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## Small Group Discussion Guide — December 7, 2025

- Series: God In Person
  - Sermon: Dear Elizabeth
  - Scripture: Luke 1:18-25; 39-45
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### **FOLLOW-UP FROM LAST WEEK**

Looking back over this past week, where were you able to slow down and intentionally embrace the presence of God - the reason for the season - and where did busyness still get the upper hand?

### **CONNECT**

1. What stood out for you from this week's service, and why?
2. What's the most memorable gift you ever received as a kid, and why did it stick with you?

### **ENGAGE**

Read Luke 1:18-25 (Read 1:26-38 for complete context) and 1:39-45

1. In v. 1:18, Zechariah doubted the angel Gabriel's announcement that he and his elderly wife, Elizabeth, would have a son. How would you characterize Zechariah's response? Now, put yourself in Zechariah's place. How do you relate to moments when God's promises feel impossible or hard to believe?
2. In vv. 1:39-45, when Mary greets Elizabeth, the baby in Elizabeth's womb leaps with joy, and Elizabeth responds with praise, which is an immediate contrast to Zechariah's earlier doubt. How would you characterize Mary and Elizabeth's response? What do these different reactions teach us about responding to God's promises?

### **APPLY**

1. Zechariah's doubt, Mary's surrender, and Elizabeth's patience each reveal a different way of encountering God. When God interrupts our plans, whether through circumstances, conviction, or invitation, do you tend to respond more like Zechariah ("no - prove it") or Mary ("yes - how")? How might you grow in readiness to respond with trust rather than resistance?
2. Even long-time believers can become hardened or slip into "knowing more than being more," just like Zechariah. How does humility guard us from becoming prideful, assuming we already understand what God is doing, or missing His invitation? In what area of your life might God be "interrupting" or inviting you to move from knowledge to surrender, so you can participate more fully in His work?

## **GOING DEEPER**

Maybe like never before, resist the urge to do more this season. Find time and space to be with God and receive the rest and peace that only He can bring to your life.

## **PRAYER**

Dear Father, thank you for this day and for the opportunity to experience you in new and meaningful ways. As we joyfully anticipate Christmas and prepare our hearts for the birth of Jesus, help us use this season to reflect, pray, repent, and receive the renewal of hope you offer. Soften our hearts, Lord. Teach us humility so we may follow your plan rather than our own. Interrupt our lives in ways we don't expect, and surprise us with your presence, your guidance, and your will. We love you. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

## **ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE**

Luke 1:30-34

Revelation 2:1, 3-4

## **QUOTES**

"The most important thing in prayer is never what we say or ask for, but our attitude towards God. And the very first requisite for a minister of religion is that his own inner life should be maintained in a healthy state; his own contact with God be steady and true." Evelyn Underhill

"There really are no more unbelieving and hard-hearted and worldly people than clergymen..." Vincent Van Gogh