



## **Fellowship and Family**

In Perry's Wednesday night lesson two weeks ago he covered Acts 2:42-47 *"They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 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, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved."* This passage always has so much meaning to us, in establishing the closeness these new Christians had with one another, the sense of family they created, and the deepening of their relationship with God through their study and fellowship.

As you know, we recently added new deacons and reorganized their efforts around Service, Edification, Evangelism, and Discipleship. I've been privileged to work with the Discipleship deacons as they have considered how we could enhance and reinvigorate our small group bible studies. It has been a blessing to me to see how they have worked together, shared ideas, openly threw out far-ranging ideas and, even when they differed in opinions, always worked to the benefit of His Kingdom. As has been announced, most groups are now meeting at either 4:00 or 6:00 Sunday evenings at our building. This provides many benefits, including a convenient place for childcare, the opportunity to have fellowship meals around these studies, mixing of generations easily with these groups, new opportunities for leadership development, and less requirement for hosting. We've seen fantastic participation, and the opportunity to be back together as the pandemic wanes has been a great reminder of how much we crave to be

together as family. If you have not yet taken advantage of one of these small groups, please give it a try!

Your shepherds earnestly desire to provide food for spiritual growth, and these small group studies are an important part of this care and feeding. We hope and pray that you have the same craving that Peter described in his first letter: *“Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice and all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and slander of every kind. Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation, now that you have tasted that the Lord is good.”* If you are not craving God’s word, and fellowship with your brothers and sisters, please take a moment and search your heart on why that longing is not there.

- David Shaw