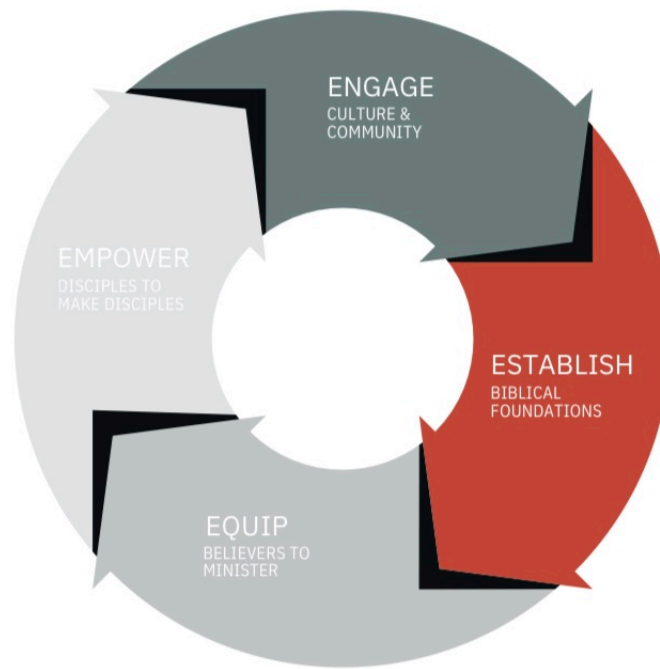


The mission of Rise Up Church is to raise disciples, empower families, and revitalize neighborhoods by the transformational power of the gospel. At Rise Up Church, our discipleship rhythm shapes how we live and expressed in four key movements that we call the 4E's. It is all about following Jesus and helping others do the same.



The purpose of our Koinonia Gatherings is to establish people in biblical foundations by building Christ-centered connections. We believe the Scriptures teaches that life change happens best in community, as we grow together in God's Word and are led by the Holy Spirit.

Below, you'll find a sermon-based guide from the most recent sermon to help lead a Rise Up Church Koinonia Gathering, along with a five day devotional designed to help you apply the sermon throughout the week.

Koinonia Gathering Notes

Theme: The promise of salvation through the Messiah shines brightest in our darkest places. (Isaiah 9:1–7)

■ Leader Instructions

Begin with prayer—ask the Holy Spirit to illuminate hearts and lead the conversation. Remind the group that this is a safe space to be vulnerable and encouraged. Invite participation, but never force it. If time allows, end by praying over the group's personal 'dark places' with hope in the light of Jesus.

■ Sermon Recap

Main Idea: God gave a promise of salvation during a dark moment in Israel's history—a promise ultimately fulfilled in Jesus. That same promise shines brightly in the darkest moments of our lives.

Three Key Points: 1. The Promise Begins in Darkness (Isaiah 9:1–2) 2. The Promise Brings Joy and Freedom (Isaiah 9:3–5) 3. The Promise is Fulfilled in Jesus (Isaiah 9:6–7)

■ Icebreaker

What's a time you were in literal or emotional darkness, but a light (whether a person, a promise, or a breakthrough) brought you hope?

■ Discussion Questions

1. The Promise Begins in Darkness

Read Isaiah 9:1–2. What was the historical and spiritual darkness Israel faced? How does this connect with our own personal darkness—internal or external? In what ways have you seen God shine His light in your own dark places? What keeps people from bringing their darkness into the light of Christ?

Follow-Up Question: What 'defeater beliefs' (e.g., 'I've been in the dark too long') are common today, and how does Jesus confront those?

2. The Promise Brings Joy and Freedom

Read Isaiah 9:3–5. What images in this passage speak to celebration and victory? What's the difference between worldly happiness and biblical joy? Do you think most people experience this kind of freedom in Jesus? Why or why not? In what areas do you long to experience deeper freedom right now? Reflection Verse: Philippians 4:4 – 'Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice.'

3. The Promise is Fulfilled in Jesus

Read Isaiah 9:6–7. Which name of Jesus speaks to your heart most right now—Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace? Why? How can trusting in Jesus change the way we approach life's challenges? What does it mean for His government and peace to have 'no end'? How does this promise give you hope today? Follow-Up: How might we reflect these attributes of Jesus (counselor, peace-bringer, protector, etc.) to others this week?

■ Prayer Prompt

Thank God for being light in the darkness. Confess areas where you're still hiding in darkness. Ask Jesus to be your Wonderful Counselor or Mighty God or Prince of Peace (whichever applies most).

Pray for each other to experience joy and freedom in Christ.

■ Memory Verse

“For to us a child is born, to us a son is given... and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.” — Isaiah 9:6

†■ Response Challenges

For Believers: Walk in the light—don’t live like you’re still in the dark. Seek joy in God’s presence, not your performance. Embrace Jesus as the Counselor and King you need today.

For Those Exploring Faith: Jesus meets you in your darkness. You don’t have to clean yourself up first—come as you are. Receive the promise of salvation by trusting in Jesus.

■ 5-Day Devotional

Day 1 – Light in Darkness (Isaiah 9:1–2)

Reflect on a time when God brought light into a dark season of your life. How did it change your perspective? Pray for His light to shine in areas still in shadow.

Day 2 – Joy in His Presence (Isaiah 9:3)

Meditate on Psalm 16:11. What does it mean for you personally that joy is found in God's presence? Take time to worship Him today.

Day 3 – Freedom from Burdens (Isaiah 9:4–5)

Read Matthew 11:28–30. What burdens are you carrying that Jesus is inviting you to lay down? Give them to Him in prayer.

Day 4 – The Names of Jesus (Isaiah 9:6)

Pick one name of Jesus—Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace—and meditate on it throughout the day. How does it bring you comfort?

Day 5 – Living in the Promise (Isaiah 9:7)

Consider what it means that His peace and kingdom have no end. How can you live as a citizen of His eternal kingdom today?