

CONNECTED TO CHRIST

Overcoming Isolation through Community

BRIAN K. DAVIES

Five Week Sermon Series

Today's culture seems divided like never before.

People are growing weary as this divisiveness results in increased levels of anxiety, isolation, and loneliness. Thankfully, God's Word speaks directly to this and offers believers community, a sense of identity, and belonging in Jesus. He gives community with other believers through Christ's Church. This five-week sermon series will provide listeners with the tools to break out of isolation, find identity and belonging in Christ, and invite others to join faith-filled community again.

Title	Scripture Readings (Preaching text bolded)	Themes
Created for Community (Intro and Chapter 1)	Genesis 2:18-25 Revelation 7:9-12 John 17:20-26	Week One will be an introduction that focuses on identifying the interconnected problems of division, tribalism, loneliness, and isolation. Work with the relevant statistics and examples from Chapter 1 to identify how we've been a party to these problems in both word and deed. John 17:20-26 will point listeners to Jesus' heart to find unity among His people in hopes that we will experience the same unity that Christ has with His father. Share that what society longs for in culture—identity, belonging, and community—are found through Christ and in His Church! Use Scripture examples from Chapter 1 to show how we'll be discovering how to live in this community—together.
Jesus' Invitation to Find Community in Him (Chapter 2)	Psalms 139:1-4, 13-15 II Corinthians 5:17-21 Luke 5:17-26	Luke 5:17-26 shares a powerful, dramatic scene that reveals much about community. First, it's a story of friends looking out for and doing their best to help a paralyzed buddy. Second, it shares the power of Jesus to take outsiders and bring them (us!) into life-changing relationship with Him. Before we talk about building community with one another, we first need to celebrate the work of God in our lives through Jesus, who brings us into relationship with God. Good news: God has made a space and a place at the table for people like us! This week will celebrate the power of the Gospel in us.
God's Vision for People in Community (Chapter 3)	Exodus 35:21-29 I Corinthians 12:12-26 Luke 2:46-52	Having been changed by the Gospel and brought into life with God through Jesus Christ, we are then brought into a community of fellow changed people called 'The Church.' Exodus 35:21-29 and 1 Corinthians 12 speak to the truth that every single person brings value to God's family. Although we sometimes doubt God's plan or let the evil one convince us we have little to offer, the reality is that we are each Holy Spirit empowered and gifted creatures used by God to bless one another and to make His love known. This message will use the tangible example given in Exodus 35 of how each person brought what they were able, and together, made an impact.
Essential Practice 1: Regular Worship (Chapter 4)	Psalms 23:1-6 Hebrews 10:23-25 Matthew 11:28-30	We are busy and pulled in so many directions, and it's easy to put off worship and time with God. Yet taking a moment to stop, remember who we are, and worship God is essential to our spiritual health and to the concept of community. In these moments, we are reminded that we find our sense of identity, belonging, and community first in Him, and then in one another. A Lutheran understanding of worship celebrates that worship is not about us and what we do, but rather it's God serving us. Coming out of a period where people got out of the rhythm of worship, this message will be an invitation to come back.
Essential Practices 2 and 3: Relationships and Service (Chapter 4)	Exodus 4:10-16 Romans 12:9-16 Matthew 14:13-21	Two of the best ways to realize and live in community are through relationships and serving together. Jesus, who lived in relationship with His disciples, intentionally sent them out in pairs. He also gives His disciples serving opportunities, knowing that in these moments, we'll experience rich community. Romans 12:9-16 elevates the importance of loving, honoring, caring for, and being in community with others.

Created for Community

Intro and Chapter 1

Scripture Readings

Genesis 2:18-25

Revelation 7:9-12

John 17:20-26

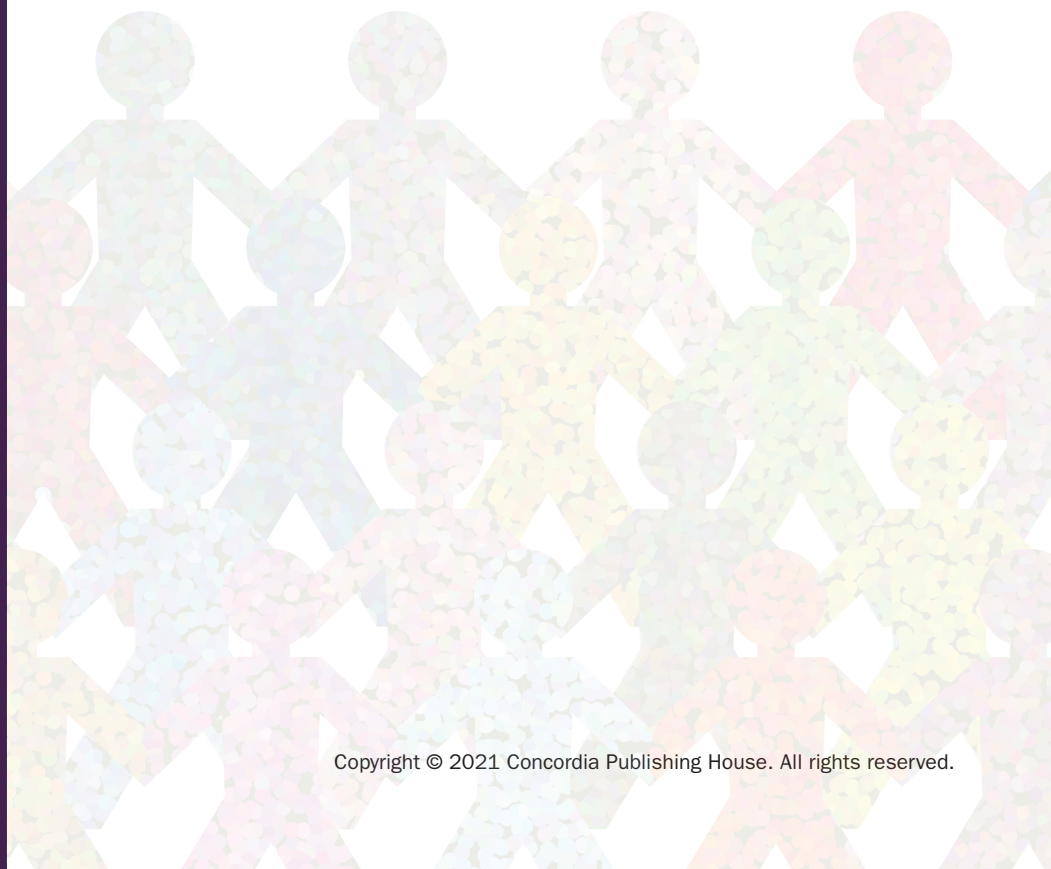
THEMES

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Jesus' Invitation to Find Community in Him

Chapter 2

Scripture Readings

Psalms 139:1-4, 13-15

II Corinthians 5:17-21

Luke 5:17-26

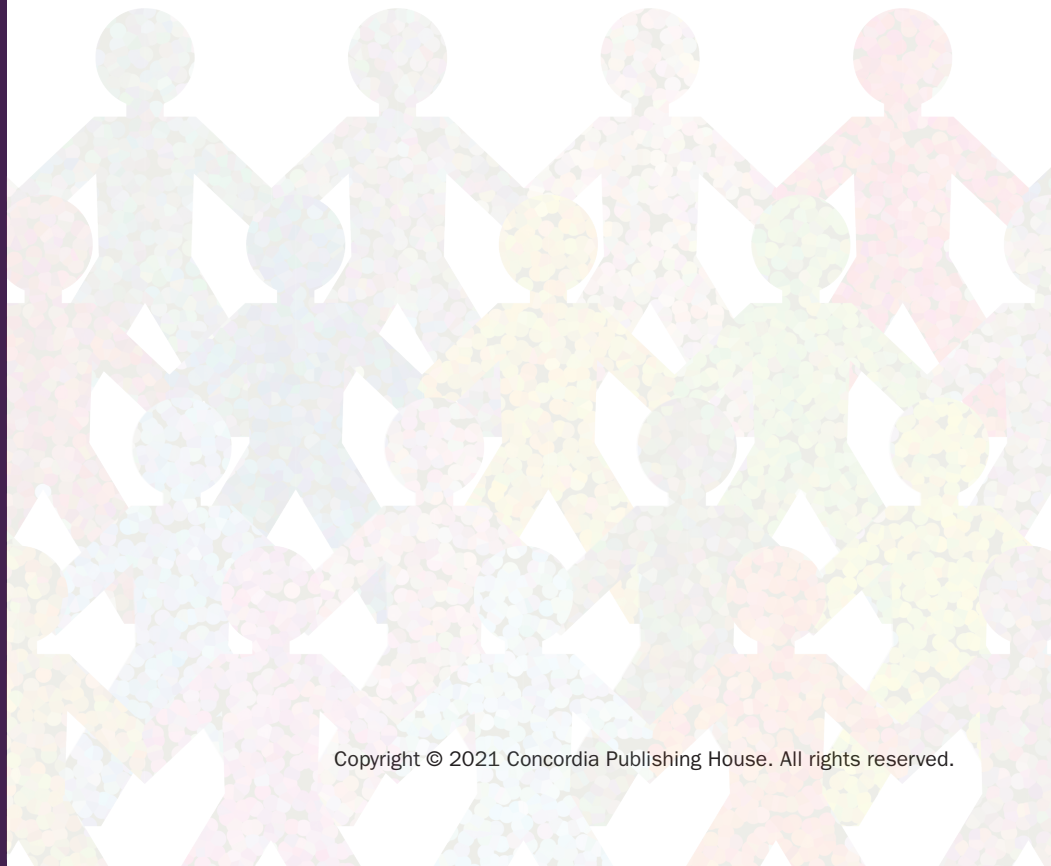
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Luke 5:17-26 shares a powerful, dramatic scene that reveals much about community. First, it's a story of friends looking out for and doing their best to help a paralyzed buddy. Second, it shares the power of Jesus to take outsiders and bring them (us!) into life-changing relationship with Him. Before we talk about building community with one another, we first need to celebrate the work of God in our lives through Jesus, who brings us into relationship with God. Good news: God has made a space and a place at the table for people like us! This week will celebrate the power of the Gospel in us.

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God's Vision for People in Community

Chapter 3

Scripture Readings

Exodus 35:21-29

I Corinthians 12:12-26

Luke 2:46-52

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Having been changed by the Gospel and brought into life with God through Jesus Christ, we are then brought into a community of fellow changed people called 'The Church.' Exodus 35:21-29 and 1 Corinthians 12 speak to the truth that every single person brings value to God's family. Although we sometimes doubt God's plan or let the evil one convince us we have little to offer, the reality is that we are each Holy Spirit empowered and gifted creatures used by God to bless one another and to make His love known. This message will use the tangible example given in Exodus 35 of how each person brought what they were able, and together, made an impact.

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Essential Practice 1: Regular Worship

Chapter 4

Scripture Readings

Psalms 23:1-6

Hebrews 10:23-25

Matthew 11:28-30

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We are busy and pulled in so many directions, and it's easy to put off worship and time with God. Yet taking a moment to stop, remember who we are, and worship God is essential to our spiritual health and to the concept of community. In these moments, we are reminded that we find our sense of identity, belonging, and community first in Him, and then in one another. A Lutheran understanding of worship celebrates that worship is not about us and what we do, but rather it's God serving us. Coming out of a period where people got out of the rhythm of worship, this message will be an invitation to come back.

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Essential Practices 2 and 3: Relationships and Service

Chapter 4

Scripture Readings

Exodus 4:10-16

Romans 12:9-16

Matthew 14:13-21

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Two of the best ways to realize and live in community are through relationships and serving together. Jesus, who lived in relationship with His disciples, intentionally sent them out in pairs. He also gives His disciples serving opportunities, knowing that in these moments, we'll experience rich community. Romans 12:9-16 elevates the importance of loving, honoring, caring for, and being in community with others.

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