

WHAT IS CHURCH?

C: A CREATIVE COMMUNITY

WHAT IS CHURCH 2

**New Hope Project Video from Life Chapel MOUNTAINS Lexington Va &
Full Gospel Church OCEANS Wall NJ**

Today we are livestreaming from FGC Oceans.



DEFINE COMMUNITY

- **Compound Word made up of two words: COMMON & UNITY**

Can you think of examples where unity occurred in the bible and what happened?



NEEDED BEFORE POWER & GROWTH...

- Acts 1:12-14

When God's people purposefully meet **TOGETHER** powerful things happen!

Upper Room Prayer Meeting

“These all continued with **ONE** accord in prayer and supplication.”

This happened after Jesus went to heaven and before Pentecost happened.

Despite their loss, feelings, and hurt/confusion, they stayed committed to

PRAYER

COMMON UNITY



THE BIBLE'S DEFINITION OF CHURCH- ACTS 2

Acts 2: 1-4

They were gathered in ONE PLACE. The Holy Spirit came and gave them POWER.

Verse 41

After Peter preached, thousands were saved.

We'll talk more about this throughout this series (H).

Verses 42-47 CHURCH Checklist

- ✓ **They devoted themselves to teaching, fellowship, breaking bread, prayer, & praise.**
- ✓ **Wonders & signs occurred. They had favor.**
- ✓ **Everyone was together and had everything in common. (COMMUNITY)**
- ✓ **They sold property & possessions to give to anyone who had need.**
- ✓ **The Lord ADDED TO THEIR NUMBER DAILY THOSE WHO WERE SAVED!**

GOD SHOWS UP IN COMMUNITY

Church is NOT about a BUILDING or REGION.

It's the people. It's the purpose. It's the power that overwhelms our prerogatives.

2 Chronicles 5: 13-14

“The trumpeteers and musicians joined in UNISON to give praise and thanks to the LORD. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals, and other instruments, the singers raised their voices in praise to the Lord and sang. “He is good; his love endures forever.” Then the temple of the Lord was filled with the cloud, and the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the LORD filled the temple of GOD.”



GOD COMMANDS IT AS A GOAL

Psalm 133:1

“Behold how good and pleasant it is when brothers dwell in unity!”

Persecution among the church shouldn't be IN the church –between body parts.

We shouldn't “shoot our own man” or “abuse the bride.” When we do, we only hurt ourselves, our witness, and give the real enemy of all of our souls the win. We score for the opponent's team.

When we choose to be agents of division, we are disobeying God Himself.

We are doing “church” our way, not God's way, being the church.



COMMUNITY IS DIVERSE

Romans 12:4-5

“For as in one body we have many members and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members of another.”

Galatians 3:28

“There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all ONE in CHRIST JESUS.

-ALL generations, cultures, genders, languages, socio-economic distinctions, regions, political parties, giftings & callings etc coming together for a common godly purpose in an age and culture that is increasingly divided, discouraged, and dark.

YOU are NEEDED! YOU are a VITAL part of this faith COMMUNITY both in and outside the church walls.



COMMUNITY IS WITHOUT WALLS

“Outside of Christ, humanity builds walls to alienate it’s various groups, but Christ erases the walls by the blood of His sacrifice.”

The Sabbath School, “Church Without Walls”

Ephesians 2:11-22

Ephesians is called the Gospel of Relationships

“For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath *broken down the middle wall of partition between us.*” v 14

Galatians 6:15

“For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.”



COMMUNITY GROWS

The Great Commission Matthew 28:16-20

The Fellowship of Believers Acts 2

If a church isn't growing, is it a church? Does anything alive, not grow?

“Sure, you can choose the safety and predictability of the cage, forfeiting the adventure God has destined for you. But you won't be the only one missing out or losing out..... The opportunity costs are staggering. Who might not hear about the love of God if you don't seize the opportunity to tell them? Who might be stuck in poverty, stuck in ignorance, stuck in pain if you're not there to help free them? Where might the advance of God's kingdom in the world stall out because you weren't there on the front lines?” Mark Batterson



COMMUNITY IS SAFE

Separate an ember of coal from other coals, what happens?

When a lion or wolf attacks a herd, whom gets picked off first?

How does an army work together to win battles & defeat a foe?

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12 - from last week's message

Two are greater than one. We are **STRONGER TOGETHER.**

Proverbs 11:14 – There is “safety in an abundance of counselors”

It's a re-charging station; an incubator, a compass & anchor for life's journey



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“We choose the name MOSAIC because it is an artform where broken and fragmented pieces are brought together by an artist to create something beautiful out of the imperfect and irregular pieces. WE are a work of art formed by the hand of the master artist. He is creating something beautiful through us all using even our brokenness and imperfections.”

Erwin McManus, pastor of Mosaic

Church

Isaiah 64:8

“Yet you, LORD, are our Father. We are the clay, you are the Potter; we are all the work of your hand.”



DEFINE CREATIVE

Merriam Webster – adjective

Relating to or involving the imagination or original ideas, especially in the production of an artistic work.

“CHANGE unleashes people’s creative energy.” Notice the word UNLEASHES.


The church was never created to be domesticated. It can be messy & unpredictable.

“Jesus didn’t die to keep us safe. He died to make us dangerous. Faithfulness is not holding the fort. It’s storming the gates of hell. The will of God is not an insurance plan. It’s a daring plan. The complete surrender of your life to the cause of Christ isn’t radical. It’s normal. It’s time to quit living as if the purpose of life is to arrive safely at death. It’s time to go ALL IN and ALL OUT for the ALL in ALL!” Mark Batterson All In



CREATIVITY

- **# 1 Most Viewed TED (Technology Education Design) Talks**
 - **#1 on the list of most desired business traits**
 - **Highly valued, marketed to, & encouraged in the world outside church**

 - **WHY NOT IN CHURCH?**
- 

GOD IS AN OUT OF THE BOX CREATOR-

- **Genesis, Psalms, & Job- God created all things and they were amazing!**
- **Revelation- Check out the new heaven & earth**
- **He commands us to take dominion, multiply, enlarge our territory, be good stewards of our gifts/ talents & think outside the box all throughout the bible.**
- **He rarely moves in the same way twice, often confounding & infuriating religious minds.**
- ✓ **calling a runaway, murdering slave from a burning bush to save a nation**
- ✓ **using lepers, prostitutes, fishermen, & Samaritans to save & teach**
- ✓ **being born of a virgin, unwed teenage girl who gave birth in a manger**
- ✓ **using a shepherd boy to slay a giant and become king**
- ✓ **building an ark before it had ever rained**
- ✓ **hugging the prodigals and throwing welcome home parties**
- ✓ **gaining through giving, leading by serving, winning by surrendering**
- ✓ **healing on the Sabbath through things like muddy Jesus spit in the eye**
- ✓ **dying to live and give eternal life, defeating death and the grave**

CREATIVITY

- **LEADS TO NEW LIFE**
- **WIDENS & DEEPENS WORSHIP**
- **FORMS COMMUNITY**
- **TEACHES TRUTH IN UNIQUE AND COMPELLING WAYS**
- **INVITES US TO MISSION-** helping people discover their gifts & how to use them

5 Reasons Why Your Church Needs to be More Creative

Len Wilson



WHEN WE CREATE, WE GLORIFY THE CREATOR

“We are both WORKS OF ART and ARTISTS at WORK”

“True creativity does not come easy. Creativity is born of RISK and REFINED from FAILURE.”

Erwin Raphael McManus The Artisan Soul



CONSUMERS OR PRODUCERS

AKA Shoppers or Farmers?

“Our sin and brokenness mars our God image and compels us to survival behaviors of consumption. We consume to distract us from our emptiness; absent something new to watch or eat or wear, we can be overwhelmed with loneliness and despair. So a lonely and broken world fills us with the artifacts of consumerism.”

Len Wilson

YOU were called to be more than an ARTIFACT. YOU were CREATED to be part of a COMMUNITY. THIS COMMUNITY!

YOU were created to THRIVE , not just SURVIVE.



OH COME TO THE ALTAR

Praise Dance Team

