Under the Circumstances

Part 1: *When Life Happens*

📍 Big Idea

Our circumstances are not an indicator of God's absence.

📖 Key Scriptures

- **John 11:1-45**
- **1 Peter 5:6-7**

Discussion Questions

- If you had a last-minute plan derail recently, what happened and how did you respond "under the circumstances"?
- When life swerves, which gut response is most you: stuff it, vent it, pray it, or plan it?
- **Read John 11:1-45**
  - Note the tension: "Because he loved them… he waited." What words/phrases stand out?
  - Martha says, "Lord, if you had been here…" Where have you prayed a version of that? What did it reveal about your view of God?
  - Sue highlights that love doesn't skip grief — it sits in it. How does Jesus' weeping (v.35) reshape your expectation of how God "should" act?

- - When Jesus delays (vv.5–6, 14–15), what might God be forming that immediate relief can't?
  - **Read 1 Peter 5:6-7**
    - What's hard about "casting" anxiety versus "informing" God about it? What helps you actually let go?
    - Sue shared learning to "cast… and leave it there." What practices help you leave it there for more than a day?
    - Where do you see Jesus present in John 11 before the miracle (showing up, feeling, weeping)? How might that presence be enough even when outcomes don't change?
  - Not every story ends with a visible miracle. What anchors can we hold when the ending is still unresolved?
  - Complete the sentence: "Even if _____ doesn't change, I will trust Jesus to _____."

💬 Challenge Question (For Takeaway):

Name what's weighing on you… and hand it over.

Try this:

1. **Name it:** Write a single sentence: "Jesus, I feel _____ about _____."
2. **Cast it:** Pray 1 Peter 5:7 aloud. Place the note in a Bible/journal as a physical sign of release.
3. **Text one person:** "Carrying something today — could you pray?" Or encourage someone else: "Prayed for you today. You're not alone."

Touchpoint: Each morning, repeat: "My circumstances are not an indicator of Jesus' absence."