

## **SERIES TITLE**

AT THE MOVIES

## **SERIES SUMMARY**

Bring a friend, grab some popcorn, find a seat... you're at the movies! Each week we'll learn how God uses characters and storylines from the big screen to inspire positive change. Journey with us through some of Hollywood's most impactful films and experience God's purpose for you in a fun and fresh way. Our At the Movies series is only viewable on an Eastside campus. For times and directions, please choose a location near you.

## **SERMON TITLE**

WE BOUGHT A ZOO

## **SERMON SUMMARY**

In *We Bought a Zoo*, widowed father Benjamin Mee decides to buy a struggling zoo in an effort to create a fresh start for himself and his two children. Overcoming many challenges, Benjamin discovers the importance of family, resilience, and embracing new adventures. Ultimately, the experience helps him heal from his loss and forge a stronger bond with his children while giving us many lessons on what it means to step out on faith.

## **ICE BREAKER**

What is the riskiest thing you think you've ever done? What made you do it?

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. In the film, Benjamin Mee faces significant challenges while restoring the zoo. How does his journey reflect the idea of having faith when facing something really difficult? Can you identify moments (in the movie or in your life) where someone's hope inspired you to face a challenge? Which of the three calls in *Romans 12:12* - "*Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.*" do you find most helpful in these moments?
2. Hebrews 10:24-25 says, "And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together...". The zoo becomes a gathering place for various characters who each bring their own struggles. Is your small group such a place? Is there anything different you can do, inspired by this verse or the movie, to support each other even better through struggle?
3. Benjamin's decision to buy the zoo represents a leap of faith. What does this say about the importance of trusting God when confronting the unknown? Proverbs 3:5-6 says,

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge Him, and He will make straight your paths." Has this rang true for you in those moments? Share how.

4. Psalm 147:3 says, "He heals the brokenhearted and binds up their wounds." The film explores themes of grief and healing within Benjamin's family. How does their journey reflect the role of faith in coping with loss? How has God healed any wounds left by profound loss in your life, or the life of someone close to you?
5. Read [Matthew 6:25-30](#). The interactions with the animals and the natural world in the zoo serve as a backdrop for the characters' personal journeys. How does this illustrate the connection between your faith and your appreciation of nature? Have you ever had an epiphany about God or your life just by being in nature or with animals?

### **PRAYER + WRAP UP**

- Ask for any prayer requests within the group.
- Pray for a member of the group who is facing a sizable challenge or loss.
- Ask God to teach you to trust him in the challenges you may be currently facing.
- See if there is a text or phone "check in" that might be helpful for someone in the group during the week as a result of your prayers.