

FALL 2025

encounter & follow guide

a guide for following Jesus in everyday life.

you're invited.

We are stepping into a journey of encountering and following Jesus together. This is the heart of our mission at Orchard Hill Church: helping next generations encounter and follow Jesus to bless a broken world. You're invited into this journey — not to walk it alone, but to discover more of who Jesus is and what it means to trust Him in your everyday life. This *Encounter and Follow Guide* is meant to come alongside you, offering practical ways to take your next step with Jesus.

The pages of this booklet are centered around how we live out this mission through four key strategies: engaging the Bible, belonging in community, investing in others, and worshiping God. Our prayer is that as you lean into these practices, you will **encounter** God's presence in fresh ways and **follow** Jesus in your everyday life.

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ENGAGE

the bible



The Book of Acts: Reading Plan

Our Sunday morning teaching series is focusing on Acts chapters 1-12. We invite you to read along — whether through the plan provided, at your own pace, or by listening on an app. The Book of Acts tells the story of the early church: ordinary people empowered by the Holy Spirit to share the good news of Jesus. We invite you not only to read about what God did **then**, but to notice how God is still alive and active **today**.

Our hope is that as you consistently spend time in God's Word, your faith will grow, your love for Jesus will deepen, and your awareness of His presence in your everyday life will increase. Don't worry if you miss a day. The goal isn't perfection, but consistency. Let's walk through Acts together and see how God uses His Word to shape us as a church family.

Want **daily text reminders** of what to read + a reflection question?
Text **ACTS** to 319-553-6690 ***Text reminders will be sent September 15 - October 6.

Week 1

- ☐ Day 1: Acts 1
- ☐ Day 2: Acts 2:1-21
- ☐ Day 3: Acts 2:22-47
- ☐ Day 4: Acts 3
- ☐ Day 5: Acts 4:1-22
- ☐ Day 6: Acts 4:23-37
- ☐ Day 7: Reflection / Catch-up

Week 3

- ☐ Day 15: Acts 9:1-19
- ☐ Day 16: Acts 9:20-43
- ☐ Day 17: Acts 10:1-23
- ☐ Day 18: Acts 10:24-48
- ☐ Day 19: Acts 11:1-18
- ☐ Day 20: Acts 11:19-30
- ☐ Day 21: Reflection / Catch-up

Week 2

- ☐ Day 8: Acts 5:1-16
- ☐ Day 9: Acts 5:17-42
- ☐ Day 10: Acts 6
- ☐ Day 11: Acts 7:1-29
- ☐ Day 12: Acts 7:30-60
- ☐ Day 13: Acts 8
- ☐ Day 14: Reflection / Catch-up

Week 4

- ☐ Day 22: Acts 12:1-19
- ☐ Day 23: Acts 12:20-25
- ☐ Day 24: Extra reflection / catch-up days, or re-read favorite sections



The Book of Acts: Inductive Bible Study

The Inductive Bible Study is a method that helps you deeply engage with Scripture through observation, interpretation, and application—asking what the text says, what it means, and how it applies to life. Try this method out as you read Acts to see if it leads you to new insights!

Pray | Invite the Holy Spirit to guide your study

Observe | What does the text say?

1. Ask Investigative Questions

Who is speaking?

Who are the main people?

Who is being spoken to?

What is happening?

What is the scene?

What is the cultural context?

Where is the passage taking place?

When did or will the events take place?

2. Look for Grammatical Questions

*Repeated Words, Comparisons, Contrasts,
Cause & Effect*

3. Identify Keywords & Phrases

Interpret | What does the passage mean?

1. Develop questions based on the text. Ask

what is the significance of your main observations.

2. Imagine the perspective of the people in the scene. If Jesus spoke, why did he say what he said?

3. Answer your questions from the text.

4. Summarize the passage in one sentence. What is the main point the author is communicating to the audience?

Apply | What does the passage mean for me?

1. How do you respond to what this passage is saying? Does it challenge how you see the world?

2. How can you put this into practice? Is there a central truth that you need to apply?

3. Going forward how does this passage help us move forward in our mission?

4. Pray that God will help you believe and obey.



The Book of Acts: Additional Resources

The Bible Project

The Bible Project breaks down Acts, chapter by chapter. They use videos, articles and podcasts to help people experience the Bible in a way that is approachable and transformative.



Orchard Hill Church Teachings

On Sunday mornings, we are spending six weeks this fall on Acts 1 through 12 and another six weeks in the winter on Acts 13 through 24. You can watch these teachings online anytime that works best for you!

orchardhillchurch.prg/watch



Small Group Questions

Each Sunday, our teachers create small group questions tailored to that week's teaching. We encourage you to use these questions to spark meaningful conversation with your family, friends, or a small group — whether around the dining room table, in the car, or over a cup of coffee. **orchardhillchurch.prg/watch**





WORSHIP

God



Worship God: Spiritual Pathways

A spiritual pathway is a way that you commune with God most effectively and naturally. Utilizing your spiritual pathway is a great tool for spiritual renewal.

Sacred Pathways: Discover Your Soul's Path to God: Gary L. Thomas describes nine different spiritual styles or “sacred pathways.” We all love and connect to God in different ways. God created us all with certain personalities and spiritual temperaments, which make us gravitate towards certain types of practices and prayers. God wants us to feel free to worship, according to the way he made us.

A sacred pathway describes the way we relate to God—how we draw near to him. We can identify our sacred pathway and use practices which come naturally to that pathway as an easier way of connecting to God. We do not necessarily have to have just one pathway, most of us, however, will naturally have a certain predisposition for relating to God, which is our predominant spiritual temperament.

Here's how to use spiritual pathways.

Take the assessment | Spend a few minutes filling this out to understand which ways you best connect with God.



Understand | Read the descriptions and ideas to learn how to connect with God based on your spiritual pathways.

Connect | Put these ideas into practice. Just try a couple of things at a time, be patient, and reflect on where you saw God working.



Worship God: Musical Worship

Musical worship has always been central to the life of God's people. From the psalms sung by ancient Israel to the songs we sing today, music has a unique way of lifting our eyes to God, shaping our faith, and reminding us of His presence. When we worship together through music, we join our voices as one body, declaring God's goodness and encouraging one another in truth.

Still, entering into musical worship isn't always easy. Maybe you don't feel confident in singing out loud, the songs are unfamiliar, or your heart feels distracted. But musical worship isn't about perfection—it's about offering yourself to God just as you are.

Here's a playlist of songs we often sing together on Sunday mornings:



Try listening to one or two on repeat this week as a reminder of God's promises. You might play the playlist on your drive home from school, while doing the dishes, or even as you wind down before bed—simple moments where worship can draw your heart back to Him.



Worship God: Nature Walk

One of the simplest ways to draw close to God through worship is to step outside and notice His creation. The world around us is filled with reminders of who He is—the vastness of the sky, the strength of trees, the detail in a single flower. Scripture tells us that “since the creation of the world God’s invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made” (Romans 1:20).

Slow Down | Pay attention to what you see, hear, and feel. Let the rustling leaves remind you of the Spirit’s presence. Let the steady path beneath your feet remind you of God’s faithfulness. Let the beauty of creation stir up gratitude and worship.

Pray | Thank God for His creation, bring Him your cares, and simply enjoy being with Him. A short walk can become an act of worship—reminding you that the God who made all things is with you, and delights to walk with you, too.

As you walk, pause to consider:

1. What stood out to me in creation today?
2. What does it show me about God?
3. How did I sense God’s presence as I walked?
4. What do I want to carry with me into the day?



BELONG

in community



Belong in Community: In Your Daily Rhythms

Jesus never called His followers to walk alone. From the very beginning, He formed a community of disciples who shared life, meals, and mission together. Scripture reminds us that we are the body of Christ, meant to grow in faith side by side. We know belonging in community can be difficult. Carving time, finding people to connect with, being vulnerable, none of it comes easy.

Here are a few tools you can use to help overcome the obstacles that may be standing between you and authentic community:

How to Build Community Using Your Daily Rhythms

Building community doesn't have to mean adding more to your calendar. In fact, some of the most meaningful connections grow out of the simple, everyday things we're already doing. By approaching daily routines with a little more openness and intentionality, we can create space for relationships to flourish in ordinary places.

Keep Doing What You're Already Doing | Walking the dog? Grabbing coffee? Stopping for those groceries you keep forgetting for the third time this week? Perfect—you're halfway there. Everyday rhythms are the ordinary things you already do. The secret is to do them with your eyes open.

Trade Rush for Relationship | Instead of sprinting through errands like you're on a game show, try slowing down. Smile at the barista. Say hi to the neighbor walking their kids to school. Ask your cashier how their day's going. These tiny moments add up to something big: connection.

Repeat | You don't need to plan a block party tomorrow. Just repeat small connections over time. Community isn't built in a day, but it is built in everyday.

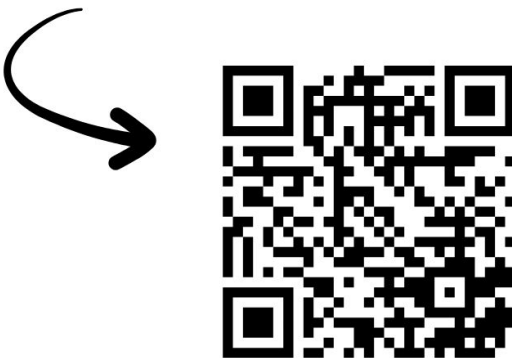


Belong in Community: Small Groups and Classes

Small groups give us a space to be known and to know others. In a large church gathering, it's easy to feel like one face in the crowd. In a group, you have a circle of people who will walk with you, pray for you, and remind you of God's truth when life feels heavy. Groups help us move from simply attending church to truly belonging as part of the body of Christ.

Whether you're new to faith, asking questions, or have followed Jesus for years, groups are a place to build friendships, deepen your relationship with God, and practice what it means to live out your faith in everyday life.

Scan the QR code to check out which groups we are currently offering at Orchard.





Belong in Community: Eat With Others

Sharing a meal is an easy way to spend intentional time in community. Everyone has to eat! We encourage you to invite some people together - the neighbors you've been meaning to spend time with, friends you've had for a lifetime, or even someone you've just met! Whether you grab takeout, do it potluck style or use the recipe we've provided, we hope you create time and space to belong in community.

Crockpot Pizza

Ingredients

- 1 lb ground beef or Italian sausage
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 jar (24 oz) pizza or pasta sauce
- 1 pkg (16 oz) uncooked pasta (like rotini or penne)
- 3 cups shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1 cup shredded cheddar cheese
- 1 pkg (6 oz) pepperoni slices
- 1-2 tsp Italian seasoning
- Optional toppings: sliced olives, bell peppers, mushrooms

Instructions

1. Cook the meat: In a skillet, cook ground beef/sausage with onion and garlic until browned. Drain excess fat.
2. Prep the crockpot: Spray with nonstick spray or use a crockpot liner.
3. Layer ingredients:
 - Spread a little sauce on the bottom.
 - Add $\frac{1}{3}$ of the uncooked pasta.
 - Add $\frac{1}{3}$ of the meat mixture.
 - Sprinkle with cheese and a few pepperonis.
 - Repeat layers until everything is used, finishing with cheese and pepperoni on top.
4. Cook: Cover and cook on Low for 4-5 hours or High for 2-3 hours, until pasta is tender.



Belong in Community: Do a Craft

One of the best ways to help our kids learn about community is by practicing it together in fun, hands-on ways. Simple crafts can spark meaningful conversations, help little ones connect faith with everyday life, and create opportunities to invite others into our homes and playdates. These activities aren't just about creativity—they're about reminding our families that God calls us to build connections, encourage one another, and share His love in ways that even children can understand and enjoy.

Try this one!

Community Kindness Rocks

Supplies:

Smooth rocks (from your yard, a park, or a craft store)

Acrylic paint or paint pens

Paintbrushes

Clear sealant spray (optional, for outdoor use)

Instructions:

Gather several rocks and clean them off.

Paint each rock with bright colors and fun designs.

Once the paint is dry, write encouraging words or Bible verses on them (like "You are loved," "Be kind," or "Acts 2:42").

As a family, hide the rocks around your neighborhood, local park, or leave them on neighbors' doorsteps.

Optional twist: Host a playdate where each child makes a few rocks. Afterward, go on a "kindness walk" together to place them around your community.

Connection: Just like these rocks bring little moments of joy to those who find them, our small acts of kindness can point people to the love of Jesus.



INVEST

in others



Serve:

The Church, Community & World

Jesus calls us to invest in others by serving—within the church, in our community, and around the world. Each of these spaces gives us an opportunity to use our gifts, share God's love, and join His mission.

Serve the Church

Pray | Lord, thank You for giving me gifts to serve. Show me where You want me to use them in Your church.

Take a Step | Join a serving team—kids, worship, hospitality, tech, or behind the scenes.

Invite | Ask a friend to serve alongside you and grow together as you build up the body of Christ.

Serve the Community

Pray | Jesus, open my eyes to the needs in my neighborhood and city. Give me compassion and courage to love my neighbor well.

Take a Step | Volunteer with a local school, food pantry, or serving project—or simply help a neighbor in need.

Invite | Bring your small group, family, or friends to serve with you and make a bigger impact together.

Serve the World

Pray | God, thank You for being at work all around the world. I pray for Your kingdom to grow in every nation, and for courage to play my part.

Take a Step | Support global missions through prayer or sponsoring a child

Scan here for
serving opportunities

