

Community Group Sermon Notes January 18, 2026

Senior Pastor, Kevin Flannery

Series: *Out of the Pew and Into the Purpose (Part 4 of 6)*

Sermon Title: Putting Faith into Action – *Ephesians 4:11-16*

Big Idea: Christ gives leaders to equip the saints, and the saints do the work of ministry, so the church grows into unified, Christlike maturity as each part does its work.

Spring Term: Week 3 of 20



Ice breaker: Think about something in life that doesn't work well when only one part does all the work (a team project, a family chore, a sport, even your own body). What happens when participation is uneven? How does it affect the whole group?

Read and reflect on Ephesians 4:11-16:

¹¹ So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴ Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵ Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶ From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Sermon and Scripture Application Discussion:

1. As you think about your experience serving: When you hear the word “serve,” what is your first reaction (energized, suspicious, tired, curious, etc.) and why? What is one time someone served you in a way that stuck with you?
2. From Pew to Purpose. *Ephesians 4:12* says God's people are equipped “for works of service,” and *Ephesians 2:10* says we were created for good works prepared in advance.
 - Where do you currently see yourself in church life—mostly observing, occasionally participating, or actively serving?
 - What factors have shaped that posture?
3. Christ as the Giver. *Ephesians 4:11*; *Matthew 20:25–28*. Paul emphasizes that “Christ himself gave” leaders to the church. Jesus also redefines leadership as service (*Matt. 20:25–28*).
 - How does seeing leaders as gifts from Christ change the way you view church leadership?
 - How might this perspective bring healing if you've experienced unhealthy leadership before?
4. Equipped for a Reason. *Ephesians 4:12*; *1 Peter 4:10*. Peter says each believer has received a gift to serve others.
 - What stands out to you about the truth that every believer is equipped for ministry?
 - How does this challenge the idea that ministry is only for professionals or “super-Christians”?
5. Serving from Grace, Not Guilt. *Romans 12:1*; *Galatians 5:13*. Paul calls believers to serve as a response to God's mercy, not pressure.

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- What's the difference between serving out of guilt versus serving out of gratitude?
 - How does remembering God's grace change your motivation to serve?
6. Growing Up Together. *Ephesians 4:13; Colossians 1:28*. Maturity is described as growing into Christlikeness together.
- How does Scripture define spiritual maturity differently than just being busy or knowledgeable?
 - Why do you think God designed growth to happen in community rather than in isolation?
7. What are the marks of "infancy" that Paul warns about in *Ephesians 4:14*?
8. Truth and Love in Community. *Ephesians 4:15; Proverbs 27:5–6*. Paul calls the church to "*speak the truth in love*."
- Why is it easier to lean toward truth without love—or love without truth? Which side is easier for you personally (truth or love)? Which side is harder?
 - What helps a community grow when both are practiced together?
9. Each Part Doing Its Work. *Ephesians 4:16; Romans 12:4–8*. Paul says the body grows as "*each part does its work*."
- What barriers do you relate to most: "too busy," "not qualified," or "burned before"?
 - What might be one small, faithful step God is inviting you to take toward serving? Did you feel led to sign up for a ministry at the Serve Fair?
 - Did you agree with this statement from Pastor Kevin: Christ is building His body... and **you** are not an **extra**. **You** are wonderfully **designed** to play **your** part in what God is doing!
10. Group Serve Step: Choose one service opportunity you can do together this Spring Term as a Community Group (church ministry or neighborhood need). Some church ministry ideas: Welcome Team, Communion Setup, ESL Snacks, Sunday School teacher). Assign roles and one person to coordinate.

Closing Prayer (Read Together): Father, thank You for Jesus, the Head of the church, who holds us together and equips us to serve. Give us willing hearts, clear direction, courage to take a first step, humility to learn, and strength from Your Spirit. Help each person find a place to serve that fits how You've made them and use our service to build up this church in love and to serve the world for Christ's sake. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Faith in Action:

- January 20, Alpha Launch Party, 6:30 PM, Welcome Center
- January 20, The Marriage Course, 6:30 PM, A106
- January 25, Harvest Sunday, 9:00 AM, 10:30 AM, Sanctuary
- January 31, New Members Course, 8:30 AM, A106