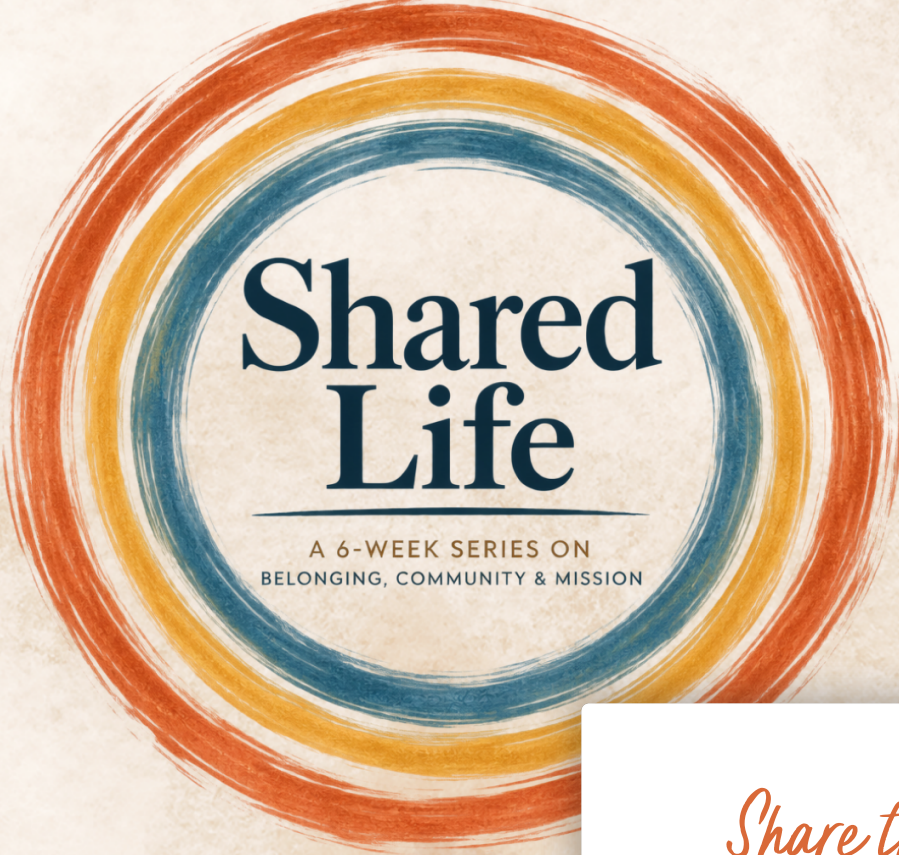




Shared Life

A 6-WEEK SERIES ON
BELONGING, COMMUNITY & MISSION

*Share the
Welcome*

**I love people who
are real more than
my ideal.**

TEACHING SUMMARY

Loneliness and disconnection are everywhere. Even when we're surrounded by people, many of us still long to be known, understood, and connected in a deeper way. But meaningful relationships rarely happen by accident.

The New Testament gives us a picture of community where people are more than familiar faces in the same room. They share life together.

Jesus invites us to move beyond simply asking, "Who is making room for me?" and instead become people who create belonging wherever we go.

ICEBREAKER

What was the last thing you experienced that didn't live up to the hype?

SCRIPTURE

Romans 15:5-7

+ Quotes from Dietrich Bonhoeffer's classic work, *Life Together*.



LEARNING FROM HIS STORY

1. Why is the harmony described in Romans 15 so hard to come by?
2. What's the difference between accepting someone because Christ has accepted them and accepting them because they're easy to like?
3. What factors prevent us from sharing life together well in our modern society?

EXAMINING OUR OWN STORY

4. Bonhoeffer says someone can have wonderfully sincere intentions and still damage community by loving their ideal more than the actual people. How would you describe your own idealized version of what Christian community should be like?
5. What kinds of differences in other believers do you find the hardest to make room for?

WRITING A NEW STORY

6. Have you ever discovered that someone you initially found difficult eventually became a gift to you? If so, what changed?
7. How can you tell when God would want you to stay patiently a part of an imperfect Christian community, and when to seek a new one?
8. Bonhoeffer says the person who loves those around them “will create community.” What's one concrete act of love that could create a little more community around you this week?

TAKING TIME TO PRAY

Jesus, make us one just as you prayed we would be. Give us the grace to love one another well, imperfections and all! Amen.

