

INTRODUCTION

The reflections during the *Building Bridges of Hope* series aim to capture the big ideas of the weekly sermon. The sermon series will focus on CG Midtown's core values through the lens of the book of Acts. The values express the unique gifts and calling of our congregation and they serve as guiding principles in how we carry out our mission and vision. They also ground us in our identity as a church and describe the way the Holy Spirit has formed us over the years. Just like the early church in the book of Acts, we want to be faithful to the call God has given us so we can offer hope to the world around us.

CG MIDTOWN VALUE: BELONGING

We make establishing, building, and maintaining meaningful, deep, and intentional relationships with God and one another a priority. We value and respect the image of God in all people. We trust that a variety of perspectives leads to deeper community.

SERMON REFLECTION

Read: Acts 2:42-47

Overview: The resurrection of Jesus and the coming of the Holy Spirit empowered followers of Jesus to live in a different kind of way. They lived in interdependent communities where no one had needs. The people around them were impressed by the way the followers of Jesus lived, even if they didn't choose to live that way themselves. But many did witness the power of the Holy Spirit in their fellowship and gave their lives to Jesus.

Reflect:

- What comes to mind when you hear the word Belonging? Where do you experience belonging? What creates a lack of belonging in our world/culture?
- How did Jesus create belonging?
- What strikes you about Luke's description of the early church? Is there a particular aspect that is most appealing to you?
- Why do you think Luke highlighted the activities of the church that he did? Consider how these activities connect to belonging.
- How can a community be formed like Luke's description? What would it take for that to happen? What are the barriers that prevent this sort of community?
- What sort of "favor" does the church enjoy today (Acts 2:47)? How can your group be a place of belonging (and favor) as described in Acts 2:42-47?

PRAYER

- Invite people to pray that God would form a deeper belonging in the small group.
- Pray the Lord's Prayer together.