

SERMON TRANSCRIPT

DATE

January 3, 2021

SPEAKER

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SERIES

We > Me

PART

1

TITLE

Built For One Another

SCRIPTURE

Genesis 1:26-27, 2:18, 3:7-10; Ephesians 2:19-22



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My name is Dave Owen, one of the pastors here. If you've joined us online, we say good morning to you as well. If you have your Bible, take those and open to Genesis. We are starting a new series, We Greater Than Me, looking at the gift of community and how God has built us for one another. We were created for community. We as a team and as a staff, as a church, believe to experience the fullness and the benefits of community, we must believe that a life full of we is greater than a life full of me.

We are seeing it, some of us have even felt it, What COVID is doing. It's showing us multiple things, but that even though we're connected maybe to each other on Zoom, or Google Chat, or whatever platform you might use, there's still something missing in our soul that we want to be connected to one another. We want to lean in and love on each other in one sense.

My dad, my kids' grandfather, this year at Christmas, we were with him and had to do outdoor gathering because he is high risk, just came through cancer as well as open heart surgery. Just as we were leaving, I'll never forget these words, he said, "I just can't wait to hug all of you again." Man's 78 years old, who is been a pastor for 40 some years, still longing for community. We're built for this. God has designed us for this. You see the significance of a fire pit, maybe you had a fire pit over the holidays in the backyard, and you see this fire that's burning, and the warmth is coming from it, and light's coming from it and the embers under it. When those are stoked together, more warmth and more fire comes. But you remove one of those embers and leave it alone. By itself, it will quickly go out.

So it is with you and I as individuals. God does not want us to be isolated. It's like the Christmas lights. You love putting the Christmas lights, I think we're going to keep our lights up to maybe August and just keep it going for a while. It was fascinating, we had tree this year, live tree too big and open it up in the house before we should have opened it up.

Had to bring the chainsaw inside the house and do some work, couldn't get it back out of the house. Not sure what we were thinking, but make sure you measure that thing before you cut it and it opens up. That would be wisdom for you this morning. But as we were checking all the lights for the tree, you just you hate when that one light goes out and then it makes the rest of the lights go out. You've been there and then you're trying to figure out which light is it that's out and having to replace that, you replaced that one and then all of them work.

So we had one on the tree that happened like that. I was like, "Look, this is COVID Christmas, we're not going to have that many people over." We just shoved that light stream back up in the tree and put a new light stream all the way around it, and just left it as it was. But listen, so it is with the church, right? When the redeemed of God are walking in the light, the church shines bright for the glory of God. One could affect the whole. We want his glory to shine. We want his Gospel to spread to all nations. God's designed it to be done together in a community. So let me pray for us as we dive into our texts.

Father, thank you for today. Thank you for the joy to be able to look at this. We ask that you would speak through your word and that you would build categories in our heart and in our mind of the significance of what your intentions were at the beginning of creation, even through redemption. God, of living a life together, built for one another for the glory of Your name. So would you do a great work, we pray in Jesus' name, amen.

So this morning, in Genesis, what I'm going to walk us through is five truths of how the Bible shows us God's plan to build us for one another in community. It's going to be a unique next three weeks, we'll dive down into Romans 12, and stay in that text. This morning, I'm going to do a little overview of Genesis 1, 2, 3, head to Ephesians, and then 1 Peter. I'll put multiple texts on the screen for you. I want you to read with me some of the Genesis passages and see some things in the Bible. Then I'll put some of the other passages as we get toward the end of our time together.

So here's the first truth I want to show you. All people are created in the image of a relational God, all people are created in the image of a relational God. Notice in Genesis 1:26. It says, "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over the livestock and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. And so God created man in his own image. In the image of God, He created him. Male and female, he created them.'"

Notice the text in verse 26. This couple of words I want you to look at that in the Hebrew language, which Genesis was originally written by Moses is unmistakably plural. Notice it says. "Then God said, 'Let us make man in our image, after our likeness.'" What's going on here? It's not God and the angels, looking down, looking at creation. Angels are servants and messengers, not agents of creation. I believe it's very clear here that God is speaking as a triune God, the Spirit of God in the first chapter is hovering over the waters in verse two.

Then we know from the totality of Scripture, in John chapter one, it says similar language as Genesis 1 in the beginning, that Jesus was with God in the beginning. Through Jesus, all things were made. Without him, nothing was made that was made.

Colossians 1:15 says, "In Jesus, all things were created. God has created only humanity and all of his creation in his image," in the likeness in a sense, relationally. Now this is not necessarily out of this sense of being lonely. No, I think it's out of an overflow of the love and the joy that's found within the throned God, the Father, Spirit, and Son, meaning that we have capacity, limited, yes to reason and to experience, love, and beauty and truth. There is worth and value in all people, all races, all ethnicities because we are made in the image of a relational God. The relational capacities in people seeing perfectly a god point to the fact that this is in our blood. This idea of relationships.

See, God is filling the world with image bearers of himself in one sense, and yet sinful at birth. We are valued and full of worth. So as a people in this first chapter, judges, let's see the value of all people, simply because of the reality. They're all made in the image of a relational God. But the second thing that I want you see is this, is all people are considered vulnerable when running alone. Now, flip over to one chapter more, to chapter two.

In chapter two, I want you to notice in verse 18. 18, it says this, "Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone. I will make him a helper fit for him.'" Now we notice the context is marriage itself, male and female, he's created Adam and Eve, the first two. But it's also telling us a lot about what God is saying about the principle of relational communal living. It's fascinating to think that in chapter one, God would call what he made good. Then he would move to the point that he would actually say after Adam and Eve, and male and female, that this is very good. Then he would use the same word "good". But he would use it like this, "It's not good for man to be alone."

What is God saying here? There's no deficiency in creation. He just wasn't done yet with creation, he's highlighting the reality of relational living and the significance of it. I don't have to convince you this morning of the massive need to be connected. Culture has done a great job of proving that through social media. Yet it's exposed our deeper longing to not just be connected, but to be in community. Many of you, maybe you have a certain amount of followers on whatever platform that you are using. There's something about when people hit like or you have more followers or you add followers, there's something to the human heart that fuels and fills it temporarily.

Yet what social media has also shown us and exposed is that being connected is not enough. It's actually living in community, being with people. Jesus Christ did not come in pixels. He came in flesh among us. Right?

Look, look, we are more prone to danger when alone, even though we may be connected to hundreds, if not thousands in the social media world. Yet we're alone, depression's rising, loneliness is rising, and we are more prone to temptation. We're more prone to attack from the enemy. We're more prone to loneliness and growing cold and of heart, and even throwing in the towel and quitting. Listen, isolation is not God's design. It's fascinating in chapter one that God actually told Adam and Eve in his creation that they would have dominion over the birds of the air and the fish of the sea and the livestock. It's almost when you look into the animal kingdom, you get this incredible concept of them traveling together.

Birds, right, they fly. They fly in a flock to get to their destination. The water buffalo, they travel in in a herd as they move through the waters and across the land. I mean, fish, fish swim in a school, not to necessarily become smarter, but yet to protect. Right? You see the animal kingdom, they're traveling together to be protected against predators, ultimately.

You've watched the animal kingdom or one of those shows when one is maybe slightly prideful and wants to do it on their own, and you know someone's tucked down behind a rock just waiting for that one to leave the herd and go out on their own and try to do it. That's the one that the enemy focuses in on, the lion will focus in on and will attack.

See, listen. Sometimes I think the animal kingdom gets it better than the church. 1 Peter says it like this, "Be alert and of sober mind. Your enemy, the devil prowls around like a roaring lion, looking for someone to devour." Listen, the military, they get this concept of togetherness, even when battle, they train together. Then they send men and women together. They don't go solo on this.

Listen, my grandfather, Lucien Williams, I wish I could have known him better than I did. He died when I was six years old after his fourth heart attack. He was a remarkable man, a pastor for many years. But in the mid 40s, he served our country in an army. He was one of those of many that landed at Normandy and made his way into Germany. He left here when my mom was three, about three to four months old. He returned when she was three years old. He survived landing at Normandy, making his way into Germany, and then making his way back home, representing our country and for that, I'm forever grateful.

But it's fascinating to think as they would land in these boats, they would go in these boats. These boats would land on the shore, and they would attack together, never alone, moving forward. Christians who who run with other Christians have a longer stamina to endure hard days and tempting days. Isolation, isolation is the enemy's strategy to take you deep into temptation and sin. Listen, sin will always promise more than you can produce, more than it will produce. It'll cost you more than you ever want to pay. It'll keep you longer than you ever want to stay.

So the animal kingdom and the military gets this concept of togetherness. Listen, let's be a people as a church that celebrate the provision of God found in community. Isolation will lead you always away from God, rather than for God. Let me just speak to this too real quick because I know in this unique season we find ourselves in, many are at home on the couch. We've grown comfortable on the couch at home and watching church on the couch. Some rightly so, they are high risk for this disease. They don't need to be in a group. We understand it, we respect that, we commend that. But here's going to be the temptation after all of this is over.

Some studies show that 20% of churches in the West will close when this pandemic is over. Here's the temptation for many of us, that the couch is so comfortable that even after this is over, you're going to want to stay there. Let me tell you who else is going to want you to stay there. The enemy is going to want you to stay there because it's so comfortable and you can hide easily. Get a little bit of Jesus, get a little bit of song, get a little bit of feel good. He's going to take you out if you try to do this on your own. So we want to commend to you. Listen, let's celebrate the provision of God found in community.

But number three, look at this. He says, “All the people, all people are tempted to conceal their sin and cover their shame.” All people are tempted to conceal their sin and cover their shame. Now, Genesis chapter three is a monumental chapter. You may notice that the heading of chapter three it says, “The Fall.” What that means is that this is the fall of humanity into sin. It’s fascinating that it took humanity only three chapters to mess everything up. Right? Chapters one and two, you see it all good. Chapter three, chaos breaks out.

It’s fascinating how it enters, right? The serpent who’s more crafty than any other of the beast, the enemy, Satan, himself moves through the serpent to do something that’s really strategic in the way he tempts us. He tempted by questioning what God had already said. This is the way he will tempt you as well. He’ll always tempt you and I by questioning what God has always already told us in his word, what to do and what not to do. What’s fascinating in the text, in Genesis 1 and 2, he gives Adam and Eve thousands of freedoms. Where the end of chapter two in verse 25, it says that they were actually not ashamed. There was no shame whatsoever. You got this incredible to two chapters where Adam and Eve are there. It’s an amazing setting.

God gives one restriction, only one restriction. That’s it. One restriction, and the one restriction that God gives, the enemy uses to question them that God is actually holding out on you. That there’s something that sometimes the way the enemy tempts, right, is that when God gives restrictions in his word, that we think, that we his creation, we think we know what’s best. So we lean in, and we say, “Well, God’s holding out on my joy.” Listen, God is not a kill joy god, he is for your joy. He created you. If he did not crush his son for you, will he not also give you all that you need?

Listen, when you think about this chapter and you lean into this chapter, you see so many things. But I want you to notice in verse seven a few things that happened because of this devastation of being tempted to this lie from the enemy, of questioning God’s word, that he’s holding out in this one restriction, and then all chaos breaks out.

In verse seven, “Then the eyes of both were open as they ate from the tree that God had restricted them from eating. And they knew that they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin-cloths. They heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day. And the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord.”

God walking with them in the garden, they hid themselves. They sewed fig leaves, they ran from him in shame. They were just a few verses prior full of absolute no shame. Now shame has engulfed them so much so that they have not only run from God, which really theologically, you can’t run or hide from God because ... It. Then they instantly went to functional saviors.

They immediately went to functional saviors, things that they thought would help their own way. They didn’t comment acknowledge. They made their own clothing, they made their own garments, they ran, they hid. This is what we do. We lean into things that function temporarily as a savior, little S, but it only builds a larger

wall between you and God. We binge eat, we binge watch, we binge shop. We do all this thing, anything that we think. Here's what's fascinating about all of this, right? Food is good, a good movie is good. A few necessities are good, but any good thing made by God make bad Gods. Let me say that again. Any good thing that's made by God makes a bad god. It will not save you ultimately.

Listen, when we conceal our sin, you may not be able to see. You may not be able to see everything on the outside, but it's going on the inside. On the inside, it's going to affect how you live and how you engage with others. Listen, this was so poignant in my life, for the last two weeks, about two weeks ago, I had my fourth knee surgery, third on this particular knee. That's why I'm leaning to the right a little bit this morning. I had arthroscopic surgery. So this week, I got the stitches taken out. I'm doing a lot of PT, it's moving. I'm walking, praise God. But he showed me the pictures.

What they do with this particular surgery, I'm sort of fascinated with orthopedic surgery, they drill three holes in your knee. One of the hole is for a light, one of the hole is for a camera, and then one of the holes is for an instrument to clean up what's broken inside. So when he showed me that the pictures this week, as we were talking, he said, "Well, we had quite a few things going on in there." I'm like, "Well, I hadn't been able to run for two months, I assume that." So there's a piece of cartilage that's completely torn off, that's just floating inside the knee. That was encouraging. Then there was a tear in the medial meniscus. So you clean that up as well, then things are looking good. So it's fascinating though, if you saw my knee before surgery, you would think everything is fine. It wasn't even swollen. All the pain was on the inside.

This is what sin does. You may not see the effects, you could see the effects. But if you conceal it, and it's in the heart and it's deep in there, you're not going to be able to be effective to live as God has intended you to live. Listen, Proverbs 28 says it like this. Verse 13, "Whoever conceals their sin does not prosper. But the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy." You find mercy when you confess. When you run and hide from God, you don't find mercy. It's when you run to God and you confess. You're in agreement of what he has said about your sin. You find mercy. Mercy awaits your confession. So let's be z ... Confess our sin to God.

But number four, notice this, that only Jesus can conquer sin, remove shame, and restore community. Only Jesus can conquer sin, remove shame, and restore community. Now in Genesis chapter three, I want you to notice some amazing things. It may even be indented in your Bible. But from verses 14 through 19, God begins to speak into this chaos that he has found among humanity. He first deals quickly with a blow on the land, on livestock, on the world. There's a curse upon the world. This is a theological category I have for tornadoes, tsunamis, and just the pain. The world is under a curse because of sin. But before he moves to humanity, that which is made in his image, to the consequences for both woman and man, before, he will end this section in verse 19, with reminding us that we're going to be returning to dust. From that for what you come from, you shall return.

So in essence, the death penalty is inserted on humanity, the death penalty. Now let's be clearer, there's different means of death, be it COVID or cancer or heart disease, you name it. No, all of those are means. The reason humanity dies is because we have sinned against a holy God. God who can do what he wants to because he's God has indicted that penalty upon humanity. Yet before he gets ... There's some specific things within child bearing for ladies, there's some specific things among men and humanity, in working. It's just hard. It's just a grind from week to week sometimes to put food on the table. Yet before that, in verse 15, comes some amazing news.

Now some theologians will actually call this verse 15 the first gospel. I will mention it in such a way. We think of the word gospels, the good news of God, what he's done in Christ Jesus, as Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and how that has been laid out in those books. But Genesis 3:15, is in essence, the first gospel because there's the announcement. It's an announcement of good news that will come. He says, "I will put enmity between you and the woman and between your offspring and her offspring. He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise his heel." What is he saying that? What he's saying is there's an offspring that's going to come through Eve, it's going to come. Throughout the days and the ages, many are going to look to certain ones that have come, thinking that maybe it's this prophet, this priest, this king, someone to save us. Someone, maybe even militaristically speaking, to do something for us.

What he's saying, now, listen, there's going to be one who comes. He's actually going to be bruise, but he's going to bruise the enemy's head. He's going to crush in essence. Then let me say it "This is a small foretaste of the cross that will come." This is a small foretaste of what will come in Christ's life, in his death, in his burial, in his resurrection. This is a small foretaste of what will come. There'll be one who will come, and he will accomplish, reconciling you and humanity to God and reconciling you to one another. Then notice what God does in his mercy. Notice his mercy in verse 20. Now, after the announcement of death coming to you after, work is going to be hard and death is going to come, verse 20, he says, "Then the man called his wife's name, Eve."

Now what in the world is happening here? You just said work is going to be hard rest of your life, and death is coming. He's called his wife's name, Eve. Eve means one who gives life, one who brings life. How can Adam say ... I mean, I would be isolated and in depression immediately after verse 19. Yet I think what Adam is doing, he's looking up we just saw back to verse 15, at the promise of God's mercy that will be manifested in Jesus. Ultimately, Jesus. Notice the foretaste of Jesus, it's all over the place, verse 20, "Because she was the mother of all living, he's going to name her Eve." In verse 21, "And the Lord God made for Adam and his wife garments of skins and clothed them."

Do you do you see what's going on in the text? Now, they had already clothed themselves, but it wasn't sufficient. No, God in His mercy, in his mercy made for Adam and his wife garments. Garments of what? Of skins. This is the first animal death in the Bible, where he's had to kill this animal to get the garments, and then he clothed them with it. It is a small foretaste of the animals that will come and be killed temporarily in

the Old Testament for the forgiveness of sin Once a year, and the Day of Atonement.

It's a small foretaste of going further through the text into a town called Bethlehem where a savior would be born, who would be called the Lion of Judah and the Lamb of God. This is a foretaste of ones whose life would be given and life taken on a cross and in whose not physical skin close us, but his spiritual clothing of robes of righteousness that's required to be in the presence of a holy God. This is what's taking place in this text. Jesus, he removes shame, he empowers you, he forgives you. Listen, only Jesus can do this. If you're here this morning, and you've never trusted Christ, listen, we want to encourage you to admit and acknowledge your sin. You fall short of God, believe on Christ the savior. New Year's resolutions are always like let's eat better and get spiritually right.

Now, let me just encourage you if you think getting spiritually right is doing better, being better, doing more, you're going to be exhausted and probably will quit by January 8. You can't do it. You can't reach a Holy God and all the requirements. That's why he reached us and came to us in his son and lived a life you and I could not live and died the death that we deserve, and was buried, rose from the dead, and by faith, by his grace through faith, if you commit your life to him, he says he will forgive you of your sins. He will give you a new heart.

The Bible says in Ephesians 2 that he makes you alive in Christ, he doesn't put a bandaid on, he doesn't clean some cartilage out. He gives you a new heart. Now, I want to encourage you this one, if you're online, to trust Christ, some of our team that are hosting you online, they will help you make that decision even now. If you're in this room, we want to encourage you to make that decision today. If you've never made that decision, it'll change your life for the rest of your life.

To admit simply, to believe, and then to commit in your heart, commit to say I want to be forgiven my sins, I want to trust Christ. We'd encourage you to do that even this day. We want to walk with you because what happens if he does that and if he's doing that in your heart even today, he then places you. He then places you in a family, a church family. This is not a sports team. This isn't a state where you are a fan because of the color you wear, right? You were the same color you have different theological views on God. You may not even believe in God, but you're a fan. You're united by an outward appearance of a jersey or a color.

You cheer for the same team. No, no a follower of Jesus, a follower of Jesus looks, you can all look different. But you worship the same God because he's changed your heart internally. See, we greater than me means you belong to a family, to a people, to a church. Listen to what Ephesians says, Ephesians 2:19, "You are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household." 1 Peter 2 says, "You yourselves, like living stones are being built up as a spiritual house."

Listen growing up, I grew up in a small church. We used to sing this song where we would hold our hands together like this and say this is the church and this is the steeple. Open it up, and there's all God's people. Okay, seven of you know about the song. That's awesome. So listen, listen, it's a cute song. It rhymes. It's nice. We sung it a lot growing up, but it's bad theology.

The reason I mean it, let me do it this way for you, okay? For our case here, this is a renovated hotel that went bankrupt in the early 90s and we moved in. Okay, we don't have a steeple, we're not going to buy one. Okay? Open it up and there's the church. It doesn't rhyme, not cute. I'm not going to sing it for you. You would leave immediately if I started singing. Right?

No, but listen, to the church is the people of God. The church, if this place burns down physically, this building, Providence would still exist because we're a people. We're a community, we're built for one another. It's like a Lego set. My kids, we love putting these together growing up. We were young, and you dumped them out. There are different colors, and there are different shapes, and there are different sizes. Yet, when you take all of the same value, and all of the same worth, and yet when you put them together is when you build a small little city, a small, little, whatever, one you bought that gives light to it.

The reality is that none of that can be done when you're alone or isolated. He wants us to live in community. He says in Hebrews chapter three, he says, "Let's exhort one another every day as long as it's called today." That none of you would be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin isolation always causes deceitfulness of sin because you don't have others exhorting you. Let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good words, not neglecting to meet together as in the habit of some, but encouraging one another.

Listen, this is fascinating. What happens really quick. Ephesians chapter three, says it like this, "His intent was that now through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known." What is he saying when he says that through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known? The manifold wisdom of God, the word "manifold", the idea of it is it's the manifestation. It's the multi variance of colors, of God's wisdom is on full display through the church. Now, sometimes we think when we go to the ocean, and we see the ocean or the reefs of the ocean and the fish or the ocean, and we see creation, sometimes people say, "Man, I have church outside. I do church outside."

Some of you go to a mountain peak and you see that, and there's a connection with creation. You're like, "Man, God's glory is on display." Yes, God's glory is on display. Psalm 19 says, "The Heavens declare the glory of God." But listen, listen, if you want to see the manifold wisdom of God, according to God. It's not in the ocean, and it's not in a sunset over a mountain. You know where it's at? I'll tell you where it's at. It's in the gathering of God's people weekly called the church. It's right now. It's multi ethnic, it's different people from all different places from all over the world, coming together with a new heart worshipping the Son of God. You want to see the manifold wisdom of Go? Show up every week here at 8:00, 9:30 or 11:00, and it will be on full display week after week.

See, we get numb to this, we get accustomed to this, we should be amazed by this that God has redeemed any of us. Then we could come and sing his praises and worship him and read his word. So listen, let's be people who trust Christ for forgiveness and join with his people. Let's go through the Providence pathway, and the weeks to come and lock arms as a family and as a people. Let's care for each other well, so that we could get the gospel to all people. This is the last one, we're done. Jesus calls us as a people to reach all people. He calls us as a people to reach all people, isolation, we can't do it. Community, we could put together, we're putting a family of six on a plane tonight. Tonight, in the midst of a pandemic, they're moving to Central Asia to plant churches and build people's lives through the Gospel, the preaching of sharing the Gospel.

Listen, 1 Peter 2 says it like this, "You're a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of Him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. You're a people to proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness." This is what, he puts us as a people together to praise his name in community. We want to turn the volume up on the proclamation of the excellencies of him who has done this.

You and I know, throughout this year, we've watched many sporting events and empty stadiums, and it's just something missing. Is it not? I mean, I just don't come off the couch and rejoice when somebody scores. We know when stadiums are full, there's a sense of synergy and community, even in celebration of all that team has done and how much more for God's people to be a people in community, celebrating all that God has done. Listen, it's confusing to a world we live in when we try to make our name known. When we try to be the greatest and the center of the universe. We is greater than me. Listen, it's confusing when we live like that. But it's compelling, it's compelling when collectively we live for Jesus. It's compelling.

Listen, let's do this right before we celebrate the Lord's Supper this morning. I want to show you this. I want to illustrate this for you. So right now, here's what we're going to do. We're going to do small exercises, we close our time. Kids lean in, speak up really loud here. Okay? So I'm going to count to three. When I say the number three, I want you from where you are to shout with everything you got your name. Okay? I want you to shout your name on three. So here we go. Let's go one, two, three. [crosstalk 00:38:43].

Boom. Okay, that was really bad. Sounded horrible. But thank you for participating. I'm grateful for it. You proved my point. Okay. Now, listen, listen, on three this time, I want you all really loud to shout the name, Jesus. One, two, three.

Jesus!

Jesus! It's compelling, it's unified. There's something about his name that when we lift him up, he draws people to himself. He's done it in the past. He's doing it now, and he'll do it in the days ahead. So let's be a people who carry the Gospel together to all people. The light that shines, the brightest at home, shines the farthest away. Let's pray together.

Father, we love you. Thank you for your kindness and your grace and your mercy today, to look at how you have built us for one another, and how you have given us the gift of community. God, I pray that in a season that's really hard, when it's hard for so many that can't come, that, God, you would help us be intentional in trying to connect in any way that we can. That, God, for those who can come, would you give them the sense that we need them and they need us? We need each other to live this life, life on mission that you have called us to. God, we ask that you would do this in Jesus' name, amen.



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