

# Beginnings: The Start of the Church

## "A Purpose"

Week 3 – May 8, 2022

Scripture: Acts 2:42-47

*Grab your Bible and a few people to connect with. Look up the verses below and share your thoughts. It's that easy!*

**Share:** Do you enjoy hosting family gatherings or do you dread hosting them? If your family is not local, do you host gatherings with friends or hope for an invite? Why?

**Read the scripture noted above together:** Take turns reading if you prefer. Enjoy the different Bible translations we each read.

### **Discuss the following context:**

This series will trek through the book of Acts, and look at the early church, in the aftermath of Jesus' physical ministry, and challenge us to pursue faith and community while keeping in step with the Holy Spirit, as the early church did.

The early church devoted themselves to the apostles teachings and the breaking of bread, essentially faith and community (Acts 2:42). Their approach was UNITY (Acts 2:44-45), the result was AUTHENTIC RELATIONSHIP (Acts 2:46), and it was CONTAGIOUS (Acts 2:47). How can we apply what we see in Acts 2:42-47 to our current context? How can we recalibrate our lives through faith and community to produce growth, impact, and life change?

### **Share your thoughts about the following questions:**

1. If you were asked about your devotion to faith and community how you you respond? Do you invest more time in growing and honing your faith (prayer, reading your Bible, worship, studies, groups, podcasts, books, etc), or developing community relationships around you (local church, neighbors, marginalized, etc.), or both? Why?
2. What could the church look like in 2022 if our approach was unity and people met the needs of others, even at their personal expense?
  - a. What does this say about segregated or polarized expressions of community?
  - b. How does this challenge the private, individualistic lives we often live?
  - c. What is the danger in "opening up only certain parts of our lives" versus opening up our whole life to develop community relationships?
3. Authentic community includes moments of tension and seasons of being uncomfortable. How does a "be yourself without fear of judgement" type of community impact your faith?

**Pray together:** Ask each other to share what is on your heart today. Thank God that He made us to be communal beings – desiring both community with Him and with others. Ask God to help us recalibrate our lives so that we can move closer to His design for our lives. Ask Him to remove barriers and place a burning in us to live like the early church lived – in unity creating authentic relationships that are simply contagious. We desire to be filled with the Holy Spirit!

# Beginnings: The Start of the Church

"A Sermon"

Week 2 – May 1, 2022

Scripture: Acts 2:14-41

*Grab your Bible and a few people to connect with. Look up the verses below and share your thoughts. It's that easy!*

**Share:** What is your first memory of church? Were you invited to church or did you attend with your family? Have you ever thought about what it would be like to be part of the early church?

**Read the scripture noted above together:** Take turns reading if you prefer. Enjoy the different Bible translations we each read.

## **Discuss the following context:**

This series will trek through the book of Acts, and look at the early church, in the aftermath of Jesus' physical ministry, and challenge us to pursue faith and community while keeping in step with the Holy Spirit, as the early church did.

In Acts chapter 2 Peter addresses the crowd in the aftermath of the craziness taking place in verses 1-13. He teaches those gathered about the progression of prophesy being fulfilled through Jesus (verses 14-21), Jesus is God's chosen Messiah (verses 22-32), and Jesus ushering in the Holy Spirit (verses 33-36). Peter gives the main application (verse 38), where he instructs the crowd to 'REPENT', 'BE BAPTIZED', and 'RECEIVE THE HOLY SPIRIT'.

## **Share your thoughts about the following questions:**

1. **Repent** means to change your outlook, have a change of heart, and reverse the direction of your life. If you change the way you see the world how can that change the way you live in the world?
2. **Being baptized** is more than just getting dunked in a tank full of water, it is a permanent shift – a new identity as a Christ follower. What does it mean to be identified by your relationship with Christ?
3. **Receiving the Holy Spirit** is our opportunity to engage with God. Jesus is God's chosen Messiah, and after His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension, the Holy Spirit ushers in a new era of interaction between God and humanity. Jesus foretold this was going to happen in John 16:7: "I tell you the truth: it is to your advantage that I go away, for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you. But if I go, I will send him to you."
  - a. Scripture gives us a fuller description of what the Holy Spirit can look like in our lives. Read these verses and discuss.
    - John 14:6
    - Romans 8:28
    - Galatians 5:22
    - Acts 1:8
    - 2 Corinthians 3:17
  - b. Jesus was God WITH us, the Holy Spirit is God IN us. It is possible to have fellowship with God until He comes again. Do you find hope in this gift?

**Pray together:** Ask each other to share what is on your heart today. Thank God that when we trust in Him, it changes us on the inside and outside. Ask Him to help you have complete dependence on the Holy Spirit.

# Beginnings: The Start of the Church

## "A Room"

Week 1 – April 24, 2022

Scripture: Acts 2:1-13

*Grab your Bible and a few people to connect with. Look up the verses below and share your thoughts. It's that easy!*

**Share:** Have you ever discovered a tool or gadget that was a game-changer? Something that simplified or clarified a task or process. Share your experience!

**Read the scripture noted above together:** Take turns reading if you prefer. Enjoy the different Bible translations we each read.

### **Discuss the following context:**

This series will trek through the book of Acts, and look at the early church, in the aftermath of Jesus' physical ministry, and challenge us to pursue faith and community while keeping in step with the Holy Spirit, as the early church did.

Its so easy for the Church to get distracted by all the issues that life and culture can throw our way. Its important to take time to re-focus on who the Church is called to be, and what the Church is called to do.

### **Share your thoughts about the following questions:**

1. The Holy Spirit shows up on the scene after the ascension of Christ (post resurrection). Acts 2:1-13 says the Spirit came like a 'VIOLENT WIND', 'TONGUES OF FIRE', 'EVERYONE WAS FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT', and they were 'SPEAKING IN OTHER LANGUAGES'—and this is the birth of the Church.
  - a. This was the catalyst of God being made available to EVERYONE! Previously, the Holy Spirit was given only to a select few to perform specific tasks. What does this say about the character of God?
  - b. The Church exists as a body, by means of the Holy Spirit, called to be the hands and feet of Jesus in the here and now. What does this mean for each of us?
  - c. Acts 2 often creates confusion or raises questions (violent winds, tongues of fire, speaking in other languages, etc.). What questions do you have from Acts 2:1-13? If you don't have specific questions, what attributes of the Holy Spirit stand out to you?
2. The Holy Spirit came to fulfill God's promise given in the Law and the Prophets. It is the beginning of God filling ALL believers with His presence. How can we depend on His presence and access the power of the Holy Spirit in our lives daily?
3. What could it look like for Kensington Church to be a community of people who centered their lives around the presence of God...who were activated in their sphere of influence?

**Pray together:** Ask each other to share what is on your heart today. Thank God for His presence. Thank Him for sending the Holy Spirit to fill all believers so that we may share the gospel with others. God, help us bring clarity and unity around the power of the Holy Spirit, and for your Church to be filled with the Spirit so that we can be the hands and feet of Jesus today.