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Acts 2:42

*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers.*

This passage from the Book of Acts describes for us the way the earliest converts to Christianity committed their lives. These first believers after the 1<sup>st</sup> Pentecost, (when they were baptized by the Holy Spirit) committed themselves to growing in spiritual maturity. They were filled with a passion to follow the Risen Christ. They wanted to know more and more about Jesus for they had been convinced by the resurrection that he truly was the Son of God and the Messiah. For this reason they gathered each day, not just on the Sabbath, to worship and praise God for what he had accomplished through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus the Christ. They studied the Old Testament manuscripts to not only read the many prophecies that Jesus had fulfilled, but also to come to know more perfectly the mind of God through the scriptures.

It is important to observe that the followers of Jesus did much more than just set aside an hour or so once a week for worship. These believers met in house churches on a daily basis. They studied together, discussed what a Christian life should look like with one another, prayed together for themselves and others, and communed. They shared a common meal with each other (the 1<sup>st</sup> potlucks) and then shared in communion as Jesus had told them to do, "*Do this as often as you do it in remembrance of me*". Note, there were no priests to bless the communion meal for any believer was worthy to serve this meal in God's eyes. There were no "membership" requirements

either for the communion meal was for all who confessed their sins and invited Jesus to be their Savior. It took many centuries for the Church to take "control" of what Jesus asked us to share openly and as often as possible. The insecurity of some has stolen the open fellowship that all believers used to share.

As powerful and beautiful as this early picture of Christian community is, it is missing one piece. The early Christians were convinced that Jesus' return to claim his kingdom here on earth was imminent. As a result, they focused all their energy on growing in faith. They wanted to prepare their hearts to meet the Risen Christ. It took time but they soon began to understand that their faith needed to be put into action. As James would say "Faith without works is dead." Our task as Christians certainly is to grow spiritually to more perfectly love our Lord. But it is also our obligation to share the Good News of Jesus Christ so others may come to know Him as Lord. We are also to serve and love all people, especially those in need and those who are broken and enslaved to sin. The Christian life is committed to transformation and service.

At Mosinee UMC we believe in Christian community lived out in action. If you would like to share in the joy of this faith, please come and join us and experience your own new beginning.