Week 2: December 6, 2026 At Home in Bethlehem David - "Tired of Keeping Up Appearances?" 1 Samuel 16:1-13

1. Appearances today: The sermon opens with the idea that it's dangerous to judge by appearances. When have you been misjudged because of how something looked, or misjudged someone else? What did you learn?
2. The hunger beneath the surface: The sermon says that in our hearts we hunger for attention, affirmation and affection, which is to say, for love. Where do you see people, or yourself, trying to meet that hunger through image or achievement?
3. A hole in the soul: Halle Berry describes beauty as "essentially meaningless" and says people still have "that hole in their soul." Why do you think outward success so often fails to fill that emptiness?
4. Samuel's surprise: Even Samuel, a seasoned prophet, was drawn to Eliab's impressive look. Why is it so easy for us to assume that the person who looks the part is the right choice? What does that tell us about our own assumptions?
5. The overlooked one: David was left out in the field and not even invited to the sacrifice. Where in your life have you felt overlooked or left out? How does God's choice of David speak to that experience?
6. Comparison and competition: Jill Briscoe heard God say, "You don't need to compete." What areas of life tempt you to compare yourself with others? What would it look like to bless and encourage others instead?
7. A heart God can see: It can be comforting and frightening that "the Lord sees into my heart." Which of those feels truer for you right now, and why? What makes honesty with God difficult?
8. Attacks and Lacks: The sermon describes traumas that block our hearts from feeling God's love, either active (Attacks) or passive (Lacks). How might past wounds make it hard to feel God's love, even when we believe it? What helps you begin to work through them?
9. David's prayers: Read Psalm 42:2, Psalm 51:10 and Psalm 19:14 together. Which of these prayers expresses where you are today? What would it mean to pray it honestly this week?
10. Where the real battle is: The location of the battlefield is inside us rather than outside. How does it change your view of faith to think that Jesus comes "to save us…from us"? What would it look like to place your heart in His hands?