon reveal anything to you? Is God asking you to grow in some way as a response to what you've heard or experienced? Write those things out.
4. Name 1 or 2 things you are going to do this week as a response to the worship service. Share it with someone.

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

# Monday

## The First Reading

**Start with prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

**Slowly read the passages below. Read them out loud if possible.**

Philippians 2:1-11:

*Therefore if you have any encouragement from being united with Christ, if any comfort from his love, if any common sharing in the Spirit, if any tenderness and compassion, then make my joy complete by being like-minded, having the same love, being one in spirit and of one mind. Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others. In your relationships with one another, have the same mindset as Christ Jesus:*

*Who, being in very nature God,  
did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage;*

*rather, he made himself nothing  
by taking the very nature of a servant,  
being made in human likeness.*

*And being found in appearance as a man,  
he humbled himself  
by becoming obedient to death—  
even death on a cross!*

*Therefore God exalted him to the highest place  
and gave him the name that is above every name,  
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,  
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,  
and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,  
to the glory of God the Father.*

1 Corinthians 11:18-19:

*In the first place, I hear that when you come together as a church,  
there are divisions among you, and to some extent I believe it. No  
doubt there have to be differences among you to show which of you  
have God's approval.*

**Read the passages out loud one more time.**

Read it once more, this time **noting** (by circling, highlighting, or underlining) those words or phrases that stand out to you. Mark them here on this page, or in your Bible.

Spend five minutes **meditating** on those words or phrases.

That is all for today.

**End in prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.



*Tuesday*

## The Return Reading

**Start with prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

**Read the full chapters of Philippians 2 and 1 Corinthians 11.** Read slowly and out loud if possible.

Read both chapters again, this time **noting** the phrases that stood out to you yesterday through the passages.

**Spend some time answering the questions below.**

1. Is there a recurring pattern in the words, phrases and themes that stood out to you? And if so, how many times do they reoccur?
2. Are there themes that emerge from both of these passages?
3. What do these themes mean to you? Why are they important, why do you think they stood out?
4. Write out a prayer below, asking God to continue to reveal what these words/themes/Scripture passages mean for your life.

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**End in prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

## Wednesday

### Further Reflection

**Start with prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

**Slowly read the passages again.** Read them out loud if possible. Return to pages 30-31 to re-read 1 Philippians 2:1-11 & 1 Corinthians 11:18-19.

**Spend some time journaling/responding to the following prompts.**

1. How is Jesus central to our unity as a church?
2. What is the process in which Jesus is moving us towards a unified body?
3. Name the things Paul is calling the Philippians to do to strive towards unity.
4. How can our differences unify us?
5. Why, according to these verses, are differences essential to unity?
6. Where do you see division in your community?
7. How do this weeks passages address those divisions, what are you being called to do about that?

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**End in prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their Words.

## *Thursday* **A Devotional Response**

I recently had an experience with an old friend of mine, where I found out that we had very different understandings on current events. Having known her for many years, I was shocked and hurt to see that this was her view. It was disheartening and overwhelming for me to hear this from a fellow Christian. I believe many can relate to my experience.

We all know that 2020 has brought many circumstances that have not only brought division in the world, but division in the church as well. Our different experiences and views of life lead us to have different political views on controversial and touchy subjects like abortion and black lives matter. But we need to remember that our unity and new identity in Christ is the number one priority. Before all titles, we are disciples of Jesus. Our loyalties shouldn't belong to any political party, organization or anything of the world.

As a church, we need to come together despite our different political beliefs and societal views, and put our identity unity in Christ first. In my situation, I had to take a huge step back and realize that if God can still love me in spite of all of the things I've done, I need to love others even when they don't have the same beliefs as me. We should all use experiences like these as opportunities to grow deeper in our unity with Christ and with fellow brothers and sisters.

The church is the only hope that God has put on earth to bring peace and unity back into the world through Christ. Although it is a challenging time to be united, by God's grace we must uphold our identity in Christ, love one another, and be an example to the world.

*by Betty Solomon*

## Friday Your Turn

**Start with prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

**Slowly read the passages again, out loud if possible.** Return to pages 30-31 to re-read 1 Philippians 2:1-11 & 1 Corinthians 11:18-19.

Respond to this week's passages below. If you would like to share your reflection with us, email us at [info@eastbrook.org](mailto:info@eastbrook.org).

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**End in prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their Words.

# Saturday Collect

Today, spend some time thinking back through the week. Journal your responses below, or share your responses to these questions with another person in your family or small group.

Where did you experience God this week?

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Where did you feel God was absent?

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In what ways did God empower you this week?

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What did you learn?

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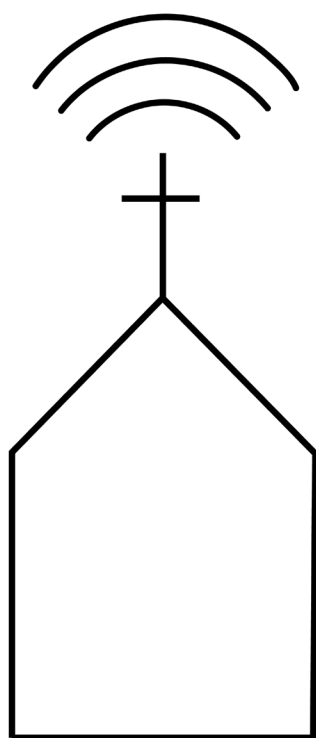
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## Close in prayer:

*God of might, giver of every good gift, put into our hearts the love of your name, so that, by deepening our sense of reverence, and, by your watchful care, keep safe what you have nurtured. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. AMEN.*



# Sunday

## Week 4 Worship Response

After participating in the worship service this week, whether in person or online, spend time discussing or responding to the following:

1. What did God say to you this week?
2. Name the attributes that the musical worship highlighted about God. Spend time thanking God again for these attributes.
3. Did the sermon reveal anything to you? Is God asking you to grow in some way as a response to what you've heard or experienced? Write those things out.
4. Name 1 or 2 things you are going to do this week as a response to the worship service. Share it with someone.

[illegible]



# Monday

## The First Reading

**Start with prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

**Slowly read the passage below. Read it out loud if possible.**

John 17:

*After Jesus said this, he looked toward heaven and prayed:*

*"Father, the hour has come. Glorify your Son, that your Son may glorify you. <sup>2</sup> For you granted him authority over all people that he might give eternal life to all those you have given him. <sup>3</sup> Now this is eternal life: that they know you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom you have sent. <sup>4</sup> I have brought you glory on earth by finishing the work you gave me to do. <sup>5</sup> And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began.*

*<sup>6</sup> "I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. <sup>7</sup> Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. <sup>8</sup> For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. <sup>9</sup> I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours. <sup>10</sup> All I have is yours, and all you have is mine. And glory has come to me through them. <sup>11</sup> I will remain in the world no longer, but they are still in the world, and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name, the name you gave me, so that they may be one as we are one. <sup>12</sup> While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.*

*<sup>13</sup> "I am coming to you now, but I say these things while I am still in the world, so that they may have the full measure of my joy within them. <sup>14</sup> I have given them your word and the world has hated them,*

for they are not of the world any more than I am of the world. <sup>15</sup> My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one. <sup>16</sup> They are not of the world, even as I am not of it. <sup>17</sup> Sanctify them by the truth; your word is truth. <sup>18</sup> As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. <sup>19</sup> For them I sanctify myself, that they too may be truly sanctified.

<sup>20</sup> "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, <sup>21</sup> that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. <sup>22</sup> I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— <sup>23</sup> I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

<sup>24</sup> "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

<sup>25</sup> "Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. <sup>26</sup> I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."

### **Read the passage out loud one more time.**

Read it once more, this time **noting** (by circling, highlighting, or underlining) those words or phrases that stand out to you. Mark them here on this page, or in your Bible.

Spend five minutes **meditating** on those words or phrases.

That is all for today.

**End in prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

## Tuesday

## The Return Reading

**Start with prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

**Read the full chapter of John 17 again.** Read slowly and out loud if possible.

Read it again, this time **noting** the phrases that stood out to you yesterday through the passages.

**Spend some time answering the questions below.**

1. Is there a recurring pattern in the words, phrases and themes that stood out to you? And if so, how many times do they reoccur?
2. Are there themes that emerge from this passage?
3. What do these themes mean to you? Why are they important, why do you think they stood out?
4. Write out a prayer below, asking God to continue to reveal what these words/themes/Scripture passages mean for your life.

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**End in prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

## Wednesday

### Further Reflection

**Start with prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

**Slowly read John 17 again, out loud if possible.** (See pages 40-41.)

**Spend some time journaling/responding to the following prompts.**

1. What does it look like in your life to want unity?
2. Where are those places that unity already exists?
3. Where are those places that you long for unity?
4. Where are those places that you know you need unity, but don't want to seek it?
5. How does Jesus' prayer for unity inform your understanding of unity?
6. What would it look like for you to invite Jesus' prayer for unity into your daily prayers?
7. Spend time praying for unity, write it out if it helps. Pray, like Jesus prayed, for the unity of His children.

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**End in prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their Words.

## Thursday

### A Devotional Response

I'll be honest... In the midst of the current political climate, when I found out we were reading passages focused on unity, I sort of rolled my eyes (Sorry, it's just the truth). In the American church, I think we often confuse unity with "getting along," and if not that, at the very least it's knowing when to hold your tongue so you don't rile everyone up.

But, when I studied this passage, you know what I didn't find? I didn't find Jesus urging Christians to get along, to support certain ideals over others, to be quiet about things on which they disagree. Instead, I found Jesus, turning to Creator God, and asking Him to make us one.

Something that really stood out to me is that literally not one part of Jesus' prayer is asking God to solve any of our problems that divide us. However, Jesus reminds everyone listening that HE is the one who has been "granted authority over all people that he might give eternal life." That was a huge relief to me as I meditated on this passage, because half the reason I stress about division in the church is that it feels like it's my job to help bridge divides wherever I can. However, Jesus makes it abundantly clear in this prayer to the Father, that He is the one who has protected us, that not even one has been lost. Jesus is the one with the authority to decide who should be given eternal life. Jesus is the One, pointing us to the Father, who can bring us into the fold of unity that He has with God.

I don't have a nice way to wrap this up. I really don't have an answer to what exactly I think unity in the Body looks like right now. But you know, I shouldn't! Because that's not my job! Jesus KNEW we were going to mess this up on our own. I am so grateful that He left this prayer for us to read and to understand that unity isn't political agreement. It's not getting along, it's all of us, having our eyes and minds fixed on the Father and His kingdom.

*by Rachel Daun*

## Friday Your Turn

**Start with prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

**Slowly read John 17 again, out loud if possible.** (See pages 40-41.)

Respond to this week's passages below. If you would like to share your reflection with us, email us at [info@eastbrook.org](mailto:info@eastbrook.org).

[illegible]

**End in prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their Words.

# Saturday Collect

Today, spend some time thinking back through the week. Journal your responses below, or share your responses to these questions with another person in your family or small group.

Where did you experience God this week?

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In what ways did God empower you this week?

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What did you learn?

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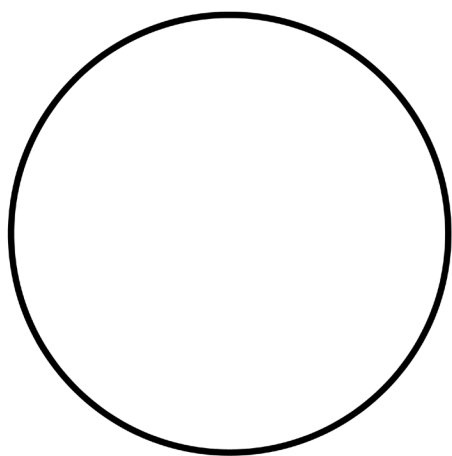
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## Close in prayer:

*God of might, giver of every good gift, put into our hearts the love of your name, so that, by deepening our sense of reverence, and, by your watchful care, keep safe what you have nurtured. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. AMEN.*





# Sunday

## Week 5 Worship Response

After participating in the worship service this week, whether in person or online, spend time discussing or responding to the following:

1. What did God say to you this week?
2. Name the attributes that the musical worship highlighted about God. Spend time thanking God again for these attributes.
3. Did the sermon reveal anything to you? Is God asking you to grow in some way as a response to what you've heard or experienced? Write those things out.
4. Name 1 or 2 things you are going to do this week as a response to the worship service. Share it with someone.

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# Monday

## The First Reading

**Start with prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

**Slowly read the passage below. Read it out loud if possible.**

Revelation 7:9-10:

*<sup>9</sup> After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. <sup>10</sup> And they cried out in a loud voice:*

*"Salvation belongs to our God,  
who sits on the throne,  
and to the Lamb."*

**Read the passage out loud one more time.**

Read it once more, this time **noting** (by circling, highlighting, or underlining) those words or phrases that stand out to you. Mark them here on this page, or in your Bible.

Spend five minutes **meditating** on those words or phrases.

That is all for today.

**End in prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

**Tuesday**  
**The Return Reading**

**Start with prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

**Read the full chapter of Revelation 7 in your Bible.** Read slowly and out loud if possible.

Read it again, this time **noting** the phrases that stood out to you yesterday through the passages.

**Spend some time answering the questions below.**

1. Is there a recurring pattern in the words, phrases and themes that stood out to you? And if so, how many times do they reoccur?
2. Are there themes that emerge from this passage?
3. What do these themes mean to you? Why are they important, why do you think they stood out?
4. Write out a prayer below, asking God to continue to reveal what these words/themes/Scripture passages mean for your life.

[illegible]

**End in prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

# Wednesday

## Further Reflection

**Start with prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

**Slowly read Revelation 7:9-10 again, out loud if possible.**

Revelation 7:9-10:

*<sup>9</sup> After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. <sup>10</sup> And they cried out in a loud voice:*

*"Salvation belongs to our God,  
who sits on the throne,  
and to the Lamb."*

**Spend some time journaling/responding to the following prompts.**

1. Name some people that you're excited to worship God with in eternity.
2. Take time to think of what the scene described in today's passage may look like.
3. What does it make you feel? Happy, excited, sad, nervous, a little of everything? Why?
4. What is the closest thing you have experienced to the scene described in Revelation 7?
5. How did it make you feel then? What about now when you reflect on this experience?
6. What things are fighting against the Revelation 7 reality today?
7. How can you personally work towards that kind of heavenly unity now?

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**End in prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their Words.

# Thursday

## A Devotional Response

A Milwaukee Bucks playoff game is one of the most electrifying events I have ever been to. The roar of the crowd is truly something special to behold, but I rarely look around and study the individuals within the crowd. Instead, my focus on the court increases as the volume increases. But what would happen if the fans at the game spent the whole game trying to draw attention to themselves?

In Revelation 7:9-10, the relationship between multitude and individual is similar. The multitude is one group. It is made up of every difference you could possibly imagine in all of humanity, but the action of the multitude is unified away from itself and toward the Throne. Each person is wearing white, meaning they all have been through literal hell and were washed in the blood of the Lamb. This multitude is the most diverse representation of humanity ever seen, and the significance of that diversity should not be lost! It is easy, however, to stay there and miss the point. Just like with basketball fans, the multitude is there to focus on the main event, not focus on itself.

I long to see such a representation here on earth. In the present time, we value individualism and exalt ourselves in the multitude. Inequality seems to reign on every corner, and sometimes even the ones who stand against inequality use their "Holiness" as podium to glorify themselves. Sometimes self-hatred drives us to compare with others and damage ourselves. We are not in the same multitude as in Revelation 7. Our robes are still in the process of being washed by the blood of the Lamb. But there is a day when that multitude will come forth from every corner of the earth. In that multitude, there will be no place for pride, no place for self-loathing, no place for inequality, and no place for self-righteousness. There will be only a single, unified multitude that cannot contain itself when it gets a look at the Throne.

*by Zack Johnson*

**Friday**  
**Your Turn**

**Start with prayer.** Ask God to impart wisdom to your mind, ask Jesus to relate the words to your soul, and ask the Holy Spirit to illumine your heart to their words.

**Slowly read Revelation 7:9-10 again, out loud if possible.**

Respond to this week's passages below. If you would like to share your reflection with us, email us at [info@eastbrook.org](mailto:info@eastbrook.org).

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# Saturday

## Collect

Today, spend some time thinking back through the week. Journal your responses below, or share your responses to these questions with another person in your family or small group.

Where did you experience God this week?

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Where did you feel God was absent?

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### Close in prayer:

*God of might, giver of every good gift, put into our hearts the love of your name, so that, by deepening our sense of reverence, and, by your watchful care, keep safe what you have nurtured. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. AMEN.*



# *Special Thanks*

## **Editor**

Nic Fridenmaker

## **Eastbrook 365 Team**

Jim Caler, Liz Carver, Nic Fridenmaker,  
Laure Herlinger, Dan Ryan, Rachael Sheets

## **Proofreading**

Maritza Diaz

## **Design and Layout**


Liz Carver

## **Inquiries**

Eastbrook Church  
5385 N. Green Bay Ave. | Milwaukee, WI 53209  
414.228.5220 | [info@eastbrook.org](mailto:info@eastbrook.org)  
[eastbrook.org](http://eastbrook.org)

## **Works Cited**

1. All Scripture quotations are taken from the New International Version (NIV) unless otherwise noted. *The Holy Bible*, New International Version. Grand Rapids: Zondervan House, 2011.



Unity is one of the most popular words about human relationships, yet one of the most elusive realities of human existence. Study with us as we explore unity from both theological and practical angles, beginning with the nature of God before moving into the positional and developmental unity of the church, the place of prayer in unity, and the ultimate vision of unity for the church. Along the way, we will also uncover what the Bible says in relation to practical guidance for living in unity.

