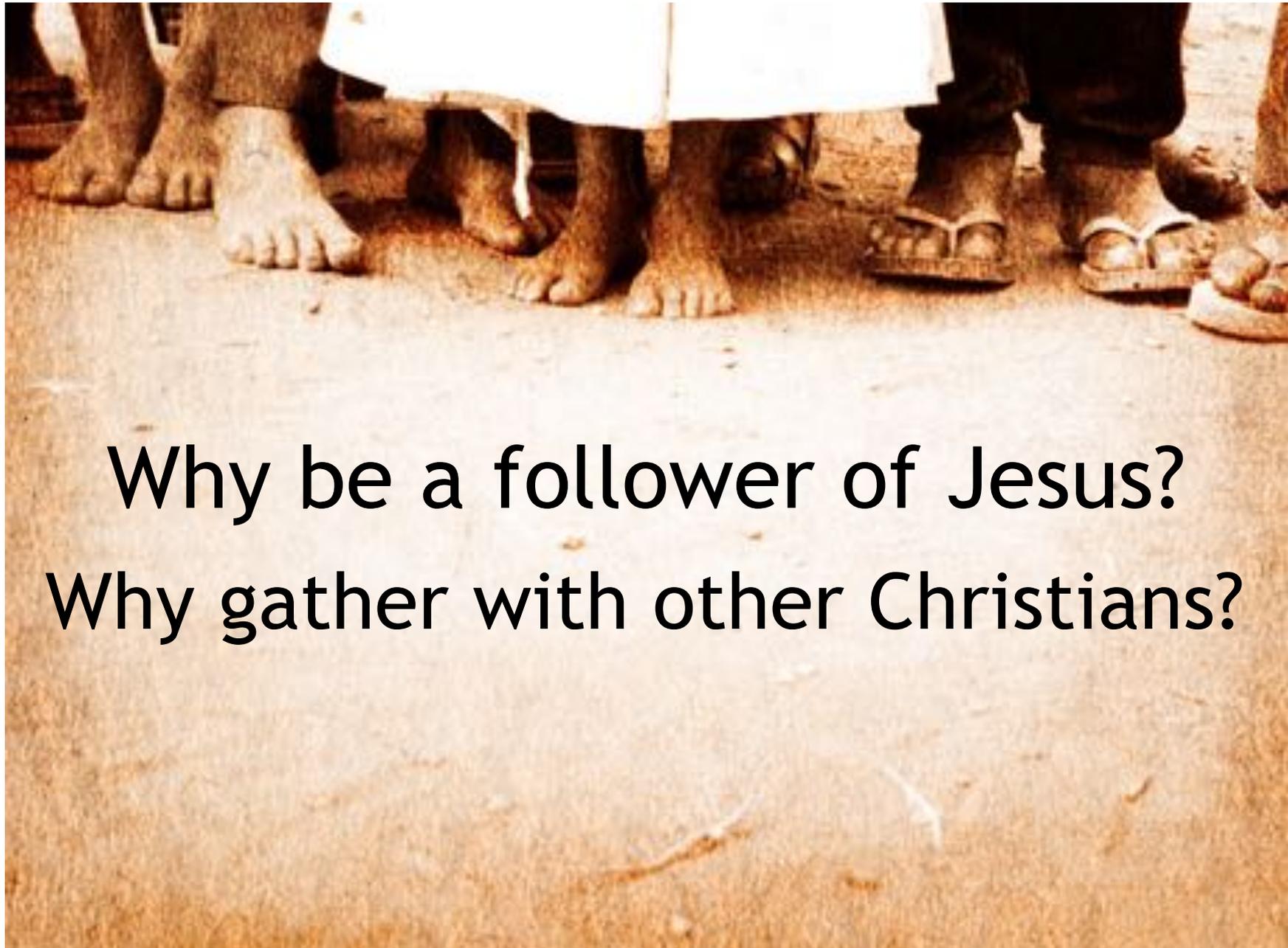




CHILDREN AND WORSHIP:

Why Intergenerational Worship is Important

Terri Martinson Elton, Phd



**Why be a follower of Jesus?
Why gather with other Christians?**

Why Intergenerational Worship is Important

THREE REASONS

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

Hear O Israel, The LORD is our God, the LORD alone. You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

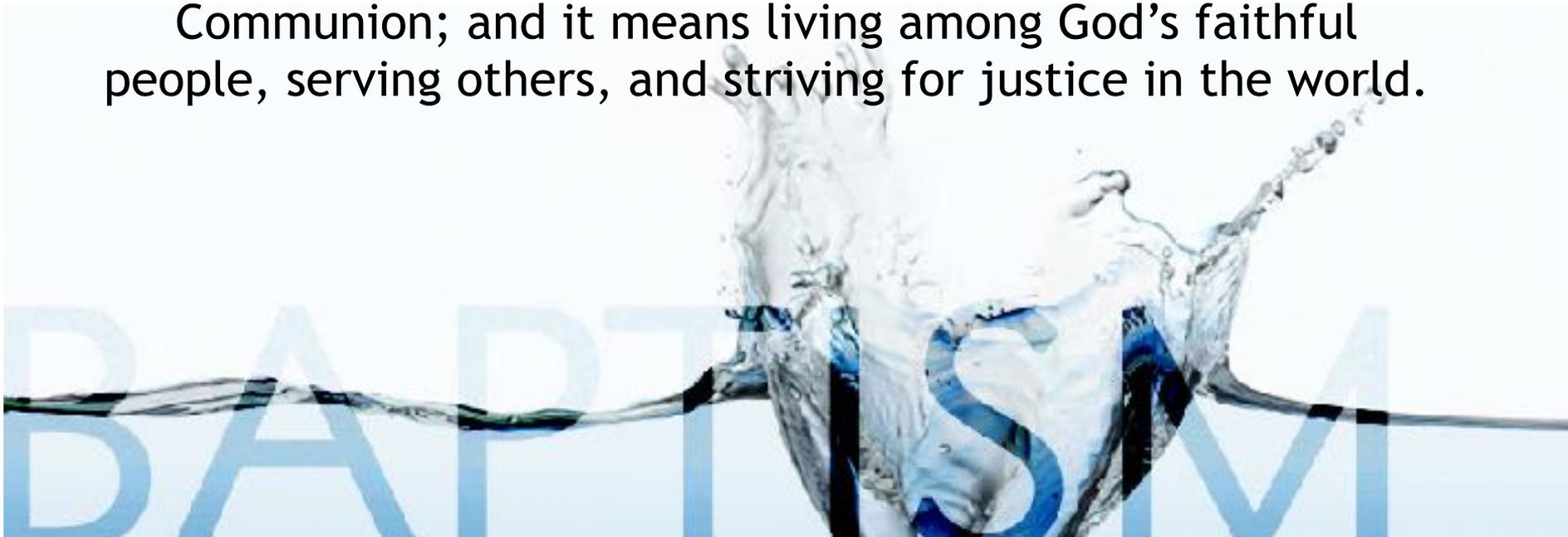


REASON #1

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In baptism, parents, sponsors, and congregation members promise to raise the baptized in faith.

This includes teaching the Lord's Prayer, the 10 commandments, and the Creed; it means placing the Word of God in their hands and bringing them to Holy Communion; and it means living among God's faithful people, serving others, and striving for justice in the world.





Congregations are communities called to pass on faith across the generations.

This has been true throughout all of our history.

Worship is central to who we are as the body of Christ - it is where God's Word is proclaimed, it is where we gather at the Lord's table together, and it is where we are reminded of our identity as children of God.

REASON #1



Worship is the gathering of the whole people of God, therefore all ages must be present, living alongside each other.
The question is not IF, it is HOW.

REASON #1

intergenerational worship reflects the nature of God

- Allen Harkness writes,
- “Expressions of community that reflect God’s relational nature require the **inclusion and valuing of all the diversity of humanity** in a covenant relationship with God if they are to witness to the one who created and sustains community as an expression of his nature. And this must include age diversity”



REASON #2

intergenerational worship reflects the nature of God

- God, as triune or three persons, is by nature community. Therefore **as Christians our identity reflects God's identity.** To live and be Christian is to live in relationship to others, and to come to see ourselves as part of the body of Christ.



REASON #2

intergenerational worship reflects the nature of God



REASON #2

- Living this communal identity requires accompanying each other in life: in good times and bad, in our joys and our challenges, through the expected and unexpected moments.
- As we do we learn together ways it means to live Christian and participate in sharing God's love with the world.

intergenerational worship reflects the nature of God



- Gathered as the body of Christ, worship is a primary place to discover our identity in community.
- How does having children in worship enhance the whole community's ability to do this?

REASON #2

forming faith

- Intergenerational processes are integral to personal faith development.
- John Westerhoff reminds us why we need three generations:
 - Young - vision
 - Middle age - present reality
 - Elders - memory
- “True Christian community necessitates the presence and interaction of three generations.”
The future of the church and one’s own faith formation depends upon the interworking of three generations.



REASON #3

forming faith

- Relationships, more than curriculum, centered on particular practices are how the content and relational nature of faith is passed on.
- Kendra Creasy Dean says, “People, not programs, are the best translators of faith,”
- Mentoring and modeling faith.



REASON #3

Lenten Services Mentoring



Faith 5
Worship

Zion Lutheran,
Loveland, CO

forming faith

- Worship has the opportunity to be the main intergenerational gathering of a congregation. **How does worship cultivate relationships that cross generations?**



REASON #3

Practices - current and imaged

- **Fostering Christian Communities and Relationships**
 - Congregation-wide
 - Across generations
 - Family-to-Family
 - Within households

What do you do well?

What could you try?



Practices - current and imaged

- **Foster Christian practices**
 - Engaging Scripture
 - Prayer
 - Worship
 - Learning/talking about faith
 - Service

What do you do well?

What could you try?



Practices - current and imaged

- **Empower and Equip**
 - Active participation
 - Discover gifts and explore passions
 - Opportunities to lead
 - Places to exercise your voice

What do you do well?
What could you try?

