



SERMON REFLECTION QUESTIONS for May 28, 2023

Sermon Title: Reframing Church

Pastor: Bryan Eckelmann

Theme/concept What is God's vision for the church? Pentecost began the church, and if we assume that the church began as it was intended to be, then the church is NOT a building but a people, not a one-hour service but a community movement, and not a convent of the saved but a movement of Christ's inviting.

Icebreaker (for groups) Describe your earliest memories of "church."

Reflections on the Sermon What were your take aways from the sermon?

Background Scripture

Acts 2:37-39 (New International Version)

³⁷ When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?"

³⁸ Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ³⁹ The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off —for all whom the Lord our God will call."

Acts 2:42-47 (New International Version)

⁴² They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. ⁴³ Everyone was filled with awe, and many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. ⁴⁴ All the believers were together and had everything in common. ⁴⁵ Selling their possessions and goods, they gave to anyone as he had need. ⁴⁶ Every day they

continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

Reviewing the Scripture

1. Verse 37 begins with, "When the people heard this...". What had they heard? Elaborate as much as you wish.
2. According to verse 37, give 2 ways that the people responded. How did they address the apostles?
3. In verse 38, how does Peter reply?
4. Reread verse 39. To whom does this promise apply?
5. From verses 42-47 list 12 or more activities that the new believers pursued.
6. How are the above activities similar to/different from those practiced at Trinity today?
7. Can you think of parts of our worship at Trinity that are not mentioned in verses 42-47? Why do you think this is?

8. How often were new believers added? How often does Trinity add new believers?

Going Deeper

1. If you have ever had to change congregations, what did you look for when choosing a new “church”? If you have never changed congregations, what would be your important criteria for choosing a new church?
2. From verses 44 and 45, how do you feel about all the believers having everything in common, selling their possessions and goods, and giving to anyone in need?
3. Picture yourself as either a new Jewish believer or a new nonJewish believer in the early church in Jerusalem. What are your impressions of your new church? What do you like? What are your concerns? What would you like to change? What do you have difficulty understanding? How do you plan to participate in your new church?
4. Verse 43 tells us that many wonders and miraculous signs were done by the apostles. Do miraculous wonders and signs still occur in church today? How do you feel about this?
5. Write a description of your ideal church. How large? Who are the members? How active are they? Where does it meet? How often does it meet? Who preaches/teaches? At what rate is it growing? What are its traditions? What is its vision? How will you participate?

Closing Prayer

Dear Lord,

Thank you for sending us your Holy Spirit at Pentecost and for birthing your church. Thank you that all who confess our risen Jesus as their Lord and Savior are welcome in your church. Thank you that we are not just a building or a one-hour service or a convent of saved people. Thank you that we are instead a growing group of people, a community, and a movement responding to Jesus' inviting. Please preserve and protect your church worldwide until our Lord, Jesus returns.

In His Holy Name,
Amen