

Membership Covenant



A Guide for Spiritual Formation

Text for the Week: John 17:20-26

Message for the Week: Invitation to Community

Sunday, October 8

Opening:

What is one low (a bad thing) and one high (a good thing) that happened to you this past week? Write them down and take turns sharing them with the others in your group.

Where have you seen the work of the Holy Spirit in your life this past week?

What are the things that we pray about? What do these prayers reveal?

Preparation:

Spend 1-2 minutes in silence with God to center and prepare yourself for your time with God today.

Read:

Read / Have two people in your group read [John 17:20-26](#) out loud.

[Clicking this link will bring you to multiple translations.]

As you read and/or listen to the text being read, circle, take note of, highlight, or underline what words, phrases, or ideas grabbed your attention and heart in these verses?

Write them down below and/or share them with those who are with you.

Respond / Reflect:

What is the desire of Jesus' heart for the church through this prayer? What is our desire for the church? Are these two the same?

What is the purpose or goal of Jesus' prayer?

What is the glory that Jesus gave to his followers?

How would you define the complete unity / community that Jesus refers to in his prayer?

What types of things do we/can we unify ourselves around? What types of things can the church unify itself around? Are there things that we are unifying ourselves around that we need to let go?

How were you trained "to be" the church?

What is it in us that drives us to DO rather than to BE? Why do we always feel the need to be doing something?

Try It:

What is one thing we do in the church that you don't understand? Ask someone you trust about that thing and why we do it.

Prayer:

Spend time in prayer with/for the other people who are with you. Pray this prayer together:

Father, forgive me/us for being so concerned about and distracted by doing. Teach me/us "to be" in you, to find rest and fulfillment through a deepening relationship with Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit. May those who know me/us see the glory and love of Christ in me/us. AMEN

Missional/Spiritual Practice: Groups

I commit to being an active participant in Covenant's faith community through corporate worship and ministry involvement. Are you an active participant in these?

I commit to being involved in a small group, prayer group, and/or a ministry group to encourage others in their spiritual life and to be held accountable for mine.

Are you involved in a ministry group? If not, which ministry group will you join?

John 17:20-26

New International Version

²⁰ “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me, and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— ²³ I in them and you in me— so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.

²⁴ “Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.

²⁵ “Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. ²⁶ I have made you^[a] known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.”

a. John 17:26 Greek *your name*

The Message

²⁰⁻²³ I'm praying not only for them
But also for those who will believe in me
Because of them and their witness about me.
The goal is for all of them to become one heart and mind—
Just as you, Father, are in me and I in you,
So they might be one heart and mind with us.
Then the world might believe that you, in fact, sent me.
The same glory you gave me, I gave them,
So they'll be as unified and together as we are—
I in them and you in me.
Then they'll be mature in this oneness,
And give the godless world evidence
That you've sent me and loved them
In the same way you've loved me.

* * *

²⁴⁻²⁶ Father, I want those you gave me
To be with me, right where I am,
So they can see my glory, the splendor you gave me,
Having loved me
Long before there ever was a world.
Righteous Father, the world has never known you,
But I have known you, and these disciples know
That you sent me on this mission.
I have made your very being known to them—
Who you are and what you do—
And continue to make it known,
So that your love for me
Might be in them
Exactly as I am in them.