



# THE WAYS

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**WELCOME CHANGE.** Be curious about new ideas, perspectives, and approaches. Get excited by the possibilities that change can bring. What worked in the past won't always work in the future, for God is doing new things.

1. What was the last thing you were really curious about?

**READ Acts 15:1-11**

1. What is the new thing God is doing here and why does it matter?
2. Why would people have wanted the Gentiles to be circumcised?
3. If you were in Paul's shoes, what would it take for you to confront church leadership for what you knew was right?

**Scenario:** There is something our church has been doing for years which has been a meaningful part of your faith life. You hear congregants talking about how it is declining and discussing how we might need to change it or get rid of it. One Sunday you hear leadership having the same conversation, and you are worried about how your church might change.

1. For you, what is that ministry or event at FPC?
2. How would you feel in this circumstance?
3. What would you change about your church if it brought a new person in?
4. How do you discern what needs to be changed and what needs to be protected?

The world is a different place than it was even 10 years ago. We can either keep doing the same thing we have always done with diminishing returns or *Welcome Change* as an opportunity to communicate the same Gospel in a new way to a new world. All change includes loss; all change includes struggle and experimentation; but when we follow God as he does a new thing, change also includes the dynamic presence and power of our Lord.

**PRAY TOGETHER.**

(Pray God would prepare our hearts for the change He has in store for us.)

## DAILY Devotional

**MONDAY:** *READ:* Isaiah 43:19. *THINK:* Our God is ever doing a new thing. He is responding and acting within a changing world with changing needs. What God did yesterday, might not be what he is doing today. *Welcome Change* as God works in new and unexpected ways. God is not bound to do repeat performances forever, but is creative and inventive. *PRAY:* God would give you eyes to see the new things he is doing.

**TUESDAY:** *READ:* Mark 2:22. *THINK:* When religious leaders get angry with Jesus that the disciples aren't fasting, one of his responses is this: no one pours new wine into old wineskins. God has poured out a new Spirit on His Church and His followers, and we must be made new as well. *Welcome Change* as God undertakes the process of renewing his followers and his Church to be the community and witness He needs. *PRAY:* The Spirit would be at work in your heart and our church to make them new.

**WEDNESDAY:** *READ:* Heb. 13:8. *THINK:* We do not change for change's sake and there are some things which never change. Do not be deceived, Jesus is the same, God's will and God's heart are the same. While God might be doing a new thing, it is still the same God. *Welcome Change* which holds true to the witness of Jesus Christ, not novelty which parts from His ways. *PRAY:* the Spirit would help you discern between God's new work and people's novel ideas.

**THURSDAY:** *READ:* John 1:14. *THINK:* There once was a time when God as man was new and unprecedented in this history of the world. Imagine you lived at that time, and Jesus, a man you could see and touch, told you he was God's son. When God does new things, it can be hard to accept, but they are wonderful to behold. *Welcome Change* because God's most powerful acts are new. *PRAY:* God would help you see Him in unexpected places.

**FRIDAY:** *READ:* John 14:16. *THINK:* Likewise, there was a time when the Holy Spirit living in and with Humans would be unheard of. The High Priest was able to enter God's presence once a year, yet in the Holy Spirit, God's presence is with us everyday and everywhere. When you *Welcome Change*, you break free of old patterns and find God's empowering presence. *PRAY:* for the Spirit's power and presence in your life to use you to do a new thing in your world.

**SATURDAY:** *READ:* Rev. 21:6. *THINK:* We hold out hope for a day when all things are made new. When the earth is lit by the light of God's goodness and grace and we can dwell with God in perfect unity. While that day is yet ahead of us, we can *Welcome Change* as God undertakes the process of making this world into a new earth. *PRAY:* that you could put your hope in God's return more than anything else.