

that's our new nature in Jesus.

This overflow of love was lived out in a special way around Jesus dinner table. I love the image of 'Communion' being Jesus' brothers and sisters gathered around the dinner table. Celebrating life together in that wonderful personal bond of love; as we share the very presence of Jesus. Jesus there in person for us, person to person.

Jesus community of faith was also devoted to pray. That's talking with him from the

heart, revealing what's on their heart and soul, seeking to be open to hear what's on his heart and soul. So we all know how to pray, because we all can talk to our Heavenly Father about what's on our heart and soul. Dad loves to hear from his children, and nothing is too unimportant or too big because he loves you.

Let us pray. Heavenly Father grow us to every greater maturity so that our lives, in every detail, is an expression of your love for us. Daily free us from being shaped

by our fears and regrets. Open our minds and our hearts to be lead by the Holy Spirit as we seek to live personally with you; person to person in your love with our sisters and brothers in Christ. Amen.

9 September 2012

THE CHURCH IS BORN—Acts 2:42

E100



This week we began reading Acts 2, the birth of the Church. What a powerful story. We find Jesus' disciples still locked behind closed doors because of fear.

What fears motivate your actions? The fear of what other people think. The fear of not wanting to be controlled by what other people think. The fear of rejection. The fear of some pain or lose. What fears seek to take control of you? Is it that your life is a response to guilt, or the hurt others have done to you?

The disciples were locked behind closed doors, wanting to feel safe. What do you look to to feel safe?

And then the Holy Spirit rocked the boat.

He came and filled each person with his presence. The disciples now step out, not in their own strength or their own courage. The disciples now step out motivated by the Holy Spirit's presence. What a change.

Peter; who once was very concerned about what other people thought, now full of the Spirit is telling people about Jesus and the hope he brings. I don't think it would have come into Peter's mind to worry about what people thought, either way. Peter steps out ready to proclaim Jesus. Peter's focus isn't on himself, but full of the Spirit's presence he is totally secure.

Peter isn't driven by guilt. Peter isn't doing this because he should. Peter has given up

being should upon. Peter is flooded with the Holy Spirit's presence and out of this relationship he now steps forth to give what has been given to him.

And here is where we see the essence of the Church, a personal relationship with God, lived out with the person of the Holy Spirit who Jesus has sent to be with us. The essence of the Church is a relationship of trust lived out in the person of the Holy Spirit.

This week why don't you ask somebody outside of the church what they think the church is all about. Ask somebody outside of the church what they think religion is all about.

Today I'm reminded that the church is about

Christ Church Lutheran

Worship Times - 9.00am & 10.45am
Pastor: Tim 0427326553



Jesus' disciples multiplying disciples

a family sharing life together, person to person, in the Father's love. This is what Jesus gave his life for. That you might live in the Father's love, person to person with God, loving each other person to person. This is the kingdom Jesus gave his life for.

I find it important to notice what the early church spent their time doing, because each of their core activities was to maintain and grow a relationship.

We don't find a new set of rules we should do, and if we don't do them then we are condemned, we're not good enough. I don't find a new set of rules telling me what I should do, leaving me with a sense of guilt. I don't live from guilt. I don't live a fear driven life. In Jesus I am one of the Father's children, whom he loves and delights in. I'm done with fear because in

Jesus I know the Father loves me. He's not interested in telling me what I should do, he's passionate about me growing to maturity in his love.

The Father's goal is that you act out of a sense of being loved, giving because you have received from

**The Heavenly Father
Loves You.
Just ask Jesus.**

him. Guilt is not the agenda. Jesus didn't give his life to create a new community of fear; you should, you should, you should or you'll go to hell. If that were the case Jesus could have stayed in heaven, we are more than capable of producing this sort of existence on our own.

Jesus has opened a new way to the Father, a personal relationship based on his love for us.

So the early community of faith were devoted to four things. Notice the word 'devoted' is about personal commitment. They're not following a new set of rules but living a relationship, a relationship of love that Jesus has created.

The goal is not to re-create what Jesus has already done, but to live it. I'm not trying to appease an angry God, I'm enjoying life with my loving Father.

Does God love me; after all I'm not perfect, and I'm not looking like being perfect any time soon. Does God love me, does God love you?

In Jesus the answer is always 'Yes'. In Jesus you are the Father's child whom he loves and delights to share his life with. In fact God has come to share his life with us in person, the person of the Holy Spirit. So when Jesus returns it won't be a time of fear, because

I've been sharing life with God all along; seeking to live up close and personal with him through the Holy Spirit.

Jesus won't change his strips when he returns, he'll remain true to himself, he'll remain true to me, my big brother. The Father won't change his strips, in Jesus he'll stay true to himself, proudly telling the world of his love for his children.

I know my parents loved me, not because I was perfect, but because they chose to love me. It was out of love they feed me, that they disciplined me, that they spent time with me, that we enjoyed life together. There I get, all be it an imperfect image of the Heavenly Father, out to celebrate life with his loved children, because he has chosen to love us and stay true to himself.

In that I can certainly risk my life. In that I can trust and step out into life joining the Heavenly Father in his celebration of life.

So the early community of faith were devoted to the Apostle's teaching, not to become intelligent but to hear again and again and

**Really, the Heavenly
Father Loves You.
Believe it. Jesus does.**

again the Father saying; "I love you". It wasn't their imagination running away with them. It wasn't wishful thinking, but they have history with the Father through the Son.

You have history with the Father through the Son, your relationship isn't based on wishful thinking, or some pipe dream. Jesus has given his life out of love for you, so that you are now able to live in God's forgiving grace.

So the early church, Jesus' community of faith devoted themselves to being open to hear the Father saying again and again and again; 'I love you'.

And the wonderful overflow of being loved is that you can now live loved. So Jesus community of faith were devoted to sharing their life together in the love they had from the Father. In one word that's 'Fellowship'.

Actually when you love someone you seek to share life with them. You seek to overcome the barriers to love.

It's also how the Holy Spirit seeks to love us and give us the opportunity to love him as we live this love out to each other. We go beyond what we could ever do on our own. In a beautiful, mystical way the love of the Father flows through us, binding us to each other, inspiring us to acts of love because