

Small Group Discussion Guide

Sermon: "The Bethlehem Surprise" • Series: *Silhouettes of Hope: Christmas through the Eyes of the Minor Prophets*
Pastor Mel Baga, D.Min. • Dec. 20, 2025

OPENING PRAYER

Faithful God, as we open Your Word, slow us down, open our hearts, and help us recognize where You are already at work—especially in places we might overlook. Amen.

1. WARM-UP CONVERSATION (5–10 MINUTES)

When you hear the word Christmas, what images or expectations usually come to mind? Where do those expectations come from?

2. READ THE TEXT TOGETHER

Read Micah 5:2 aloud (twice, if helpful). After reading, pause for silence and sit with the words.

3. UNDERSTANDING THE PASSAGE

- a. Micah speaks into a world marked by brokenness, injustice, and spiritual fatigue. yet instead of pointing toward power or reform, he names a place most people would dismiss:
 - What do you notice about *where* hope is said to come from in this passage?
 - Why do you think God chooses a place that seems small or insignificant?
 - How does this challenge common assumptions about where change, healing, or leadership usually come from?
- b. Micah describes a ruler whose origins reach far back into God's story.
 - What does this suggest about God's faithfulness over time?
 - How does this shape the way we understand hope—not as something new and flashy, but as something deeply rooted?
- c. Bethlehem is associated with shepherds rather than palaces.
 - What kind of leadership does this hint at?

- How might this vision of leadership speak to the problems Micah’s world was facing—and the problems we still face today?

4. PERSONAL REFLECTION (SILENT OR JOURNALING)

Take a few moments. Invite the Holy Spirit to speak as you reflect or journal.

- Where in my life do things feel small, stalled, or overlooked right now?
- What area of my life have I quietly written off as “nothing important”?
- How might God be inviting me to see that place differently?

5. LIVING THE PASSAGE (APPLICATION)

Choose one practice to live out this week:

- **A Practice of Attention.** Notice small moments, ordinary people, or quiet opportunities where God may be present.
- **A Practice of Humility.** Intentionally choose service over visibility in one concrete way.
- **A Practice of Presence.** Stay engaged in a relationship, responsibility, or calling that feels unremarkable but important.
- **A Worship Renewal Step.** Offer God your best in one specific area—time, attention, generosity, or devotion.

6. CLOSING REFLECTION QUESTION

If God often begins His greatest work in overlooked places, where might He be inviting you to expect hope right now?

7. CLOSING PRAYER

God of Bethlehem, thank You for meeting us in small places and quiet moments. Teach us to trust Your work when it is hidden, and give us courage to follow You with humble faithfulness. Begin again with us where You choose. Amen.