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| **SERMON NOTES Sunday 11th October** |
| **SunnySide** |

**Bible passages Acts 2:42-47 & John 17:20-26**

**Introduction**

Luke, the author of Acts, highlights four ingredients of the early church which will be our focus through our new sermon series on Acts. In Acts 2.42-47 commitment, generosity and strength of community are important to how these ingredients were engaged with.

**What does Acts tells us about how the early church looked and how the church today should look?**

Luke is careful to point out these four key ingredients which are: the apostles teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayer. These ingredients are what the early church was built upon and this is how the church today should look. There is a warning, that these ingredients should not be neglected or forgotten about. Luke tells us that one is no more important than the others.

**John 17**

In this pages from John, Jesus is praying to the Father for all believers. He desires that all may know him, not just the disciples, and know the Father. He prayers for complete unity. Jesus tells us that through the unity of the church many may believe.

**Conclusion**

At then end of Acts 2 it says that ‘the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved’. The fruit of the four key ingredients is growth.

The gospel hasn’t changed. God’s power hasn’t diminished.

Because of COVID things have changed and we as a church need to press the refresh button and figure out how to implement these four ingredients to be a flourishing church in our time. So, why not spend some time praying and asking God what kind of church is he calling us to be?

**Some questions for discussion**

1. Read Acts 2:42-47. Imagine a world without any Christian church. If you lived in such a world, and then suddenly found yourself swept up in this pattern of teaching, fellowship, bread-breaking and prayer, what would be your reaction?

2. Look at each of the four ingredients. What risk does a church face if anyone of these is absent or neglected?

3. Which of these four ingredients do you think we do well in and is important to us as a church family?

4. Which of these four ingredients do you think that our church may be lacking?

5. Read John 17:20-26. What strikes you?

6. What can we learn from the prayer of Jesus in John 17?

7. What is God asking you to do as a result of what he has said to you through these passages?

8. The early church was a distinctive and attractive community which had a positive impact on those around it. Constantly reaching out to others with the good news of the Kingdom and welcoming them in. How can we be a positive impact on those around us?

Why not spend some time just thanking God for his church and for all the things that are important to us. Pray for his guidance over the next few months as we journey through the book of Acts.

This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us. (1 John 5:14)

Revd Rachel Hamilton