

The early community of faith were devoted to prayer; that's not prayer lists, but time talking with God, with Jesus, through the Spirit. Thanking Jesus, inviting him to lead them. This week why not be devoted to prayer; thanking Jesus for all that you love, all who you love. Then invite Jesus to speak, and listen, be open to his voice. Respond; be involved in the conversation.

This could be just a minute as you pause and reflect on what is happening, as you enjoy what you're doing, as you talk about your frustration, or marvel at creation. This could be a time of quiet meditation, where you create an atmosphere free of distractions to be there, present, with Jesus.

How often did the early community of faith in Jesus meet?

I wonder if one reason Jesus has kicked us out of the building is because we began seeing our life with him limited to the time we spent in the building?

This week I encourage you to sit down with the Spirit and meditate on the Bible. Invite the Spirit to be your guide, then follow his lead. Seek to be devoted, drawing on Jesus devotion to you.

Ask the Spirit who to make contact with this week, each day, then ring them, email them, text them, drop off a gift. Follow the Spirit's lead and make contact; giving living expression to the unity we have in Jesus.

Make time to be with Jesus as you have a wine and some bread, with a friend, over a meal.

And seek to grow in prayer; sharing from your heart and soul with Jesus. Sharing your joys, loves, fears, frustrations. Then invite Jesus to share what's on his heart and soul with you. Listen and respond. Jesus didn't give his life to be quiet and impersonal, but conversational and intimate. Invite him to speak, then listen.

This week enjoy life with Jesus, literally, doing it. Live out these four simple practices. Enjoy life with Jesus, living it daily.

3 May 2020

## EASTER—3

Acts 2:42-47



Easter is a celebration of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. We celebrate Jesus giving his life freely for us; arrested and executed. Of course that is followed by Jesus being raised to new life. What powerful events.

So would you say Easter is the end or the beginning? After Easter did Jesus pack up and go home because he'd won the victory over sin, death and the devil?

I invite you to pause and reflect on Easter; is it the end or the beginning? Share your thoughts and why you think so?

For Jesus Easter is a new beginning, definitely not the end. Jesus has just won the forgiveness of sins; life with his Father, in a relationship of love and affection, lived out in a conversational atmosphere, where you get to live out his supernatural love, quit naturally.

Jesus certainly didn't go to the extreme of dying to have life with us, to then forget about us. Jesus goal wasn't to forget about you. Jesus goal is to share life with you, personally, intimately. Jesus goal is to enjoy life together with us, his new community of faith in him.

The question this raises is; how will this new community of faith live? How will this new community of faith in Jesus, share life with him and each other?

Will we continue as the People of the Old Testament lived? Will we shape our lives on the people around us, becoming like them? An example of that was when the Children of Israel asked for a king, just like the people around them; which didn't go all that well. How does this new community of faith in Jesus live?

I invite you to jot down your thoughts on how Jesus' community

of faith would live? Are we like the Old Testament people, why or why not? Are we to reflect the community in which we live, why or why not?

As I reflect on Jesus' community of faith, I'm reminded of the Children of Israel as they wandered through the wilderness. This slave people were now a nation, headed for their own land; the Promised Land. But each time they are stressed or confused they express the desire to go back to Egypt; the place of slavery.

The fear of the unknown was too much for them. They sought comfort in doing what they'd always done. I know that can be true of me. But living as a slave is no way to live life as a free person, in God's loving presence, where there is nothing to fear.

Fear is such a powerful force. So is the loss of hope. Jesus encountered two of his

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### Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am  
Pastor: Tim 0427326553



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

disciples leaving Jerusalem, heading home, confused and despondent. The symbolism is powerful to me; these disciples are leaving where Jesus is, going away from him, from his presence.

If the goal is to share life with Jesus, what direction do we need to be going in; toward Jesus or away from him? The answer is self-evident; life with Jesus means drawing close to him, talking with him, walking with him, opening up our

hearts and souls to him, listening to Jesus share his hopes and dreams with us. The goal is living intimately with Jesus.

In Luke's record of the early community of faith in Jesus we see how they sought to live this intimate life with Jesus. I find this a powerful section of God's word; "All the believers devoted themselves..." (Acts 2:24)

Do you notice they weren't casual or half-hearted, they were devoted? I invite you to share some examples of people who are

devoted to something. What you do when you're devoted to something?

The disciples were devoted to 'the Apostle's teaching, to fellowship, to sharing meals – which included the Lord's Supper – and to prayer.' (Acts 2:42)

How often did they get together? Once a month. I

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### Jesus is inviting you to come walk and talk with him

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remember years ago to be a member you had to have gone to communion four times in the year. At that stage there probably weren't too many more than four times communion was celebrated. Would you think going four times a year would equate to being devoted?

We're told that this community of faith in Jesus meet daily in the Temple and met in their homes for the Lord's Supper. Who do you meet with, daily?

Jesus didn't give his life to forget about us. Do you think he's

devoted to you? Do you think you're on Jesus heart and mind, daily? Without a shadow of doubt.

That's why I can seek to be devoted to him; because Jesus is devoted to me. Jesus gave his life for us to enjoy living with him, daily.

So the early community of faith in Jesus were devoted to the apostle's teaching.

Do you notice it didn't say bible study? There is a difference. They were devoted to knowing the truth

about Jesus as it was revealed. They were devoted to knowing the truth about God as he had revealed himself in Jesus. The passion is to know Jesus, as you seek to share each day with him.

Our passion is a living, breathing relationship with the living, breathing Jesus; person to person. We're not making things up. We're not just doing what seems fun to us. We have God, in Jesus, revealing his heart and soul to us, so that we can share heart and soul with him.

That's what Jesus reveals God is after. In an encounter with a woman Jesus said; "the time is coming when true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth." (John 4:23) Our relationship with Father will be lived out heart and soul, based on the truth he has revealed about himself in Jesus. It won't be made up, or a good guess, but what God has revealed about himself and about you, about us.

Thank God our relationship with him isn't based on my guess work; because as a slave to sin, I would lose the real person in my limited world of hurt, confusion, greed, need, desire. A slave will always think like a slave; thank God in Jesus we get a revelation of Father, of our new selves, of life lived in the Promised Land of love and affection with Father, Son and Spirit. All beyond my wildest dreams.

Daily I thank God that I'm not limited to my wildest dreams, but he's invited me into his

wildest dream. In Jesus I'm invited into God's passion for life. I get to be on a wonderful journey of discovery; discovering God; his love, his personality, his hopes and dreams. All way, way, way beyond anything I could imagine possible.

Thank God we've got the apostle's teaching. Thank God we can spend time with

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### What helps you recognise Jesus, so that you might enjoy his presence

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the Spirit letting him teach us, grow us, mature us as we feast on God's words, as we make the time to eat our full of life with 'The Word', Jesus.

I always love the fact that we don't have words but a person. I'm not following an idea; I'm sharing life with a living, breathing person, who just happens to be God, and is passionate about me, about you, about sharing himself with us.

I love this time of isolation that we are in at the present for it is giving me the time to be with Jesus as I

meditate on his word. I don't want to waste this wonderful opportunity.

Fellowship is a bit harder; but thanks to the phone and other media we are able to spend time together; time there to support and encourage each other. At the start of the year I invited people to form what were labelled four by four groups; time to get traction.

What a wonderful opportunity to spend time ringing people up. I invite you to ask the Spirit to reveal who he wants you to make contact with this

week; then do it.

I invite you to pause for a minute and simple ask the Holy Spirit who to make contact with this week. Jot down their name, and do it. How often did the early church meet?

Sharing a meal together is a bit harder, but where two or three are together Jesus has promised to be there. Why not go out on a limb and invite two or three people out on a picnic? We're aloud groups of under 10, with the four square meter rule. Enjoy lunch, enjoy a good wine and some bread together.