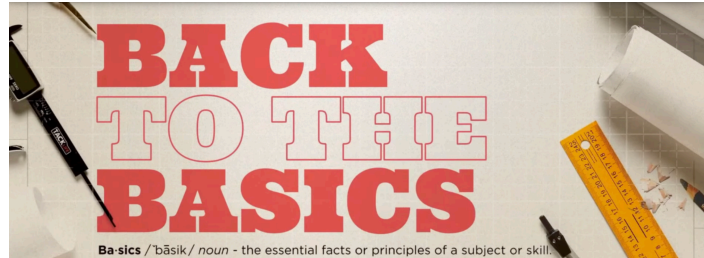


Instructions:

Group leaders, take some time before your gathering to look over these questions. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide you as you pick 3-5 questions to discuss that pertain to your group's unique style and needs.



Series description:

The story of Acts is the story of the church, the Spirit drawing diverse people together around a common purpose and a common mission. Acts is the roots of our church, the origins of our faith. Join us as we go back to the basics as we explore the shared practices, leadership, mission, and spirit that defined the earliest followers of Christ. May they be simple guidelines and inspiration for us today.

Message description:

When Greek-speaking Jewish widows were being neglected in food distribution, the apostles responded with humility—listening to the complaint, involving the whole community, and appointing seven Spirit-filled leaders from the affected group to oversee the ministry. The early church community shows us the power of shared leadership around the same mission; no one role is more important than the other, but everyone is needed and everyone belongs.

The church is Acts valued shared leadership to fulfill the ministry of Christ. And so do we. The United Methodist Church values lay leaders who are empowered and called to carry out the mission of Christ because they are essential to the life of a local community. It must be more than just the pastor, because the pastor is only one person. In a time of our own leadership transition, we must remember to trust the Spirit that is with us, lean into our community of care, and step up to lead when needs arise so that we can continue to be the revolution.

Scripture: Acts 6:1-8

Questions based on this week's teaching:

1. In Acts 6, the early church faced conflict when Greek-speaking Jewish widows were overlooked. What stands out to you about how the apostles responded, and how might that shape the way we handle conflict or criticism today?
2. The book of Acts follows the formation of the early church that was far from perfect and instead learning as they went. How does that perspective change the way you think about church today or your expectations of Christian community?
3. The apostles empowered leaders from the affected group to solve the problem. Why is it important that "those closest to the problem are closest to the solution"? Can you think of examples where this principle applies in our church or community?
4. Every person and every role matters in God's mission. Where do you see your own gifts fitting into the mission of our church, and what might be holding you back from stepping into a new role?
5. What does trusting the power and presence of the Spirit look like for you and for our church right now?