

At Reservoir Church, we want to help everyone experience the love of Jesus, the joy of living, and the gift of community. To point in that direction we have five core values: Connection, Everyone, Action, Freedom, and Humility. This summer we're going to take a look at those values—what they mean, and how you can think about them in your own life. We'll start at the beginning, with "Connection".

I care about connection. I don't know if you notice, but lots of times when I pray for us I pray that during our time together we'll all feel close to God, and close to each other. Back when we used to meet at church we sometimes were *really* close to each other on the rug—but that's not what I mean! You can be crammed in with other people in a group, or on a bus, or at a party, and still feel alone if you don't have anyone to talk with you and listen to you and understand you. Or, you can be stuck in your own house during a pandemic and still be connected to other people. How do we do that?

Last month we heard about how the community of believers got started. As people heard Peter and James and John and the other apostles talking about Jesus, and saw them healing people who were sick, some of them decided they wanted to follow Jesus themselves. So they went to one of the believers, and they got baptized. We can imagine that they started to have a connection with Jesus, and a different kind of connection with God than they had before. But we don't hear very much about that. Instead, the big change in their lives is the community they became a part of.

In Acts we hear what that community was like. The believers felt close to each other—like their hearts and minds were all going in the same direction. They were so united they didn't want to keep anything for themselves, but instead shared everything they had. None of them could be poor, because people with extra money shared it with those who didn't have enough; no one went hungry or homeless. It was great! And all those folks sharing so happily were also filled with excitement and energy for telling the world the good news about Jesus.

I want all of us to be able to have those same sorts of amazing connections. I hope that you feel like you have a place you can be connected here in our Kids Church community and in our whole church, and in other places in your life. I've been talking about groups because we're here all together, but you can also think about how you connect with other people one-on-one. The way Jesus talked and listened to people let them feel like he understood them and cared about them; we can follow his example with our own friends, and we can look for people who understand and care about us.

There are certainly lots of reasons to be nervous about connection. Sometimes we aren't sure what if we have anything to offer people, or if they'll really like us. Sometimes we feel like we need to hold back in order to be safe, to take care of ourselves. Sometimes we're just too cool to want to join in. And all those are fine. But when I read the Bible I see God saying that it's good for us to connect with other people. We'll be taken care of. We'll have chances to take care of other people. And we'll get energy and new ideas and life from being part of something bigger than ourselves.

Wondering Questions

I wonder who you feel connected to these days?

I wonder how feeling connected to God can sometimes make people feel connected to other people? How about the other way around?