FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

LAPLACE

INVITATION TO SILENCE

Learning to be still in the presence of God.

LEADER’S GUIDE

A 12-week spiritual formation course · Spring 2027

Scripture is our foundation. Into the Quiet is our companion. Communion with Jesus is our aim.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF LAPLACE

How to Lead This Course

Each meeting lasts 60 minutes: welcome and prayer (5), reflection on reading and practice (10), biblical teaching (25), group discussion (10), guided silence and assignment (10).

Lead with grace. Do not measure spiritual maturity by minutes of silence. Do not require disclosure of private experiences. Encourage participants to keep eyes open, use a Scripture anchor, or step out when needed.

Reading note

Use John Mark Comer’s Into the Quiet as a companion, but confirm chapter and page assignments against the class edition before distributing a reading calendar. The prompts below identify themes, not exact chapter citations.

Teaching caution

Explain the original context of each passage. Psalm 46:10 addresses God’s sovereignty amid conflict; 1 Samuel 3 records a unique prophetic call; 1 Kings 19 does not promise that God will always speak through quiet impressions.

WEEK 01 / The Invitation to Be Still

Psalm 46:1–11

Big idea: Silence is not about escaping noise; it is learning attentiveness to the God who is already present.

Opening & reflection · 15 minutes

Begin with prayer. Invite participants to reflect on the prior week’s practice without tallying performance. Ask what they noticed, what was difficult, and what Scripture brought to mind.

Biblical teaching · 25 minutes

1. God our refuge in chaos. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

2. Stillness as surrender to God’s sovereignty. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

3. Attentiveness and the example of Jesus. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

Discussion · 10 minutes

- What feels loudest in your life right now?
- How does Psalm 46 locate our security in God rather than circumstances?
- What would three quiet minutes make room for?

Guided silence & assignment · 10 minutes

Read a short portion of Psalm 46:1–11 aloud. Invite comfortable posture and unhurried prayer. Leave a few moments of genuine quiet, then close with a short prayer. Offer an alternative of silent Scripture meditation.

At-home practice: 3 minutes of silence each day; notice distractions without judging yourself.

Book connection: Invite one insight from the assigned Into the Quiet reading and evaluate it in light of Scripture.

Closing prayer

Father, teach us to trust you, receive your Word, and live attentively before you. Form us into people who love Jesus and our neighbors. Amen.

WEEK 02 / The Noise We Carry

Luke 10:38–42

Big idea: Good responsibilities can become anxious distractions that crowd out attentive discipleship.

Opening & reflection · 15 minutes

Begin with prayer. Invite participants to reflect on the prior week’s practice without tallying performance. Ask what they noticed, what was difficult, and what Scripture brought to mind.

Biblical teaching · 25 minutes

1. Martha’s welcome and distraction. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

2. Mary’s receptive posture at Jesus’ feet. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

3. Choosing attentiveness amid ordinary service. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

Discussion · 10 minutes

- What good thing tends to consume your attention?
- How does Jesus address Martha?
- How can you serve without becoming distracted by service?

Guided silence & assignment · 10 minutes

Read a short portion of Luke 10:38–42 aloud. Invite comfortable posture and unhurried prayer. Leave a few moments of genuine quiet, then close with a short prayer. Offer an alternative of silent Scripture meditation.

At-home practice: 5 minutes daily; replace one habitual phone-check with quiet prayer.

Book connection: Invite one insight from the assigned Into the Quiet reading and evaluate it in light of Scripture.

Closing prayer

Father, teach us to trust you, receive your Word, and live attentively before you. Form us into people who love Jesus and our neighbors. Amen.

WEEK 03 / The Way of Jesus

Mark 1:32–39

Big idea: Jesus withdrew to pray even amid legitimate and urgent demands.

Opening & reflection · 15 minutes

Begin with prayer. Invite participants to reflect on the prior week’s practice without tallying performance. Ask what they noticed, what was difficult, and what Scripture brought to mind.

Biblical teaching · 25 minutes

1. The crowds and real ministry needs. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

2. Jesus seeks a deserted place to pray. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

3. Prayer and discernment shape mission. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

Discussion · 10 minutes

- What makes you feel constantly available?
- What does Jesus do before the disciples find him?
- Where can you establish a small place of solitude?

Guided silence & assignment · 10 minutes

Read a short portion of Mark 1:32–39 aloud. Invite comfortable posture and unhurried prayer. Leave a few moments of genuine quiet, then close with a short prayer. Offer an alternative of silent Scripture meditation.

At-home practice: 5–7 minutes daily; schedule one longer period of solitude.

Book connection: Invite one insight from the assigned Into the Quiet reading and evaluate it in light of Scripture.

Closing prayer

Father, teach us to trust you, receive your Word, and live attentively before you. Form us into people who love Jesus and our neighbors. Amen.

WEEK 04 / Into the Wilderness

Luke 4:1–13

Big idea: Solitude can expose competing desires and invite deeper dependence on God.

Opening & reflection · 15 minutes

Begin with prayer. Invite participants to reflect on the prior week’s practice without tallying performance. Ask what they noticed, what was difficult, and what Scripture brought to mind.

Biblical teaching · 25 minutes

1. Spirit-led wilderness and testing. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

2. Jesus answers temptation with Scripture. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

3. Dependence rather than impulse. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

Discussion · 10 minutes

- What do you reach for when uncomfortable?
- What does Jesus’ use of Scripture teach us?
- How can solitude support faithful responses?

Guided silence & assignment · 10 minutes

Read a short portion of Luke 4:1–13 aloud. Invite comfortable posture and unhurried prayer. Leave a few moments of genuine quiet, then close with a short prayer. Offer an alternative of silent Scripture meditation.

At-home practice: 10 minutes daily with a short Scripture passage as an anchor.

Book connection: Invite one insight from the assigned Into the Quiet reading and evaluate it in light of Scripture.

Closing prayer

Father, teach us to trust you, receive your Word, and live attentively before you. Form us into people who love Jesus and our neighbors. Amen.

WEEK 05 / Quieting the Soul

Psalm 131

Big idea: A quiet soul grows through humility and trust, not through having every answer.

Opening & reflection · 15 minutes

Begin with prayer. Invite participants to reflect on the prior week’s practice without tallying performance. Ask what they noticed, what was difficult, and what Scripture brought to mind.

Biblical teaching · 25 minutes

1. Accepting creaturely limits. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

2. The weaned child as an image of trust. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

3. Hoping in the Lord. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

Discussion · 10 minutes

- What are you trying to control?
- What does the child image suggest about rest?
- How might humility change your prayer?

Guided silence & assignment · 10 minutes

Read a short portion of Psalm 131 aloud. Invite comfortable posture and unhurried prayer. Leave a few moments of genuine quiet, then close with a short prayer. Offer an alternative of silent Scripture meditation.

At-home practice: 10 minutes daily; begin by reading Psalm 131.

Book connection: Invite one insight from the assigned Into the Quiet reading and evaluate it in light of Scripture.

Closing prayer

Father, teach us to trust you, receive your Word, and live attentively before you. Form us into people who love Jesus and our neighbors. Amen.

WEEK 06 / A Heart That Listens

1 Samuel 3:1–10

Big idea: Listening begins with humble readiness to receive and obey God’s revealed Word.

Opening & reflection · 15 minutes

Begin with prayer. Invite participants to reflect on the prior week’s practice without tallying performance. Ask what they noticed, what was difficult, and what Scripture brought to mind.

Biblical teaching · 25 minutes

1. Samuel’s unique prophetic call. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

2. The posture of a servant. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

3. Scripture, prayer, and discernment. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

Discussion · 10 minutes

- How do we avoid treating every impression as God’s voice?
- What does Samuel’s response teach?
- What Scripture calls you to obedience?

Guided silence & assignment · 10 minutes

Read a short portion of 1 Samuel 3:1–10 aloud. Invite comfortable posture and unhurried prayer. Leave a few moments of genuine quiet, then close with a short prayer. Offer an alternative of silent Scripture meditation.

At-home practice: 10 minutes with Scripture, silence, and a written prayer.

Book connection: Invite one insight from the assigned Into the Quiet reading and evaluate it in light of Scripture.

Closing prayer

Father, teach us to trust you, receive your Word, and live attentively before you. Form us into people who love Jesus and our neighbors. Amen.

WEEK 07 / God in the Quiet

1 Kings 19:1–18

Big idea: God cares for his people in weakness; his presence is not limited to dramatic experiences.

Opening & reflection · 15 minutes

Begin with prayer. Invite participants to reflect on the prior week’s practice without tallying performance. Ask what they noticed, what was difficult, and what Scripture brought to mind.

Biblical teaching · 25 minutes

1. Elijah’s exhaustion and God’s care. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

2. The quiet sound at Horeb. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

3. Renewed calling and companionship. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

Discussion · 10 minutes

- How does fatigue affect you?
- What expectations do you bring into prayer?
- What does God give Elijah after the encounter?

Guided silence & assignment · 10 minutes

Read a short portion of 1 Kings 19:1–18 aloud. Invite comfortable posture and unhurried prayer. Leave a few moments of genuine quiet, then close with a short prayer. Offer an alternative of silent Scripture meditation.

At-home practice: 15 minutes daily, divided into shorter periods if needed.

Book connection: Invite one insight from the assigned Into the Quiet reading and evaluate it in light of Scripture.

Closing prayer

Father, teach us to trust you, receive your Word, and live attentively before you. Form us into people who love Jesus and our neighbors. Amen.

WEEK 08 / What Silence Reveals

Psalm 139

Big idea: Because God knows us fully, we can approach him with honesty rather than hiding.

Opening & reflection · 15 minutes

Begin with prayer. Invite participants to reflect on the prior week’s practice without tallying performance. Ask what they noticed, what was difficult, and what Scripture brought to mind.

Biblical teaching · 25 minutes

1. Fully known by God. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

2. God’s inescapable presence. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

3. Self-examination grounded in grace. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

Discussion · 10 minutes

• What do you avoid facing?

• How does being known by God affect you?

• What is the difference between conviction and shame?

Guided silence & assignment · 10 minutes

Read a short portion of Psalm 139 aloud. Invite comfortable posture and unhurried prayer. Leave a few moments of genuine quiet, then close with a short prayer. Offer an alternative of silent Scripture meditation.

At-home practice: 15 minutes of silence and optional private journaling.

Book connection: Invite one insight from the assigned Into the Quiet reading and evaluate it in light of Scripture.

Closing prayer

Father, teach us to trust you, receive your Word, and live attentively before you. Form us into people who love Jesus and our neighbors. Amen.

WEEK 09 / The Practice of Surrender

Matthew 26:36–46

Big idea: Surrender brings our real desires before God while trusting his will.

Opening & reflection · 15 minutes

Begin with prayer. Invite participants to reflect on the prior week's practice without tallying performance. Ask what they noticed, what was difficult, and what Scripture brought to mind.

Biblical teaching · 25 minutes

1. Jesus' genuine anguish. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

2. Honest prayer and obedient surrender. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

3. Watchfulness amid human weakness. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

Discussion · 10 minutes

- What does Jesus' honesty teach us?
- How is surrender different from passivity?
- What concern can you entrust to God?

Guided silence & assignment · 10 minutes

Read a short portion of Matthew 26:36–46 aloud. Invite comfortable posture and unhurried prayer. Leave a few moments of genuine quiet, then close with a short prayer. Offer an alternative of silent Scripture meditation.

At-home practice: 15 minutes daily including a prayer of surrender.

Book connection: Invite one insight from the assigned Into the Quiet reading and evaluate it in light of Scripture.

Closing prayer

Father, teach us to trust you, receive your Word, and live attentively before you. Form us into people who love Jesus and our neighbors. Amen.

WEEK 10 / The Beauty of an Ordinary Life

1 Thessalonians 4:9–12

Big idea: Quiet faithfulness expresses itself through love, work, and ordinary obedience.

Opening & reflection · 15 minutes

Begin with prayer. Invite participants to reflect on the prior week’s practice without tallying performance. Ask what they noticed, what was difficult, and what Scripture brought to mind.

Biblical teaching · 25 minutes

1. Brotherly love comes first. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

2. Aspiring to live quietly. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

3. Faithful witness in everyday responsibilities. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

Discussion · 10 minutes

• What does culture say makes a life important?

• What does Paul actually command?

• How can quiet prayer shape your relationships?

Guided silence & assignment · 10 minutes

Read a short portion of 1 Thessalonians 4:9–12 aloud. Invite comfortable posture and unhurried prayer. Leave a few moments of genuine quiet, then close with a short prayer. Offer an alternative of silent Scripture meditation.

At-home practice: Continue silence; add three short pauses during ordinary activities.

Book connection: Invite one insight from the assigned Into the Quiet reading and evaluate it in light of Scripture.

Closing prayer

Father, teach us to trust you, receive your Word, and live attentively before you. Form us into people who love Jesus and our neighbors. Amen.

WEEK 11 / Abiding in His Presence

John 15:1–11

Big idea: Fruitfulness comes from abiding in Christ, not mastering a spiritual technique.

Opening & reflection · 15 minutes

Begin with prayer. Invite participants to reflect on the prior week’s practice without tallying performance. Ask what they noticed, what was difficult, and what Scripture brought to mind.

Biblical teaching · 25 minutes

1. Christ the true vine. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

2. Remaining in Jesus and his words. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

3. Love, obedience, joy, and fruit. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

Discussion · 10 minutes

• How can practices become performance?

• What fruit do you hope to see?

• What sustainable rhythm could help you abide?

Guided silence & assignment · 10 minutes

Read a short portion of John 15:1–11 aloud. Invite comfortable posture and unhurried prayer. Leave a few moments of genuine quiet, then close with a short prayer. Offer an alternative of silent Scripture meditation.

At-home practice: Draft a daily, weekly, and monthly Rule of Silence.

Book connection: Invite one insight from the assigned Into the Quiet reading and evaluate it in light of Scripture.

Closing prayer

Father, teach us to trust you, receive your Word, and live attentively before you. Form us into people who love Jesus and our neighbors. Amen.

WEEK 12 / Living from the Quiet

Luke 5:15–16

Big idea: The goal is not completing a course but living in deeper communion with Jesus.

Opening & reflection · 15 minutes

Begin with prayer. Invite participants to reflect on the prior week’s practice without tallying performance. Ask what they noticed, what was difficult, and what Scripture brought to mind.

Biblical teaching · 25 minutes

1. Growing demands around Jesus. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

2. His recurring pattern of withdrawal. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

3. Silence that sends us back in love. Read the passage closely, explain the surrounding context, and connect this movement to faithful dependence on God. Invite one concrete example from ordinary life. Do not equate silence itself with spiritual maturity.

Discussion · 10 minutes

- What changed across twelve weeks?
- Which rhythm is realistic long-term?
- Who can encourage you to continue?

Guided silence & assignment · 10 minutes

Read a short portion of Luke 5:15–16 aloud. Invite comfortable posture and unhurried prayer. Leave a few moments of genuine quiet, then close with a short prayer. Offer an alternative of silent Scripture meditation.

At-home practice: Finalize and begin your Rule of Silence; review it seasonally.

Book connection: Invite one insight from the assigned Into the Quiet reading and evaluate it in light of Scripture.

Closing prayer

Father, teach us to trust you, receive your Word, and live attentively before you. Form us into people who love Jesus and our neighbors. Amen.