Nov 1, 2026 – Small Group Questions

“It’s an Inside Job: Equipping the Saints for Ministry”

Primary texts: Acts 20:17–38 and Ephesians 4:11–16

Observation — What does the text say?

1. In Acts 20:17–21, Paul reminds the Ephesian elders of how he lived and ministered among them. What particular characteristics of his ministry do you notice? What does this tell us about the relationship between Christian leadership and personal example?

2. Read Acts 20:28–32. What specific responsibilities does Paul give to the elders? Why do you think he tells them to watch over themselves before watching over the flock?

3. In Ephesians 4:11–16, Paul identifies particular ministries given to the Church. What does he say these ministries are intended to accomplish? Who, ultimately, is supposed to do the work of ministry?

Interpretation — What does it mean?

4. The sermon suggests that Christians are already saints by virtue of God's grace and their baptism, rather than because they have achieved moral perfection. How does this understanding change the way we think about ourselves and our responsibilities within the Church?

5. Consider Ephesians 4:15–16. Paul describes the Church as a body in which every part must do its work. What happens to a congregation when some members see ministry as the responsibility of the clergy or a small group of committed volunteers?

6. The sermon makes the distinction between inreach and outreach. How might the health of our relationships within the congregation influence our ability to reach people outside it? Is there a biblical basis for putting particular emphasis on caring for the household of faith? Consider Galatians 6:2 and 6:10.

Application — What does it mean for us?

7. The golf-course conversation raises an interesting challenge to those who describe themselves as Christians but choose not to participate in a church. What do we receive from belonging to a Christian community, and equally importantly, what do we contribute to the spiritual wellbeing of others?

8. Think about the congregation at Little Trinity. Do we really know the stories, struggles, joys and sorrows of those sitting in different pews? What is one practical thing we could do to become a congregation that better carries one another's burdens and equips its members for ministry?

A final question to leave with the group

I would finish with this question, perhaps allowing a little silence before inviting responses:

If someone were to look at our congregation over the next twelve months, what would they see that might make them say, "Something extraordinary is happening among these people"?

That, I think, gets to the heart of the sermon.

The ultimate objective is not simply to have a congregation that attends church, but a congregation that becomes the Church: saints equipped for ministry, caring for one another, growing into maturity in Christ, and transforming the world around them.

“From whom the whole body, joined and knit together … promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love, as each part does its work.” — Ephesians 4:16.