

Being an Acts 2 Church – Connecting
Acts 2:42-47

- I. In the middle of our series “Being an Acts 2 Church.”
 - A. We talked about “Worship.”
 - 1) Connecting with God in worship
 - 2) Connecting with one another in worship.
 - 3) We recognized God’s call to go deeper and deeper in our relationship to him.
 - B. Last week, we talked about “Sharing.”
 - 1) We saw how the early church’s sharing was spirit led – they had power.
 - 2) We saw that through the Holy Spirit they loved one another.
 - 3) And that the church bore the fruit of new disciples.
 - C. Today we’re going to talk about a third quality the early church possessed: the way they connected with one another.
- II. As we begin ...
 - A. I’d like to say that much of the popular literature tells us that we don’t know much about the life of the early church.
 - 1) But in fact we have quite a bit of information that sheds a lot of light on the earliest Christian communities.
 - 2) Aside from the snapshots of early church life we see in the New Testament we have many, many books and letters written by the leaders of churches in the first 200 years of the church.
 - a) Clement, Polycarp, Tertullian, Hermes, and the work of many others survives.
 - b) We have descriptions of church life, commentaries on the writings of Paul and the Apostles, and letters written to churches that need guidance.
 - 3) While we don’t know everything we may like to know, we certainly aren’t left in the dark about the first couple/three centuries of the church.
 - B. That’s important to remember as we talk about Acts 2 and take it as a model for today.
 - 1) We can use this snapshot of the church with confidence because the same picture appears in many other early church works.
 - 2) It’s not a stretch for us to ask God to work in our church the same way he worked in Acts 2. He’s the same God, with the same power, and the same desire – to grow the church.
- III. First, notice that the early church was “like-minded.”
 - A. In verse 44 it says, “All the believers were together and had everything in common.”
 - 1) They were together.
 - 2) They weren’t just physically located together; they were emotionally and spiritually together.
 - B. How do you get rich and poor, slave and free, men and women to be linked together that way?
 - 1) Only by the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - 2) Because in spite of all those differences – what they had in common in Christ was more powerful.
- IV. They stuck with one another.

- A. The end of verse 44 says, they “had everything in common.”
 - 1) It might remind us of last week when we talked about their sharing by “selling their possessions and goods.”
 - 2) But this wasn’t just sharing of resources; money and things.
 - B. This was a more important sharing.
 - 1) This was a sharing of values – although they didn’t agree all the time.
 - 2) This was a sharing of citizenship – a sharing of community and belonging.
 - 3) This was a sharing of purpose – knowing that God was doing something awesome that God and you were a part of it.
- V. They got below the surface.
- A. Verse 46 says, “They broke bread together in their homes and ate together.”
 - 1) Think about this: these folks were as different in some respects as night is from day.
 - 2) And yet they sat at table together and talked together and had discussions of religion and politics together.
 - B. Most of the real deep and meaningful conversations we have with our kids, with our spouses happen in one of two places.
 - 1) In our cars; at our tables.
 - 2) Sharing a meal together and talking with one another over that meal is one of the most significant times of sharing people can have.
 - 3) The sharing of a meal breaks down barriers and opens up hearts like little else.
- VI. They experienced joy.
- A. Verse 46 says, they “ate together with glad and sincere hearts.”
 - 1) As they connected with one another something awesome happened – God gave them joy.
 - 2) Not just happiness or the laughter of a few good jokes over dinner, but joy.
 - B. Joy is the deep and abiding sense of God’s presence in your life.
 - 1) One way you sense that presence is when you are with other Christ followers.
- VII. What does a connecting church look like? Honestly, it looks a lot like CUMC.
- A. We’re a bunch of “like-minded” folks.
 - 1) We’re pretty different on the outside.
 - 2) Inside we share an emotional and spiritual connection that is irreplaceable.
 - 3) We share common interests.
 - a) Marriage groups.
 - b) Youth groups.
 - c) Women’s/Men’s groups.
 - B. We stick with one another.
 - 1) You can pick your friends, but you’re stuck with your relatives.
 - a) You can be grumpy, cantankerous, and just plain weird – we love ya!
 - b) You can say you’re an atheist, an agnostic, a skeptic, a seeker, whatever – we love ya!
 - 2) We know that God’s put us together for a purpose.
 - a) So we aren’t going to give up until we discover what that purpose is.
 - b) Democrats, Republicans, Libertarians, Old, Young, who cares! We are family.
 - C. We’re going below the surface.

- 1) The surface is where conversations about the weather and sports live.
 - a) The surface is “how are the kids?”
 - b) The surface is “boss still driving you nuts?”
 - c) The surface is “can I borrow a cup of sugar?”
 - 2) Below the surface is where we live.
 - a) My kids are making me nuts!
 - b) I’m ready to quit my job!
 - c) I just found out my husband is cheating on me!
 - 3) Our small groups are not just surface stuff.
 - a) Families, marriages, relationships get healed.
 - b) Connect with some folks on Thursday morning, have meals delivered to your house for a month – and you’ll know what I’m talking about!
- D. We are finding joy.
- 1) Joy in each other.
 - a) Too many of us don’t know what it feels like to have a real friend.
 - b) A bunch of the rest of us have found out – and they’re sitting in this room.
 - 2) Joy in God.
 - a) When you realize that God cares for you more than any of these people ever could – that brings joy.
 - b) When you realize that God cares for you more than your wife or husband ever could – that feels good.
 - c) It’s nice to know that you matter – that brings joy.
 - 3) It’s deep and its abiding.
 - a) Even when life gets tough – joy doesn’t have to go away.
 - b) Even when things get hard – there’s joy when you don’t face it alone.
 - c) Even when your not sure what to do or where to go next – God is still with you.

VIII. Being an Acts 2 church means ...

A. Being of “like-mind.”

- 1) Sticking together.
- 2) Diving below the surface.
- 3) And finding joy.

B. If you want to connect.

- 1) If you want more than fair weather friends.
- 2) If you want someone who knows who you really are inside and loves you anyway.
- 3) If you are tired of talking about the weather and are ready to talk about your soul.
- 4) Welcome, to Christ United Methodist Church.