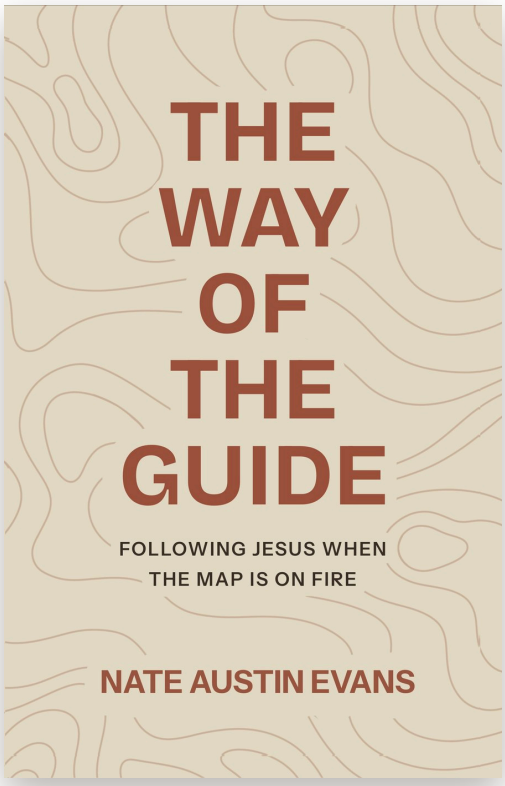
LEADER'S GUIDE

THE WAY OF THE GUIDE

SIX WEEKS FOR SMALL GROUPS



By Nate Austin Evans

For use with the book *The Way of the Guide: Following Jesus When the Map Is on Fire* (Cairn House, 2027).
Page numbers refer to the paperback and hardcover editions.

Before you start

Each meeting (about 75 minutes)

TIME	WHAT HAPPENS	WHERE IT COMES FROM
10 min	Welcome and check-in: "How did this week's reading land for you?"	This guide
5 min	Read the week's Scripture aloud	This guide
40 min	Discussion. Pick two or three questions, not all of them.	"A Guide for Fellow Travelers," pp. 231–236. The Reflection questions at the end of each chapter are backups.
10 min	Choose a practice for the week	The Practice at the end of each chapter
5 min	Close by reading the chapter's prayer aloud	The Prayer at the end of each chapter

Before Week 1, read the trail rules on p. 231 aloud and ask the group to agree to them: confidentiality, curiosity over crosstalk, honesty over harmony, and grace and gentleness.

Lent 2027 calendar

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday, **February 10, 2027**, and Easter is **March 28**. A group that meets on Sundays would meet Feb 14, Feb 21, Feb 28, Mar 7, Mar 14 and Mar 21 (Palm Sunday), then celebrate Easter together.

The book releases February 9, so copies may arrive only days before Week 1. Week 1's reading is the Introduction and Chapter 1. The Introduction is free at **nateaustinevans.com**, so members can read it before their books arrive.

Notes for leaders

- **You don't need answers.** Your job is to keep the space honest and safe, not to fix anyone's theology.
- **Let silence sit.** Count to ten before you rescue a quiet room.
- **Week 2 is about church hurt.** Some people may have been hurt by a church like yours, or by yours. If you're on staff, listen and don't defend. Their honesty is a sign the group is working.
- **Know your limit.** If someone talks about abuse, self-harm or a crisis, talk with them privately after the meeting and connect them with a pastor or a licensed counselor that same week.
- **Some weeks are heavier.** Week 5 has three chapters, so announce it a week early.

The six weeks

Each Scripture passage is one the chapter itself talks about. Read it from whatever translation your group uses.

Week 1: The First Steps

- **Read before:** Introduction and Chapter 1
- **Scripture:** Psalm 13
- **Discuss:** p. 232
- **Practice:** The Work of Lament, p. 36
- **Close:** A Prayer for Trusting in the Dark, p. 39

Week 2: The Pain of the Path

- **Read before:** Chapters 2 and 3
- **Scripture:** Mark 9:14–29 (the father who says "help my unbelief"). Alternate: Luke 13:10–17.
- **Discuss:** pp. 232–233
- **Practice:** An Honest Inventory of Your Questions, p. 55, or A Contemplative Encounter with the Guide, p. 74
- **Close:** A Prayer for the Church-Wounded, p. 77

Week 3: The Face and Story of the King

- **Read before:** Chapters 4 and 5
- **Scripture:** John 4:1–42 (the woman at the well). Alternate: Luke 19:1–10.
- **Discuss:** pp. 233–234
- **Practice:** Staring at the Portrait, p. 103, or Staking an Outpost, p. 120
- **Close:** A Prayer to the God Who Looks like Jesus, p. 105

Week 4: A New Pair of Glasses

- **Read before:** Chapter 6
- **Scripture:** Genesis 2:8–10 and Revelation 22:1–2, read back to back
- **Discuss:** pp. 234–235
- **Practice:** Tracing a Theme, p. 144
- **Close:** A Prayer for Eyes to See, p. 148

Week 5: The Cadence of the Trail

- **Read before:** Chapters 7, 8 and 9 (the longest week)
- **Scripture:** Matthew 11:28–30
- **Discuss:** p. 235
- **Practice:** pick one: One Small Experiment, p. 163; An Experiment in Listening, p. 179; Your First Experiment in Freedom, p. 193
- **Close:** A Prayer for the Unforced Rhythms, p. 165

Week 6: The Road Ahead

- **Read before:** Chapter 10 and the Conclusion
- **Scripture:** Acts 2:42–47
- **Discuss:** pp. 235–236
- **Practice:** Uncrossing Your Arms, p. 208. To send the group off, have everyone fill in "Unforced Rhythms: A Simple Rule of Life" (pp. 227–230) and share one practice they'll keep through Easter.
- **Close:** A Prayer for Home, p. 210

Bulk copies for your group: nateaustinevans.com/churches · Questions: nate@nateaustinevans.com