



GATHER | "Why Gather?"

READ: Acts 2:42-47

RECAP

People don't gather anymore. Attendance at concerts, sports, and shopping malls is in decline, and the church wrestles with this tension as well. In a world where we can download or stream any experience we want, why bother gathering? Whether it's because the church is considered irrelevant, untrustworthy, or inconvenient, people choose not to gather. However, from the very beginning, regular, public gathering was part of the church's DNA. While we can download great preaching and worship, we can't stream the divine encounters and corporate life that God reserves for the assembly of His people.

We're starting off 2019 with a new vision for the year: Gather. To gather means to regularly assemble at the same time, with the same people, and with the same vision. As followers of Jesus, we have to wrestle with the idea of community, especially today. God designed us to gather, but it's easy to disconnect from community, especially in the 21st century. Gathering in the church can feel inconvenient or even irrelevant, but our health as followers of Jesus hangs on the gathering. There are essential encounters God reserves for His gathered people. We can follow Jesus without going to church, but if we miss out on the gathering, we miss out on incredible miracles and spiritual growth reserved specifically for communities of believers. When we gather, God shows up.

RESPOND

- *Read Acts 2:42-47. What made the early church's community so good? What did they gain from gathering with each other?*
- *Why do we wrestle with the importance of gathering?*
- *What would it look like for you to gather at a new or deeper level at Brentwood in 2019?*
- *How are you going to participate in the fast this year? How does the idea of fasting make you feel?*
- *What are you asking God to do during this fast?*