

The Church as Family

START: (10 min)

1. How was your week?
2. Conversation Starter (*optional*): What is the most unexpected thing you ever saw in a church?

GOSPEL: This series on The Church as Family will be exploring who the church is and what is the church supposed to do.

1. Begin by reading this foundational verse about the church: Matthew 16:16-19. What does it mean that Jesus will build His church on "this rock"? How can we, as individuals, contribute to the strength of this foundation?
2. The church has very distinctive characteristics that make it different from other groups, organizations, etc.
 - a. LOVE: Read John 13:35. If love is a "distinct characteristic" of the church, then how can we demonstrate Christ-like love within our church community and to those outside it?
 - b. UNITY: The church is full of people with different backgrounds, cultural upbringings, and viewpoints. What steps can we take to foster unity in a diverse church body?
 - c. FRUITFULNESS: How can you measure fruitfulness in your life as well as the church body?
3. Read through Acts 2. This is the moment the first church began. What do you see the first church doing together?

A few of those practices are:

- Devotion to teaching
- Fellowship and Breaking Bread
- Prayer and Praise
- Sense of Awe
- Generosity and Sharing
- Daily Commitment

- a. Which of these practices (or other ones you saw in Acts 2) are your strengths?
- b. Which of these practices are your weaknesses?
- c. What steps can you, or your Life Group, take to implement these practices in the regular rhythm of your life?

4. How has church been a part of your life's transformation (or someone you know)?

PRAYER: Take some time in prayer, asking God to help our church embody the dynamic and powerful movement that He intended.