

Neighborhood Communion Group

Discussion Questions

Background

The idea behind neighborhood communion groups arose from the earliest Christian communities that gathered regularly in homes for a time of eating and talking. In the 21st century, our churches gather for a talk called “sermon” and a meal called “Communion,” but with little time for developing intimacy and relationships.

As you gather this evening, think of it as a throwback to the early church, or a dinner party in our day. Below, you’ll find a Scripture passage, along with some suggested questions. Neighborhood Communion is a chance to enjoy food and food for thought.

Scripture Passage

Acts 2:42-47

⁴²They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. ⁴³Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. ⁴⁴All who believed were together and had all things in common; ⁴⁵they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. ⁴⁶Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, ⁴⁷praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.

Discussion

This passage is one of the early summaries in the book of Acts, shortly after the time of Jesus when the Christian movement was just getting started. In some ways, this passage refers to the ancient equivalent of Neighborhood Communion. Here are some questions to get the discussion going.

- 1) The writer notes how they “devoted themselves” to four things: teachings of the apostles (likely Paul’s letters and oral stories about Jesus), fellowship (sharing life together), breaking of bread (Communion), and prayers. What do you make of each of these items? Is there one you find more meaningful in our day when gathered with believers?
- 2) The writer also highlights the sharing that highlighted their community, meeting each other’s needs. While we live in a very different culture and economy, how do you think about these things in the life of our church, in the life of a Neighborhood Communion group?
- 3) We also read how their meals were times of great joy, eating with “glad and generous hearts.” And yet the indication of meeting needs indicates there were struggles to be overcome. How do you think of the tenor of gatherings like Neighborhood Communion groups? How does a group make themselves vulnerable over time, sharing their struggles, as well as their joys?