

AUGUST 31, 2025

Pastor Jenna Luoto



LEADER GUIDE

Session Flow (60–75 minutes)

Big Idea

The Church is God's chosen plan to bring healing, restoration, and the presence of His kingdom into the world. It is not a building, but the people of God, called together to be the Body of Christ and the hope of the world.

Welcome & Prayer (5 min)

Warm Up (5–10 min)

- Use Question 1: When you hear the word church, what comes to mind first?
- Encourage light sharing to break the ice.

Personal Experience (10–15 min) Questions 2–3

- **Leader Tip:** Allow both positive and painful experiences to be shared. If someone brings up hurt, don't rush to "fix" it. Listen, validate, and remind them that hurt is real because love and belonging matter deeply.

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Scripture & Theological Reflection (15 min) Questions 4–5

- Read 1 Peter 2:9 aloud as a group.
- **Leader Tip:** Draw connections back to Jenna's sermon: Israel → Jesus → the Church. Emphasize that God always works through His people.

Application: The Church as the Body of Christ (15–20 min) Questions 6–9.

- **Leader Tip:** Encourage participants to think locally (our city, our church) and personally (my role, my neighbors).
- **If the group gets “stuck” in theory, ask:** What's one practical way we could live this out this week?
- **Personal Challenge (10–15 min) Questions 10–12.**
 - Encourage people to reflect on their own gifts and callings.
 - **Leader Tip:** Some people may not feel confident about their gifts. Affirm that every person has a place in the Body, and invite others to speak encouragement into one another's lives.
- **Wrap Up (5 min)**
 - **Summarize:** The Church is God's plan for restoring the world—and there is no plan B.
 - **Challenge:** Ask each person to name one small way they can be the Body of Christ this week.
 - **Close in prayer, thanking God for His presence with His Church and asking for courage to live out His mission.**

LEADER NOTES:

Tone: Keep the discussion hopeful, not heavy. The sermon carried weight, but also deep love for the Church. Reflect that love.

Participation: Draw quieter voices in by gently asking, “What do you think, [name]?” but don't force.

Handling Hurt: If deep pain or trauma surfaces, listen well and affirm. You don't need to resolve it in group. Follow up privately if needed and connect them to pastoral care.

Flexibility: You don't need to cover every question. Aim for depth over breadth.