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BETHANY LUTHERAN CHURCH  
ELKHORN, NEBRASKA  
JANUARY 20, 2008  
PASTOR MARK FRY

1 PASTOR MARK FRY: It's good to be with you today.  
2 How many of you brought your Bibles?

3 We had a New Years challenge, January 6th, that we  
4 were going to start bringing our Bibles so you could write in  
5 them. If you don't have one, we will help you get one.

6 The challenge is, we have a whole bunch of them, but  
7 we aren't very skilled or confident of using them, so we want  
8 to help you.

9 We want to challenge you as well as support you.  
10 That was our theme on January 6th.

11 We talked about the importance of the wise men and  
12 the wise women of the Bible, when they are following the star  
13 to Jesus, they get there and pay him homage.

14 They bow down in worship to Jesus and they give him  
15 their hearts.

16 They give him those precious gifts of gold,  
17 frankincense, and myrrh.

18 But when we pay homage, when we worship Jesus, it  
19 becomes a lifestyle, not just a transaction.

20 We give, we receive, we radiate, is really what we  
21 tried to concentrate on that week.

22 Last week, we had some fun last week, Lowell came  
23 and we talked about not only the upward, but also the  
24 internal and the external part of discipleship.

25 When we are working in rhythm with Jesus, we align

1 our resources, and so we as a church are trying to do a  
2 better job of telling you how we are doing that.

3 So we are having this annual meeting next weekend,  
4 and we want to show you that the past was wonderful and the  
5 future is going to be even better. It's good.

6 We want to reach out to the world. We are striving  
7 as a church to be a tithing church. That means giving ten  
8 percent of our resources away.

9 We invite people to tithe of their own resources.  
10 We are going to do that as a church. That's just the way it  
11 works.

12 And then today we are going to talk a little bit  
13 more, we went from Matthew 2 to John 2. Today we are going  
14 to be looking at Acts 2.

15 If you don't have a Bible, we will get you one, and  
16 we do provide them for you on Sunday.

17 We want you to become more and more familiar with  
18 it. It's the phrase book of heaven.

19 It is the recording of the life of Jesus. It's this  
20 love story between God and humanity since the beginning of  
21 time.

22 And I wanted to press in on that a little bit with  
23 you.

24 After services today in the chapel there will be  
25 some church council people there that would love to hear some

1 of your questions and give you some handouts.

2 They have budgetary stuff, if you are into that,  
3 they have targets, if you're into that, we have some  
4 recollections of what God has done in the past year at  
5 Bethany.

6 It's a real fun conversation, so I invite you to go  
7 in there, there are very qualified, very blessed disciples  
8 that will be leading you through that.

9 So what I want to look at with you today is we need  
10 to do a little bit of back to future kind of discipleship.

11 In other words, I want our church, and I want our  
12 families, and I want my family, to look a little bit more  
13 like it looked in the Bible.

14 I don't mean we start growing long beards and wear  
15 robes. I'm talking about the lifestyle of the 1st Century  
16 church.

17 It's very intriguing, but it's also incredibly fun,  
18 and so we are going to look at that today.

19 And instead of what would Jesus do, what would  
20 Christians do if the 21st Century looked a lot like the 1st  
21 Century.

22 Like I say, we are not going to get rid of our cell  
23 phones and cars, but what would Christians be doing?

24 We will learn what they did then and hopefully that  
25 will translate into what we do in the future.

1           Here is your Bible study for the day. I don't know  
2 how many of you knew this, and I'm not going to ask for a  
3 show of hands because I don't want to assume prior knowledge,  
4 or make you feel badly about this, but this is something a  
5 lot of us maybe don't know.

6           The guy who wrote the Gospel of Luke also wrote the  
7 Book of Acts.

8           And that's kind of confusing because you have  
9 Matthew, you have Mark, and then you have Luke, and then you  
10 have John, and then you have Acts.

11          But the guy who wrote Luke also wrote Acts, and the  
12 fun thing is to see them as sequential, so we are going to  
13 take a peek at that today.

14          Look at Luke 24, the New Testament, and you're going  
15 to find Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

16          Go to Luke 24. Luke 24, in my Bible it's on page  
17 84, and what you are going to see here is now Jesus was with  
18 his disciples for three years, baptized, it's basically a  
19 three year training program for them.

20          And then he's betrayed, he's denied, he's arrested,  
21 he's crucified, and what we see in Luke 24 is we see the  
22 story of Easter.

23          So it has been three years and what is happening now  
24 on Easter are all these wonderful stories.

25          "But on the first day of the week, at early dawn,

1 the came to the tomb, taking the spices they had prepared."

2 The women are coming to the tomb, and so all of what  
3 is happening there in Chapter 24, a lot of that takes place  
4 on the same day.

5 There is the early Easter morning story. We look  
6 that up in Verse 13, two of them are going to the village of  
7 Emmaus, on that same day it says, their eyes were kept from  
8 recognizing him, but Jesus is back, you see, and as they walk  
9 along the road and as they have a meal together they realize  
10 that was Jesus.

11 And so what is happening is Jesus is appearing and  
12 he's opening their minds to understand the scriptures, like  
13 Verse 30.

14 "When he was at the table with them, he took bread,  
15 blessed and broke it, and gave it to them. Then their eyes  
16 were opened and they recognized him."

17 And they are going on from that, Verse 44, "These  
18 are my words I spoke to you while I was still with you, that  
19 everything written about me in the law of Moses, the  
20 prophets, and the psalms must be fulfilled."

21 What Jesus is saying to them is this is that. The  
22 things that we have been doing for the last three years, and  
23 the things we are going to go now, and the things you are  
24 going to do, it's in the Bible. It's being fulfilled. This  
25 is that.

1 Verse 45, "Then he opened their minds to understand  
2 the scriptures, and he said to them, thus it is written, that  
3 the Messiah is to suffer and rise from the dead on the third  
4 day."

5 He says it's all in there, but now what he says to  
6 them, he says in Verse 48, "You are witnesses of these  
7 things. And see, I am sending upon you what my Father  
8 promised; so stay here in the city until you have been  
9 clothed with power from on high."

10 And he leads them out to the small village of  
11 Bethany, which is a suburban community of Jerusalem, just  
12 like Elkhorn is, he blesses them and he ascends into heaven.

13 The point being he said stay here and wait. So he  
14 goes up into heaven and here is what they are doing while  
15 they are waiting.

16 Verse 52, "They worshipped him and returned to  
17 Jerusalem with great joy and they were continually in the  
18 temple blessing God."

19 They are doing exactly as he told them. We are  
20 doing what Jesus told us. We are going to wait.

21 And what they do is they wait for fifty days,  
22 because in fifty days Pentecost happens.

23 But, you see, now Luke's story has not ended; it's  
24 just put on pause.

25 This is the way Wenda and I watch movies now,

1 because we can hardly stay awake, we put it on pause and  
2 watch it the next night.

3 It's on pause and then we fast-forward to Acts 1.  
4 Acts 1, remember what they are doing, they are staying in the  
5 city waiting.

6 And Luke, he's writing a book, he says, "In the  
7 first book, Theophilus," Theophilus was a friend of Luke's,  
8 "In the first book I wrote about all that Jesus did and  
9 taught from the beginning until the day he was taken up to  
10 heaven," that's just what we were talking about.

11 Verse 4, "While staying with them, he ordered them  
12 not to leave Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of  
13 the Father."

14 So they are waiting. Jesus is encouraging them.  
15 They are waiting and then as they are waiting, Verse 6 is  
16 spoken.

17 "So when they had come together they asked him,  
18 'Lord, is this the time when you will restore the kingdom to  
19 Israel?'"

20 Is the waiting over? Is it going to look like it  
21 used to look? Are you going to restore the kingdom to  
22 Israel?

23 What Jesus in essence says, he says, well, not  
24 exactly.

25 The time is coming very soon, but what he says, in

1 essence, is it's bigger than that.

2 It's not a restoration project as much as it's going  
3 to be a reversal of your expectations project, and it's going  
4 to be a reversal in these three primary ways.

5 The church is going to become a people; not a place.

6 The church is going to become a movement; not a  
7 monument.

8 And the church is going to become an organism; not  
9 an organization.

10 That's basically what he says. You can look at what  
11 he says. He is basically saying not exactly.

12 What is going to happen is you are not going to be  
13 relegated to one place.

14 The church is going to be birthed and it's going to  
15 spread out through the whole face of the earth.

16 It's going to be an organism, it's going to be  
17 living and breathing, and it's going to have the signs of  
18 life in it.

19 And it's also going to be this wonderful movement,  
20 not a monument.

21 And, you see, we have built these churches and they  
22 have become monuments and a lot of them are empty.

23 They are misunderstanding what Jesus is saying.  
24 Those are the three things that the church is going to  
25 become.

1           Then what we look at, it's fantastic, because faith  
2 becomes transformation and not transaction.

3           And we see this in Acts 2. It's fifty days later,  
4 the Spirit of the living Christ descends upon the people that  
5 are gathered waiting. Pentecost.

6           The Holy Spirit shows up in a dramatic way, and it's  
7 poured upon people, and all of a sudden people start speaking  
8 different languages.

9           See, if he was restoring the kingdom of Israel  
10 everybody would have been speaking Hebrew, but he's reversing  
11 the whole Tower of Babel thing.

12           People are babbling, but it's in a language  
13 everybody can understand, because it's a unified language of  
14 love, not division, and everybody is understanding in their  
15 own language.

16           God is love. That's what is happening, see?  
17 Fantastic reversal story, see?

18           So what we see then, its one of my favorite verses  
19 of the Bible, Acts 2, Verses 12 and 13.

20           "All were amazed and perplexed, saying to one  
21 another, 'What does this mean?' But others sneered and said,  
22 'They are filled with new wine.'"

23           Peter is great, he stands up and he says no, they  
24 aren't drunk. This is what the Bible says is going to  
25 happen.

1           This is what Jesus says is going to happen. That's  
2 what you guys are seeing, experiencing, and doing.

3           So Peter has this wonderful sermon from Verse 14 all  
4 the way up through Verse 36 in Acts 2.

5           And I wanted you to see the context, because a text  
6 taken out of context is a con sometimes.

7           This is what has been happening. What we are  
8 learning is faith becomes a transformation; not a  
9 transaction.

10           In Acts 2 we see that faith is both a home game and  
11 away game, in sports parlance, because people thought it was  
12 just some game played in the temple, but it's not, and here's  
13 where we see it.

14           Verse 37, "Now when they heard this," when they  
15 heard Peter's sermon, "they were cut to the heart and said to  
16 Peter and the other apostles, 'Brothers, what should we do?'"

17           You see, Peter has just been telling them that it's  
18 not a restoration, it's a reversal, and these are church  
19 people, and they are cut to the heart.

20           They understand. The way we have always done it  
21 doesn't work.

22           It isn't the way God wants us to do it, with the  
23 church being a monument, the church being a place, the church  
24 being an organization.

25           And so they are cut to the heart and they say what

1 do we need to do?

2 Peter says repent. Change. Don't give us that it's  
3 always been done this way before. Change.

4 "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you in the  
5 name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven, and  
6 you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the  
7 promise is for you, for your children, and for all who are  
8 far away."

9 It's not just an in-house deal. It's a road game as  
10 well.

11 And it's a game that is played in the temple, and in  
12 your homes, and on the road, and here is how. We see it  
13 beautifully then.

14 "And he testified with many other arguments and  
15 exhorted them, saying, 'Save yourselves from this corrupt  
16 generation.'"

17 You talk about a timely word, a corrupt generation,  
18 the 21st Century.

19 The 21st Century would tell you that you can't do  
20 it. Do it the way it's always been done. Just go to church  
21 once an hour a week.

22 That's the default, see, I want to make it a  
23 transaction, instead of being part of the transformation.

24 So he's telling them, here is what you've got to do,  
25 repent and be baptized, because the promise is for you and

1 your children.

2 In other words, don't relegate your children off to  
3 a different thing.

4 Don't think that your kids are the only ones who  
5 need to be learners. Everybody does.

6 It's for you, for your children, for your children's  
7 children, for all who are far away, everyone.

8 "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation. So  
9 those who welcomed his message were baptized and that day  
10 about three thousand persons were added."

11 So that is what the Christians do, this is that, and  
12 look at this. So what do they do next?

13 They have been baptized. They want to change. So  
14 they devote themselves to the apostles' teaching. They read  
15 their Bibles.

16 Isn't that cool? That's what we have been talking  
17 about.

18 They devoted themselves to reading the Bible, to  
19 fellowship amongst other believers, to the breaking of bread  
20 at tables, and to prayers, and here is what happens when they  
21 do it.

22 "Awe came upon all of them, because many wonders and  
23 signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were  
24 together and had all things in common. They would sell their  
25 possessions and goods and they would distribute the proceeds

1 to all as they had need.

2 "Day by day, as they spent much time together in the  
3 temple," it still is a church game, the building, "they broke  
4 bread at home," your table is also the Lord's table, "and ate  
5 their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and  
6 having the goodwill of all the people.

7 "And day by day the Lord added to their number those  
8 who were being saved."

9 Again, you see, the default is going to be that we  
10 think this is crazy. We can't change our lifestyle.

11 But, you see, we need to kind of hear a voice like  
12 what Peter says, when Peter says this is that.

13 This is the way the Bible wanted it to be and, you  
14 see, people say they are drunk.

15 No, no, they are not drunk. They aren't filled with  
16 new wine, but they might be crazy.

17 They are NUTS. Never Underestimate The Spirit.  
18 They are NUTS.

19 It's crazy, isn't it, to save ourselves from this  
20 corrupt generation.

21 I want to introduce to you Barb Baumert. She's our  
22 director of youth and family discipleship.

23 This is Barb, and what I wanted to do with Barb is I  
24 wanted to have a basketball up here as well, because both  
25 Barb and I in our previous lives played some basketball and

1 this is a basketball that has the air let out, so it doesn't  
2 bounce very well.

3 But, you see, we are not players anymore. We have  
4 kind of taken on more of a role of being coaches on how the  
5 game needs to be played.

6 And so this is what I've asked Barb to do. She's  
7 going to do a little bit of the Peter thing here, this is  
8 that, and tell you a little bit about what is happening in  
9 youth and family discipleship.

10 (Applause)

11 MS. BAUMERT: First I'm going to tell you, I like to  
12 cross country ski, so yesterday I went over to the park, and  
13 it was five degrees, and it was like I know I'm crazy, but I  
14 am going to go try skiing.

15 So I was sitting in the parking lot before I went  
16 skiing and I got a phone call from one of my DMD leaders.

17 He just started talking about being a leader. Our  
18 DMD group is our high school Disciple Making Disciple group.

19 He said, "I'm done sitting in the pew. I just don't  
20 want to sit in the pew one hour a week and that's the end of  
21 that."

22 And I thought maybe really he should probably sit up  
23 here and then that could be the whole message.

24 So it was a great word that I received from him  
25 about moving.

1           And then I went out and moved for like an hour and I  
2 thought that was probably God saying, yes, talk about moving,  
3 instead of just sitting in the pew, I know that's what we  
4 were all raised with, coming here once a week.

5           So I'm going to give you some examples of what has  
6 been happening with the DMD groups, because it's showing that  
7 they are trying to move.

8           And I think it's showing the kids that being a  
9 disciple is more than just sitting; it's about moving.

10           PASTOR FRY: You have about 18 leaders of these  
11 Disciple Making Disciple groups.

12           They have doubled in about the last year as a result  
13 of this transformation process and it has been a lot of fun  
14 for people.

15           Barb has been telling me some of these stories, this  
16 is that, these are similar stories of what Wenda and are  
17 hearing from the people who are leading the life groups in  
18 homes.

19           So what Barb does is she huddles those leaders on a  
20 regular basis and then they work with their youth in the DMD  
21 groups, we work with people, and they are working with their  
22 people in the life groups, and they are doing this  
23 three-dimensional life thing with the up, the in, and the  
24 out.

25           So Barb is going to tell you some of the cool stuff

1 she has been telling me. I had to prompt her, because she  
2 has been very humble with the stories.

3 MS. BAUMERT: Up on the screen is a picture of a  
4 bunch of the kids.

5 We meet monthly with the kids and they gather and we  
6 do some worship and teaching, so that's one of those nights.

7 We try to include worship, and we know that's  
8 important to teach the kids.

9 And that one is a picture of a bunch of the kids.  
10 We were supposed to play outside that day, but the weather  
11 didn't hold up, so we were playing a game of kickball with 80  
12 people in one gym. That was kind of just having some fun, in  
13 time.

14 The next one is on a mission trip, but it's the same  
15 premise when we go on those mission trips.

16 The kids are out doing stuff together, so they are  
17 building relationships with each other, and the people that  
18 we're serving.

19 Right there we are mixing cement, because we made a  
20 foundation. We built a foundation for a wall.

21 That in the distance is a soccer field where we play  
22 with the people that live there.

23 PASTOR FRY: Is that in Mexico?

24 MS. BAUMERT: In Mexico, and I think we were  
25 spelling something there, but I can't remember what it was,

1 but that was our defensive part of the team right there.

2 PASTOR FRY: Let me add a piece here, what we found  
3 in this, and what really works, you see it in Acts 2 there,  
4 they devote themselves to the teaching, they are breaking  
5 bread together, and they are also serving.

6 And some people will enter in any one of those three  
7 ways.

8 Some people really want to do the up thing, some who  
9 really want to do the fellowship, and some who really have  
10 that blessing of building houses and laying foundations and  
11 getting their hands dirty.

12 These are all three entry points into that  
13 three-dimensional life.

14 MS. BAUMERT: Everybody in here, whether you want to  
15 be a leader of a DMD group or not, it doesn't matter.

16 It's where do you want to move? What do you want to  
17 do?

18 If you want to enter into building a foundation, or  
19 even little things like maybe begin daily devotions,  
20 something, just move somewhere. I think what God is calling  
21 us to do is to move.

22 I will tell the Dave story, because it's really  
23 cute, but Dave has a group of about eight boys, high school  
24 boys, and actually the stories aren't all great.

25 He has really struggled to get consistency with kids

1 showing up.

2           So they decided they wanted to adopt a family. We  
3 had about five DMD groups that decided they wanted to adopt a  
4 family and it was before Christmas and Dave was like, "We are  
5 not just going to fork out the money. We are going to raise  
6 the money."

7           So he came up with a whole bunch of ideas. Of  
8 course, none of them panned out.

9           He was getting really frustrated and then someone  
10 said to him, "Why don't you sell donuts at church?"

11           He's like, "That won't work."

12           So anyway what happened was they sold donuts and  
13 they made \$565.

14           That day he calls and he said, "Barb, I can't  
15 believe it. We made \$565."

16           He called the family they adopted. He said, "I have  
17 some money. What do you want us to do with it?"

18           The guy was talking, maybe you can buy some  
19 Christmas presents, they were talking about what they could  
20 do.

21           And then the guy said, "You know, really, I'm just  
22 getting my degree and I need to apply for a work permit so I  
23 can stay in the country and work, but I can't afford it."

24           And Dave is like, "How much is it?"

25           The guy said, "\$340."

1           Dave is like, "Let's do that. Let's spend the money  
2 that way."

3           And so this was Monday, and the guy said, "The only  
4 catch is that I need to have all the applications done and  
5 everything by Wednesday so that I can stay in the country  
6 with my family." He has like four kids.

7           So Dave called me and said, "I need the money."

8           So I gave him the money, he gets a cashier's check,  
9 he goes with the guy down to do the application.

10           The guy and his whole family are like wow, what just  
11 happened, this money just dropped in from heaven so I can  
12 stay in the country and work.

13           So they did that and then Dave says to the family,  
14 "We have more money. What else do you want us to do?"

15           "We are kind of behind in our MUD bill."

16           So Dave had to drive all the way down to 14th and  
17 Jackson or something to do that because they wouldn't do it  
18 over the phone, there were lots of obstacles, so then he did  
19 that.

20           And Dave talked to him again, "We have more money."

21           So they are like, "The kids really need winter coats  
22 and mittens."

23           So Dave gets all his boys, I don't know, but like  
24 high school boys going to buy a coat for a toddler girl, it  
25 doesn't quite match.



1           So they've decided to adopt this family for the  
2 whole year and stay in fellowship with them and have a  
3 relationship get started.

4           It's not charity; it's relationship. It's this is  
5 that.

6           This is what we see in the Book of Acts, the second  
7 chapter.

8           They are together, they are contributing, and they  
9 are having the goodwill of all, and they are reaching out.

10          So it's three-dimensional life, is what we are  
11 really seeing, and it's awesome, just like it says in the  
12 text.

13          "And awe came upon everyone, because many wonders  
14 and signs were being done by the apostles."

15          I wanted you to know that Barb is doing the same  
16 thing with her leaders that Wenda and I are doing with our  
17 leaders.

18          We shared last week we are in the process of trying  
19 to sell our home, because on Friday nights we have between  
20 thirty and forty people in our home, and our home doesn't  
21 hold that many.

22          So we have sensed God's call to get a bigger  
23 dwelling.

24          Usually when you have the empty nest you downsize,  
25 and we just can't get our ministry done in the house that we

1 are in now, so we are in the process of getting another  
2 house, because we can't do it every night of the week.

3 We want to honor the rhythm of life, so it's a  
4 Friday night thing.

5 So we invest our lives into the leaders of those  
6 life groups and Barb invests her life into the leaders of  
7 those DMD groups.

8 It's a transformation process, so nobody is going to  
9 go out and lead a group and not be supported.

10 Nobody is going to go out and lead a group and  
11 something comes along that they have not dealt with before.

12 They have a resource in Barb, or in me, that can  
13 help them through those tumultuous times, because it's a  
14 support system and also a transformation process. Anything  
15 else, Barb?

16 MS. BAUMERT: It's awesome to watch the leaders work  
17 and their commitment and how they are ready to take those  
18 kids and move them places, physically and spiritually. So it  
19 has been really great and I love being around them.

20 PASTOR FRY: It's interesting also because some of  
21 those group leaders have one of their own biological kids in  
22 the same group, some don't.

23 And it's the same with our life groups. Some of  
24 them are families with their kids as participants.

25 We do not want any longer to separate kids out.

1 Then it becomes a programatic thing instead of a relational  
2 thing, because that's a disconnect, isn't it, if our kids see  
3 us out saving the world and we are not there. That's one of  
4 the wounds that I created.

5 MS. BAUMERT: A lot of leaders just meet in their  
6 homes and they have dinner and their family also eats with  
7 them, too, so they can stay in their homes.

8 Most of those groups are actually meeting in  
9 people's homes, or sometimes they go out.

10 I think there is one group that meets at Scooter's  
11 every Sunday morning, or different places they decide.

12 PASTOR FRY: One of the goals that you will see at  
13 the annual meeting is to grow the number of those groups.

14 We are sensing that we want at least twelve to  
15 fifteen more life groups birthed.

16 And so that is going to mean leaders, but it's also  
17 going to be people that can get connected and do  
18 three-dimensional life together.

19 Some people are already in groups. So our challenge  
20 to you is to pray about it.

21 Maybe God wants you to take that group you have and  
22 make it into a life group that is three-dimensional, instead  
23 of one or two-dimensional. We will challenge you, as well as  
24 support you.

25 So I guess to conclude, the beginning steps of it I

1 think are right there in that Acts 2 text when Peter says to  
2 them repent and be baptized.

3           Repentance is the first step. Repentance doesn't  
4 mean feel badly about the way you are living life. It just  
5 means change. Repent.

6           And some of you may be going, I have already been  
7 baptized.

8           We are not asking you to be re-baptized, but we are  
9 saying maybe you need to stir the water up a little more, to  
10 get into the game, instead of just having a transactional  
11 understanding of who Jesus is, because he reverses a lot of  
12 our understandings, and it's a good thing.

13           So my invitation as a response, I kind of have a  
14 guilt thing -- not a guilt thing -- but an awareness that God  
15 has taught me that my kids' perception of my role was that I  
16 was loving other kids more than I was them.

17           You can see how that would develop, couldn't you?  
18 I've got two kids and I'm hauling kids to Colorado on a  
19 backpacking trip, or hauling kids to Canada, or we are going  
20 out for pizza night, or whatever.

21           What my kids were seeing in that is, boy, you are  
22 around those guys a lot, but it doesn't seem like you are  
23 having as much fun when you are around us.

24           I'm being accountable to that, and I'm changing  
25 that, but that's one of the things I think the Christian

1 family has done.

2 We have relegated the discipling of our kids off to  
3 somebody else.

4 And so what I would invite as a response to God's  
5 revelation, let's bring a couple of families together.

6 Maybe you are sitting within reach of someone you've  
7 never met before.

8 What I would like you to do is to move, just move  
9 closer to one another, it might be somebody you know, and I  
10 would invite you to come together as new family friends,  
11 because God's word is pretty clear that we are all in this  
12 thing together.

13 It's a home game, the temple, and on the road, so  
14 would you just move for a moment. It doesn't have to be  
15 anybody you know.

16 I'm going to walk you through this, because one of  
17 the things we do when we pronounce the blessing on the table  
18 at Bethany is we invite you to hold hands. Remember how we  
19 do that?

20 So what I would invite you to do is hold hands for a  
21 moment, would you?

22 And one of the things that they did in the story in  
23 Acts 2 is they are together, they are devoted to the  
24 apostles' teaching, that's what we have been doing this  
25 morning, we have opened the Bible together, and now they are

1 going to have fellowship together.

2           So we are going to do that right now. As your hands  
3 are held, no matter how big your circle is, just say one  
4 thing that you are thankful for.

5           And as one persons says that, you'll say it out loud  
6 and then you will squeeze the hand of the person next to you,  
7 and then they will say the thing they are thankful for.

8           It's going to be kind of an electrical charge right  
9 around your circle, no matter how many people are in it,  
10 something you are thankful for.

11           And then just go around that circle. I'm going to  
12 give us some quiet as Gene plays piano music.

13           This is fellowship, you see. We have shared the  
14 word together, and now you are going to say one thing you are  
15 thankful for and it will go around your circle and you'll  
16 pause for a moment. Go ahead and do that right now.

17           Lord, we do thank you for those individual things.  
18 We thank you, Lord, for your word and for fellowship.

19           And we thank you, Lord, that you are inviting us to  
20 move, to make relationship with you a transformation process.

21           So we thank you for everyone gathered today, Lord,  
22 and we ask you to send us into this world to be lights, to be  
23 the salt of the earth, Lord, to make a difference, to be the  
24 leaven in the loaf.

25           So we thank you, Lord, and ask you to bring us

1 together safely and soon. In the name of Jesus, Amen.

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