

INTRO

- When you were a child, did your family have a traditional “grace” that would be prayed before meals?
- How about a bedtime prayer for the children?

Ekklesia is a Greek word defined as “**a called-out assembly or congregation**” and is commonly translated “church”. In our summer series, Ekklesia, we are looking at what the early church devoted themselves to then in order to consider what the church should devote herself to now.

READ

Acts 2:42-47

Luke, the author of Acts, describes the communal life of the first Jewish converts to Christianity. One of the practices of the first followers of Jesus was to pray together — Communal Prayer.

REFLECT & RESPOND

Communal Prayer Builds Disciples

Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, **teach** us to pray, as John **taught** his disciples.” — Luke 11:1

Both the disciples of Jesus and the disciples of John were taught to pray — disciplined.

Qu: Has someone in your life taught you or inspired you to pray?

Communal Prayer Builds Community

The Apostle Paul’s desire for believers was, “That their hearts may be encouraged, being **knit** together in love.” (Colossians 2:2a)

Paul also exhorted us to, “Bear one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.” (Galatians 6:2)

As we pray with others, we get to know one another at a deeper level. We “bear one another’s burdens”. We become invested in one another

lives as we pray. We rejoice together when prayers are answered

Qu: In what ways do you feel like community is strengthened through praying together?

Communal Prayer Builds Unity

The King James Version of the Bible uses the word “accord” when describing the relationships and prayer life of the first disciples.

Accord: To be in agreement, unity, or harmony

“These all continued with **one accord** in prayer and supplication.” (Acts 1:14a KJV)

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with **one accord** in one place.” (Acts 2:1 KJV)

“And they, continuing daily **with one accord** in the temple.” (Acts 2:46a KJV)

The early church was in one accord (agreement, unity or harmony):

1. Deep RELATIONSHIP
2. Learning TRUTH
3. Joyous WORSHIP
4. Sacrificial SERVICE
5. Communal PRAYER
6. Winsome WITNESS

Qu: What impact does the devotion of the church have on the church and the world?

PRAY

As the summer draws to a close and our series of sermons —Ekklesia— comes to an end, pray for one another that we would grow in devotion to the practices defined the first followers of Jesus?