

**Sermon Outline - Sun, Nov 21, 2021- Gratitude for The Companions**  
Ezra 3:8-13 ; Phillipians 4:4-9

Overview: This is week 3 in our Gratitude series. Again we remember that gratitude is not happiness or false optimism but a deep abiding joy, a well that we draw from because of the hard times and in the midst of challenging times in our lives and in our world. Last week we talked about Gratitude for Where We Have Come From. This week in preparation for the holiday this week we take a moment to find gratitude for those who Journey with us.

Exegesis – Reminder of the Ezra story

- Two stories of God's people at moments of gathering and reflection
- The people in Ezra are gathering to take note of what they have accomplished
- The Phillipian church if they are like most of the early church might have had a feast together each week.
- Ezra – bounded by blood and culture, Phillipians – connected by belief and community

Key Points – Gratitude for the Journey

1. Gratitude for those who blazed the trail. The ancestors that we are unequivocally thankful for and even those with whom we have complex relationships. (They did the best they could what they had and where they were,)
2. Gratitude for the friends who have walked alongside of us.
3. Gratitude for the next generation that motivates, inspires and sometimes calls us out.

Practices that Help Us to Lean into the Gratitude

1. Ask an older person to share their story with you
2. Offer your story to a younger person
3. Say thanks to someone who has gone before, walked alongside or is coming behind you
4. BONUS – Take a moment to recognize someone's limitations, forgive them, draw some healthy boundaries, and figure out how this reflection can re-shape your own choices moving forward.

Questions

1. Where are you with your ancestors and elders? Where do you have gratitude? Where is there complexity? During this season are there opportunities to lean into the complexity and extend more grace?
2. Who has walked alongside you during the tough times or helped you find joy that you want to offer gratitude to?
3. Is there a younger person that you can thank for the role they play in your life? Can you give the gift of your own story (not in a preachy way) to be a light on their path?