

## **BE A LEARNER**

*Be Curious About the Lived Experience of Others*

Learning the stories of others nudges us out of a simple view of the world. By complicating our story we create opportunities for connection and empathy for others.

*“We come to know ourselves only through stories. We listen to the stories of others, we inherit the stories of those who came before, and we make sense of our own experiences by constructing a narrative that holds them, and holds us, tighter. Stories are how we make sense of our lives.”*

– Camilla Gibb

## **1. Engage the stories of people who have a different experience than you, from their perspective.**

Pay special attention to those you have been told only one story about. Prioritize the stories of people who are already around you.

Suggestions to consider:

- New Canadians • Indigenous People
- Teenagers • Seniors • Single Parents
- People experiencing homelessness
- People living with disabilities

## **2. When you encounter people you find hard to relate to, ask questions that connect you on a human level.**

- Where did you spend your childhood?
- What is your favourite kind of food?
- What is your favourite way to spend a Saturday?
- What are some of your favourite memories?

### **3. Avoid echo chambers.**

Pay attention to the information inputs in your life (social media, news, etc.) and expose yourself to a range of perspectives.

### **4. Lean into the humanity of your own story.**

Pay attention to the ways you have been shaped by the place you grew up, your family of origin, and all kinds of other dynamics that were beyond your control. Be mindful of your default assumptions, and also learn to be honest about your own struggles or challenges.

### **5. Look for God's wisdom & God's grace at work.**

Expect that others have something to offer you. Anticipate that they have insight into God's story that you are missing, or expect to see evidence of God's grace at work in surprising ways.