

JANUARY 4, 2026

THE WAY THROUGH THE WILDERNESS

How God Shapes Us in the Journey

SERMON: The God Who Leads the Way
(WATCH SERMON) (SERMON NOTES)
SPEAKER: Pastor Steve
CORE SCRIPTURE: Exodus 13:17-22

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

SUMMARY

Pastor Steve introduced the new sermon series, "The Way Through the Wilderness," by reflecting on Cornerstone's journey and God's faithfulness. He highlighted how God sometimes leads us on longer paths to teach dependence on Him, anchors future plans in past faithfulness, and assures us of His presence. The sermon focused on Exodus 13:17–22, illustrating how God led the Israelites through the wilderness, teaching them to trust in His guidance and provision.

SHARE

As we begin a New Year, share a time when you felt God leading you on an unexpected path. How did that experience shape your faith?

READ

As a group, read **Exodus 13:17–22** out loud together.

DISCUSS

Feel free to pick/choose what is most helpful for you. Remember the goal is to have rich, relational, authentic, Jesus-centered discussions.

1. What most stood out to you about the sermon?

2. In Exodus 13:17-18, why do you think God chose to lead the Israelites on a longer path rather than the shorter route through Philistine country? What does this teach us about God's guidance?

3. Pastor Steve mentioned that God's plan for the future is anchored in His past faithfulness. How does the act of carrying Joseph's bones symbolize this truth? (Exodus 13:19)

4. Reflect on a time when you experienced God's faithfulness in your life. How does this past experience give you confidence for the future?

5. The sermon highlighted the importance of God's presence with the Israelites through the pillar of cloud and fire. How does this imagery speak to you about God's presence in your own life? (Exodus 13:20-22)

6. Pastor Steve shared how Cornerstone's journey has been marked by God's provision. How can we, as a small group, support each other in trusting God's provision in our personal lives?

7. Considering the sermon, what steps can you take to deepen your trust in God's guidance and presence in the coming year?

NEXT STEPS:
Reflect on one area of your life where you need to trust God's guidance more fully. Share with the group one practical step you will take this week to lean into God's presence and faithfulness.

PRAY:
Spend time in prayer as a group, thanking God for His faithfulness and asking for His guidance in the year ahead. Pray for each other's specific needs and for the courage to trust God on the journey.

CLOSING:
As we close, let's remember that God is with us on the way. May we walk in faith, trusting in His presence and provision as we step into this new year together.