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## SPEAKERS

Kyle, Dana

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Dana 00:01

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Kyle 00:13

Well, good morning. Good to see you all this morning it is like Ethan said, it's a good day for us. Last week was a special day for us as a church as we had our kind of our first official launch Sunday and we had the blessing of getting to have some different family and friends that were here celebrating us with us as well. And, and it was just a wonderful day. But today is kind of a new, special day for us. Because today kind of marks the the regular and the mundane and the the normal for us as we embark on a journey as a church, to grow together to grow closer to Jesus together and to get to know one another's families more and get to become a part of one another's lives. We're going to talk a little bit more about that this morning. But for now, I just want to say to follow up on on having the kids up here a minute ago, we we love having kids in the service with us. We actually all throughout the summer as our launch team met we we didn't really have the structures and systems in place to be able to have a safe, separate kids ministry during the Sunday morning. And so we essentially had all of the kids with us all summer. And and it was a transition for some of us it was an adjustment to have children in the worship service with us. But it has been such a blessing to get to hear the sounds of children during the service, to get to see their faces to get to see them learning up here with one of the pastors, it has been such a joy for us. And so I just want to say right off the bat parents, we are grateful for you and we're grateful for your kids, we do have a few resources in the back for children to use during the service to help them to help them focus. The catechism that we've been using that was just up here on the screen was called the New City catechism. And it's something that we had a few people who were really generous to donate a few copies of it. So we've got a bunch of copies of that back at the connection station as well. And you're more than welcome to use that with your families take one of those home, even if you don't have kids, it's a great tool to get to learn more and more about our God. So we just want to make sure we let you know about some of those resources that are available. Well, my name is Kyle, if we haven't had a chance to meet yet, I'm one of the pastors here at Union church. And I'm excited to continue to talk with all of you about the church, that is the sermon series that we've chosen to start off our life as union church here with the church. Because how many of you know that if you don't know what the purpose is, for something, it's really easy to break it, right? If you try and use a screwdriver as a hammer, it's not going to last very long, and it's not going to get the job done very well. And really, we're just gonna get frustrated. And I as a poor user of tools, I'm too well experienced at that reality. So what we

want to do as a church is set some some groundwork at the very beginning of our life of a church is what is the church? What's the purpose for church for local gatherings of believers of people who have been saved in the name of Jesus Christ? Why do we gather together as these these local expressions we call church? What is the purpose, and we want to do that, because we don't want to be setting wrong expectations. We don't want to be lions fans who go into the season expecting one thing and just being terribly disappointed by game three. We don't want to be a people who have a not just wrong expectation of what's going to happen, but an unbiblical expectation of what the church is called to be. And so last week, Pastor Ethan spent some time by defining the church not primarily as a place for certain ideas or people to get platforms or gain influence, not primarily as a place to fill our consumeristic preferences by by receiving the right content, not primarily as a place to find good friends or to find a future spouse, not primarily as a community, action, nonprofit, all of those things are good things and and all of those things are really are things that should be happening in the church. But they're not the main thing. They're not the ultimate thing. Instead, Pastor Ethan said the church is a people called out of darkness into God's purposes for God's glory, and our joy. And all the other things that the church can be are situated underneath that reality that we are a people that have been called out of darkness and into light. So we are going to continue working our way through this idea of what is the church, why does it exist? And today we're going to be asking, okay, well, what are the purposes that God has called us? Why has God called us to actually gather together that's Today, that would be the title of our sermon today is we are called to gather. And one of the ways we we get to know these things is through His Word through the Word of God, which he has revealed to us through the Bible. So I want to invite you to open up your Bibles, if you have one with you to the book of Ephesians, chapter four, the book of Ephesians is in the New Testament, it's near the end, if you're not sure it is, right after the book of Galatians. It's right before the book of Philippians. You can find the Bible if you don't have one with you, you can find some Bibles in the back at the connection station where everything is like you've been said earlier. So Ephesians chapter four, this is going to be our passage today, verse one through 16. And I'm going to read through our passage today. And then I'm going to close by saying, This is the word of the Lord. I'm going to ask you to respond by saying, thanks be to God, we are thankful for the word. And so we make it a central part of our services together. So hear the word of the Lord. Now, I, therefore this is the Apostle Paul, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit, in the bond of peace. There is one body and one spirit, just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is overall, and through all and in all, but Grace was given to each one of us, according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore, it says, when he ascended on high, he led a host of captives and he gave gifts to men, and saying, He ascended What does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions into the earth. He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might feel all things. And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints, for the work of ministry for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain the unity of faith and have the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children tossed to and fro by the waves, carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning by craftiness in deceitful schemes. Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head into Christ, from whom the whole body joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped. When each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.



08:00

This is the word of the Lord. Now as we work through this text this morning, I think this is what we're going to see if you're a note taker if you if you want to okay zero in what is what what am I really going to take away this morning, this is our primary point God calls the church to gather. So the United Body of Christ would grow into Christ. Christ calls the church to gather so that the United Body of Christ would grow into Christ. Would you bow your heads and pray with me? Do you Lord, we thank you for your word. We are grateful for it. We are grateful that you have revealed yourself to us through it. And Lord right now we pray that you would use it. Use it, Lord, to shine a light on the idols that we have created in our own heart, use it to comfort us use it to direct our steps. And Lord, I pray,

especially for us as a church. That you would guide our understanding of who the church is what the purpose of the church is not by our own preferences, not by our own comforts, but by your word, Lord. The church is a gift. And more we pray that you would help us to use it wisely. We pray these things in the precious name of Jesus Christ. And everybody said, Amen. All right, so I'm going to lay my cards on the table right away, when I am arguing for to you this morning, is that Jesus calls his church to gather, he calls them to gather together to be a people not to be isolated individuals who are following him but to be a people who gather who gather on Sunday mornings who gather in one another's homes who gather for Bible studies who gathered to reach out to the community, they are a people who gather. And I know this is not necessarily the way we think about it. We think about church, not necessarily about the people who we are sitting with, but about the content that we are receiving from the front. And we just want to make sure that as a church, we lay this foundation right from the way we proclaim this to you right away, that if you are a child of God, God desires for you to not just be a consumer of sermons from afar, he desires for you if you have been saved by his son, not to merely attend a local church on Sunday morning, but he desires for you to gather with the church and body and spirit and heart and in love.

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Kyle 10:36

This is a, this is gonna be a challenging sermon for some of us. For some of us, we might it might be preaching to the choir, but for some of us, there's going to be some challenge here. And I want to invite you not to hear it from me, but to hear it from Christ himself from his word. So as we look at the word, I think we're gonna see three things we're going to see a what we're going to see a how we're going to see a why. So we're gonna start off just with these first few verses, we see a what Paul gives a certain command to these fusions. The command that he gives the Ephesians is right away in the first verse, I urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called. Which begs the question, of course, well, what, what's the calling that the Ephesians have been called to? And how could you be worthy of it. And fortunately, for us, this word call or calling appears about a dozen times in the New Testament, and every time it's referring to the call of God, the call that that God calls his people out with and this is what Pastor Ethan talked about last week, that we are a people who have been called out of darkness into like, life, much like Lazarus was called out of the grave into life we as a people have been called out of an old life of sin and shame and regret and guilt, and into a new life on eternal life, a jubilant and and, and and joyful life in Christ. And God's calling of his people, his his saving them, he calls his people now Paul has spent essentially the whole book of Ephesians, which in my Bible is only about two pages, three or four pages here. And it's it's a letter that was sent to a church, right? It's a letter that Paul sends to a specific group of Christians who are gathering together to worship. And in this letter, Paul spends the first three chapters expounding on that call, what is the call of God? Why is it such a joy to us? So if you have your Bible, I want you to just take your your Bible and flip it, flip it, maybe one page back to chapter one. And you'll see right in chapter one, Paul is laying this foundation, chapter one, verse three, he has this great monologue about the the spiritual blessings that the Ephesians have gotten. And this is what he says, He says, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. He says, in love, he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons of through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has blessed us in the beloved. In Him, we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, the riches of grace, which he lavished upon us and wisdom and insight, making known to us the mystery of his will, according to His purpose, which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fullness of time to unite all things in him things in heaven and things on earth friends, that's the call. That's it right there. That's the calling that the Lord has placed on your heart if you've been saved by Jesus Christ, that's the call. That's what you've been given on adoption to himself, and adoption. And that brings with it redemption, forgiveness, and inheritance, hope, salvation, you have been called into a glorious family. And being called into that family, you've been given a new identity, your identity is no longer alone, rebellious orphan, but a beloved child in a royal family. And Paul, here now in Ephesians, four after after restarting his his his letter off with that he goes on to kind of expand on it. And then he gets to chapter four, and the whole focus of the book kind of shifts, it shifts from Okay, here's the identity. here's, here's your gift that you've been given. And now for the rest of the book, he's gonna say, here's what you do with it. Right? And so this is how he starts that transition in chapter four

by saying, you need to live into this calling live in a manner that is worthy of the calling that you have been given and and how do we do that? with humility, with gentleness, with patience with love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. So everything Paul says so Paul says, if you're gonna live in a manner that's worthy of the calling you've been given, everything is grounded in your unity together as a people. The reason he calls them to humility, the reason he calls them to gentleness and patience and bearing with one another in love, is in order to preserve unity, unity is the goal here, he says. It's the foundational expression, the foundational reality of walking in a manner that is worthy of the calling of God. And that's really interesting, isn't it? Because I, that's not the first thing I would think of, if I was saying okay, well, what is what is the manner that is worthy of the calling? What is what is it that would that would really look like it fits with my salvation, I might think something like, like holiness, something like love something like like, like really looking like Jesus. But the thing that Paul points to is unity. And if you continue in this passage, I think what's really interesting is that that unity, is actually grounded in the character of God and the nature of the salvation that he's given. God doesn't call us to unity simply because it will make our church a more cheerful and pleasant place, although, hopefully it will. He doesn't call us to unity simply because it will make it easier to accomplish our mission as we go into the kunin into the community. But hopefully that will happen. God calls us to unity, because he is unified. Look at look at verse four, there was one body and one spirit, because you've been called into one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all, and in all of these things here are one, because God is one. That salvation He gives us, marked by unity, unity of body and spirit, unity of faith and baptism. Because it is from God, and God is one, he is united in himself, there is one God, he is totally completely united and his people being united to his son are to be totally and completely united to reflect him to display him. And so friends, when when the church when when God's people, his adopted children are people who display division are a people who are marked by this union and detachment and separation and discord, not only are we disobeying God, but we're telling a lie about God. We are telling lies about the nature of the salvation He has given us. We are displaying a falsehood. Our common salvation is meant to unite us, to him and to one another, to display and give a tangible reality to his unity, his oneness. And so when Paul says act in a manner worthy of the calling that you have been called to, he's saying act in a manner that reflects the one who is called you act in to act in any other way would be a dishonor to him, it would be like is it as if you got, you know, you got invited to a really fancy party, right? Like you got invited to the Met Gala, or whatever, whatever that thing is that everybody was dressed up for. It's a gift, somebody, somebody who had connections invited you to this party, and you showed up to this party, dressed in in your your basketball shorts and your T shirt, you know, and you spent the whole time just eating all the hors d'oeuvres, and it was just a mess. And the reason why this would be so embarrassing for the person who invited you is because his invitation to you is like, it's it's an attachment to you, he has identified himself with you by inviting you to that party on in his name, and for you to act in this way, says something about him about the person who's invited you, right. And that is true for what Paul is saying here for us as a people, he says you have been called by a unified God, a God who is one and for you to act in a way that is marked by division is to reflect something that is not true about him. But there's a reality that unity is hard for us. It's not natural, and I don't have to spend a lot of time convincing you of that. It takes one second on social media to know that unity is not easy for us. Pride, impatience, harshness, selfishness, those things are natural. humility, gentleness, patience, unity. Those things are hard. Thankfully, the Lord does not build his church by natural means, but by the supernatural power of Jesus. And so as we move on in this passage we see the second thing is how, how does God choose to do this? And the How is that Jesus Christ actually equips his church with various gifts that are aimed at this one purpose of unity. Look back at the passage, look at verse seven. But Grace was given to each one of us. So every every person who is a part of Christ's church who has been saved by his blood has been given grace, according to the measure of Christ's gift. Essentially, what Paul is saying is, Christ has given to chosen to give you a certain gift, a certain amount of, of grace. And it's totally up to Jesus. It's totally in his court, he has chosen to give you a certain gift, every one of you has a gift, a certain amount of grace, but it's different. And yet Paul is saying, even though there's different gifts, different kinds of grace that have been given to each one of us, it's all aimed at one unified purpose. But it goes on to say, therefore, it says, Now Paul is quoting Psalm chapter 68, here. And he says, when he ascended on high, he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men. Paul kind of takes a minute to explain that and says in saying he ascended, what does it mean, but that he had also at one point, he had descended, he had come into the lower Earth into the lower regions, the earth, He who descended is the one who also has ascended back, far above all the heavens, that he might feel all things now, I'm not not going to spend as much time on this as we could. But this is a fascinating



couple of verses. Paul is again, let's remind ourselves, Paul's instructing the Ephesians to strive after unity. But that unity doesn't mean we all have to do the same thing. We all have to act in the same way. There's this variety of gifts. And if you want to read more about the variety of gifts First Corinthians chapter 12, talk Paul uses this a very similar analogy and goes into more depth. But I want to zero in on verses eight through 10. Here, because Paul is bringing in this picture from the book of songs from Psalm chapter 68. And it's this psalm where God is pictured as a king. He's pictured as like a conquering King returning home from war. And he's this was really interesting is in Psalm 68. Originally, if you look up Psalm 68, the verse doesn't say that the king gives gifts to men. The verse actually says that the king ascends to his throne, and then receives gifts from men. Now, Paul, is an apostle, and he's a very learned man he tells elsewhere in the New Testament, he he studied under the most important biblical scholars in Israel, the Pharisees, he, he knew his Bible, he was a faricy of Pharisees. He says, He knew his Bible. He knows what he's doing here. I don't think he quotes it this way on accident. It's not an accidental misquoting of Psalm 68. But he's what he's trying to do is turn our eyes to see this picture in a new and fresh way. So let's let's go back to this picture, a conquering King comes home from battle, he ascends back to his throne. And after sitting on his throne, he's surrounded by his his army, his officials, and they would bring the spoil, write the spoils of war, they would bring it up to the king, the wealth, the weapons, the livestock, and he the king would be in his throne, and he would receive the spoils. But then those spoils would be redistributed to his people. The spoils weren't meant for the king to horde, but it's it's to be redistributed for the good of the nation. And actually, in the psalm 68, you see this picture elsewhere in the song where we're family is are actually dividing the spoils of war. And that Hebrew word that is there that is translated as receive and the song can actually have that nuance to it, that that, that it is to receive something in order to give. So Paul is now saying that that Psalm applies to Jesus. He's saying Jesus is that conquering king he is the king who descended into the muck in the mire, and a messiness of this earth, the messiness of battle. He was God, but he descended into the lowest of the low to be with us. He came down from his throne in order to win the battle for his people. He defeated death. He died on a cross to defeat sin and then he rose from the grave in defeating death. He defeated Satan, he delivered his people, and then he ascended and he went back to his throne. far above the heavens, the highest of all places the throne of God, and He basked in his spoils of war. But what Paul is trying to highlight here is that Jesus did not win that battle in order to hoard these spoils for himself, but to distribute them to his people whom he loves, who he delivered. Quite literally. Paul is saying that Jesus died and rose again, for this for the church. Not just for a one time, your salvation you prayed the prayer you believed, and I've been justified. Nike is not just that Paul says, Paul says, He died in order to purchase your gifts, in order to win them, and any gifts that he's given you gifts of of wisdom, of knowledge, of kindness, of compassion, of evangelism, of teaching, of administration of material blessings, he's given you of mercy of any kind of service, any gifts that He has given you was fought for on the battlefield of the life of Jesus Christ, it was sacrificed for in the trenches of the cross, and it was signed and sealed for in the victory of the resurrection. Jesus Christ has Jesus Christ has fought and bled and risen for those gifts, and now he has given them to you. But why? That's the last question today. Why has he given you those gifts? We know that we're supposed to seek unity. We saw that so as to seek unity with them. But but but why? What's the ultimate end goal? Why would Jesus purchase these gifts for us? So we continue on verse 11. And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints, as everybody in the New Testament saints is just a member of the household of God. For the work of ministry, for the building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes, rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him, who is the head into Christ, from whom the whole body joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow. So it builds itself up in love. So he just given us gifts, the church has to be unified in the using of those gifts, and it does so in order to be built up into Christ. So Paul gives an example of those gifts. And it's really interesting. The example he points to isn't specific gifts like we see elsewhere in the New Testament, you know, like, like healing or, or teaching or compassion and kindness. No, no, Paul's, when he says gifts, he points to people. That's what Paul points to hear. He says the apostles, evangelists, the teachers, people, specific leaders in the church, actually all of which, who are called to some kind of word based teaching ministry. And we could spend a lot more time there. But I actually want to look at verse 12. and beyond. Look what Paul says the purpose of those leaders is to equip the saints, for the work of ministry. Again, all of us, saints just means the holy ones. In the New

Testament, anybody who has been made holy by Jesus. So every saint, every child of God, every member of his household, who has been saved by Jesus has been given the task of the work of ministry, and the teachers and the preachers, the pastors and church leaders. Their job is to equip the saints for that work of ministry, and what is that work of ministry? What's the very next phrase for the building up of the body of Christ? So here's the key friends, you're not called to be a part of a church so that the pastors or the staff or the key volunteers can do ministry to you. You are called to be a part of a church because the church needs you to build up the body of Christ. Jesus has chosen to build his church through you and you and you and you and you. He has chosen to build up his church through you, but you also need the church. You need to be equipped to do that work. It is a reciprocal relationship. The church needs to be built up. Paul says that's interesting. Paul doesn't have a view of the church in which it's this. You know, this group of perfect people, like you get saved, you get all the stuff and then you come hang out with all the rest of the good ones. It's not a Paul St. Paul says the church actually needs a lot of work. The church needs to be built up into the measure of Christ. And there they have a long way to go. The church is not a private Country Club for the well off the church is a training ground for the week. It's a boot camp. And what's being trained is not individual soldiers, but one unified army in this boot camp. So look at how Paul compares what we were to what we are to be called to you. In Christ. He says you were children, your individual children that's that's, that's plural, children, you are multiple children were individual children, tossed to and fro by the waves of brokenness in this world, carried here and there by different philosophies and truths, deceived by people adrift at sea. That's who we were, we were lonely and small and fragile. But the church as God's children, you're growing up together into a full grown man, a full grown person, that's that singular. One body, a body that is meant to look like Jesus was meant to grow up into him who is the head now, I have a six month old son, his name is Judah, and he is the best, I love them to death. He is probably cuter than your kids. Sorry. He's really great. But one thing that's, that's been really awesome to see as a dad is to get to see, see him grow. Right? He start off, and he's this little tiny baby, and he has this huge head. And he can't hold it up, you know, he just does this like, wobble thing. And we took him to the doctor at 1.1 of the doctors said, made the comment skinny baby big head. He was like really the 25th percentile. Anyway, hit big head. But the every baby has this, right? They they can't, they're their head is a little too big for their neck muscles, they're they're wobbling around, they'll both snap back if you take the wrong step. But then their their neck muscles start to develop, and they start to be able to hold their head up and they can look around and their eyes start developing, they start noticing things I can see things, then they start to get more control of their limbs and I start reaching out and grab hair and, and hair and, and more hair. their their their core starts developing. So they start they start to be able to sit up and and and at first they they just do their face ends up hitting their feet. And then then they can can simply topple over. But eventually they they get that balance and then their leg muscles stand up. And it's just incredible to see them grow and develop those muscles. And that's kind of that's kind of what Paul is saying here about the church, that the church is this this infant. And it has this this great well developed head that Jesus is the head he is the standard to which the church has to grow up into. But there's so much growth that has to happen. The rest of our body, the rest of the church has to catch up to Jesus in some sense. And in order to do so in order for the neck muscles to develop for the joints to grow stronger for vocal cords to actually connect to real words and and for our for our palates to expand beyond just milk. In order for all that to happen. The church needs each other. And of course, the church also needs Jesus. Jesus is the source of all growth, he is the head through which all nourishment comes to us. But he facilitates that nourishment through the church through local gatherings of believers, who equip one another through teaching and preaching through local churches where opportunity is given to exercise and utilize the gifts that God has given you. And one day the church will grow up into the fullness of Christ just as it was meant to. But it can't do that without each individual child that makes up the church. The church can't grow into the image of Christ without you. And you can't grow up into the image of Christ without the church. Now all of this could mean any number of things practically and I want to make sure we get out of here on time so but it can mean any number of things right we look at this passage we could really focus on the the humility and the gentleness and the love we seek in terms of unity and prioritizing peace with our brothers and sisters. We could turn our attention to the gifts that Christ has given us and try and figure out how to turn our hearts toward thankfulness and utilize those gifts. Well, we can look for unique ways that this church could use your efforts to be built up in love and if the Holy Spirit is powerful You in any of those directions, don't ignore him. But I want to leave you with one takeaway today. And that's that make gathering with the church belonging to the church a priority this year. It doesn't have to be union church. Frankly, it doesn't have to be here. It could be some other church. But if you're a

child of God, adopted by the Father, in the power of Jesus's blood, you're a part of the body of Christ. And friends, some of you, you got, you have to stop checking out a different church every week, or logging into a different online service every Sunday that catches your attention, and actually live into your calling to be a part of the body. The local church is where this actually happens, where the gifts are enacted and practice and it becomes effective as we grow into Christ. So it doesn't mean just coming to service on a Sunday morning and receiving content and then leaving, it means really participating in the life of the body. And again, it doesn't have to be here I would much rather have you be an active and participating member of another local church, there are many of them in the area that are faithful than just being a button a seat here on Sunday morning. So here at Union church, let me just give you a couple quick examples of what that might look like. It could mean serving practically volunteering on Sunday morning in a way that that helps all of the body be able to worship here, whether that's that's in kids ministry, or greeting people at the door, or making coffee or whatever else. This is a we're a church plant. This is this is an all hands on deck team effort to put on a service every Sunday morning. But it could also mean getting involved in a Bible study where the gift of your experience and your wisdom and your perspective helps somebody else grow in their knowledge of Jesus. Or maybe it's you allowing somebody else's gift to pour into you in that Bible study. It could mean using your gift of attentiveness and compassion that the churches that Jesus has gifted you with, and using that to, to notice things in your neighborhood and in your community that the church could actually lend a hand in. It could mean spending your time and your energy to get to know other people in this congregation by inviting somebody over for dinner by building up relationships of love and friendship and unity, where that mutual discipleship will happen. Maybe it means asking an older person to mentor you in this congregation or, or if you're an older person asking a younger person if they would like to be mentored. It could mean many different things. But it can't mean coming and receiving and then leaving. I can't mean that the body needs every joint muscle and organ and you need the body. Because the body friends is where we encounter Jesus, the body is what he died for. He did not just die to save you, but to win spoils of war to gift you with. Church is a grace for us friends, would you pray with me? Dear Lord, we are grateful for your graces for your mercies. And Lord, I just pray right now that you would turn our hearts from the individualistic consumeristic cultures that so many of us have grown up into, and turn our hearts towards the work of ministry that you have called each of us to that we might have a perspective towards your church that you have had. The things that you've died for that we would value that we would love that we would cherish that we would fight for you in our own hearts and amongst the people who we love, where we love you and we pray these things. In Jesus name Amen.