

Getting Started

1. Do you consider yourself a patient or impatient person? Why?
2. What do we do as a congregation to help us be a local church community?
3. What are the particular strategic initiatives to which God has called our local congregation, in its particular time and place, in participation with God's mission?
4. What insight, principle, or observation from this weekend's sermon did you find to be most helpful, eye-opening, or troubling? Explain.

Digging Deeper

5. Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 54:

Q. What do you believe concerning "the holy catholic church"?

A. I believe that the Son of God through his Spirit and Word,¹ out of the entire human race,² from the beginning of the world to its end,³ gathers, protects, and preserves for himself a community chosen for eternal life⁴ and united in true faith.⁵ And of this community I am⁶ and always will be⁷ a living member.

¹ John 10:14-16; Acts 20:28; Rom. 10:14-17; Col. 1:18 ² Gen. 26:3b-4; Rev. 5:9 ³ Isa. 59:21; 1 Cor. 11:26 ⁴ Matt. 16:18; John 10:28-30; Rom. 8:28-30; Eph. 1:3-14 ⁵ Acts 2:42-47; Eph. 4:1-6 ⁶ 1 John 3:14, 19-21 ⁷ John 10:27-28; 1 Cor. 1:4-9; 1 Pet. 1:3-5

What does it mean to be a member of the Body of Christ?

6. The parable of the Mustard Seed could possibly be drawn from Ezekiel 17:22-24. What is God speaking about in Ezekiel 17:22-24 and how does that related to Jesus and the parable of the Mustard Seed?
7. Read 2 Corinthians 5:16-6:1. What does it mean to have the ministry of reconciliation?
8. In Matthew 13:10-17 Jesus explains why he uses parables. Why does Jesus speak in parables?

Application

9. As much as we may want God to move faster in his reconciliation of the world, it is a slow process. We are called into God's redemptive work as members of the Church. What are you doing to help grow the kingdom of God?

Bible Reading Questions

April 4 – Judges 13-15 – Barren women play a prominent role in Israel's history. Why would God call them so often (Sarah, Rachel, Samson's mother, Hannah, Elizabeth)?

April 5 – Judges 16-18 – Why would Sampson tell Delilah the truth knowing that she is untrustworthy? Have you ever trusted someone who continued to let you down?

April 6 – Judges 19-21 – The book of Judges ends in a dark way, what was the main theme of this book? What are we to take away from these accounts?

April 7 – Ruth – We read that Ruth plays a prominent role in the history of Israel (she is the great, great grandmother of king David), she is also a foreigner who comes to follow God, how does this book speak to us as Christians?

April 8 – 1 Samuel 1-3 – If God called out to you would you be able to discern his voice?

April 9 – 1 Samuel 4-8 – In Leviticus 17 God warns against an earthly king as he does here. What is the issue? Why are the people so quick to want a king?

April 10 – 1 Samuel 9-12 – Will Saul make a good King? Should he even be king?

Ross Community Reformed Church

Pastor Shawn Gerbers · April 3rd, 2016

Slow Church

“Reconciliation, Community and the Church”

He put another parable before them, saying, "The kingdom of heaven is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his field. It is the smallest of all seeds, but when it has grown it is larger than all the garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches."

Matthew 12:31-32

- **God's focus is to _____ and _____ to him.**
- **God is _____ with humanity in _____ through the gift of _____ and the _____ of spreading the gospel.**
- **We _____ as _____ of the (slow) _____.**

Topics: Reconciliation, Community