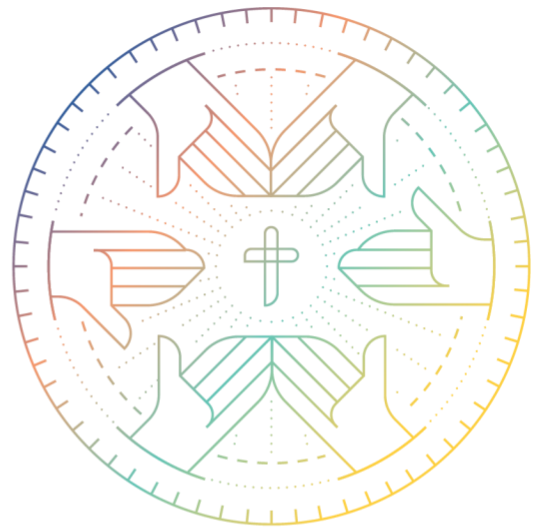


Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



WELCOME (10 MINUTES)

This week we are continuing our series, *Give Me Strength*. In this fourth week, we'll talk about how community is important for our transformation and how there are small, but specific, spiritual practices that God can use to increase our strength through community.

- Please don't forget to take attendance via the attendance reminder email. It's important!

ICEBREAKER (10 MINUTES)

Much of the life of the early church took place in their individual homes. What is your favorite feature in your current home or apartment? What do you like the most about where you live?

INTRODUCTION (5-10 MINUTES)

Was there one idea that stood out to you from Doug's message on the importance of community?

Read Acts 1:3-5.

Imagine what it was like for the early apostles and disciples during those first 40 days after Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection. Perhaps some were scared, excited, confident, confused, grieving, relieved, anxious, or even vengeful. What emotion can you imagine yourself having during those early days?

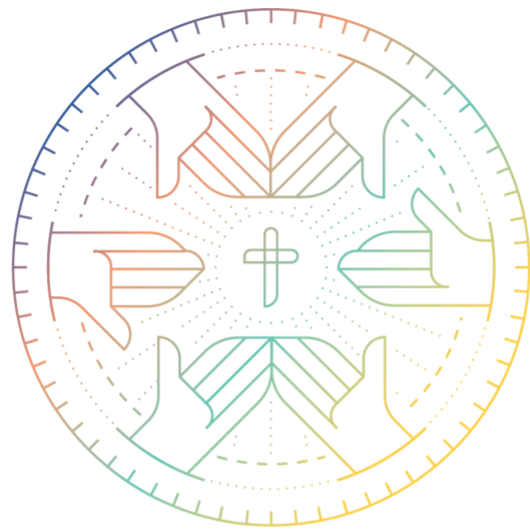
INTO THE WORD (25 MINUTES)

Read Acts 2:42-47.

Describe the various characteristics of the early church. What aspect or characteristic of the early church do you find most inviting (meaning, makes you want to be a part of this church)? Is there an aspect that surprises you?

Group Life.

WE ARE BETTER TOGETHER



Read Acts 4:32-35. How does this passage add to our understanding of what life was like for those first believers? What stands out to you?

Read John 13:34-35. Think about the many expressions of love that characterized the early church. How did those expressions draw outsiders to the message of Jesus? What happened to the church as a result?

APPLICATION (25 MINUTES)

In what ways is your small group experience similar or dissimilar to the description of this early church? Are there other meaningful ways you experience community at Fairhaven? Share with the group what you've found meaningful.

Doug talked about how the early church had all things "in common," including their Savior, their story and their calling. How would you describe the things you have "in common" with the other members of your small group?

Doug mentioned that there are 59 "one-another" statements in the New Testament and that we cannot accomplish those in one hour, once a week. What's one idea or suggestion that would help your small group to practice the one-another's of Scripture?

How does your experience in a circle of community prepare you to go out into the world during your week?

PRAYER (10 MINUTES)

Father God, in a world that values independence and individualism, you have placed us together in a community of faith we call Fairhaven. Here you have given us each a place to belong and a story to share. We come together because of our love for you and our desire to be more like Jesus. We are grateful that we are not alone in our journey...in our difficult circumstances and hardships or even in our joy and excitement. As we gather, may we commit to practicing the "one-another's" in this group and caring deeply for each other. Would you enable us to both give and receive your love in a way that brings you glory. **Amen**