



WELCOME *to* **RIVERSIDE** CHURCH

Big Lake - Buffalo - Sauk Rapids

ONE CHURCH
MULTIPLE CAMPUSES
ONE FAMILY

Aug 9, 2026

Message Notes



Your group matters.

DISCUSSION GUIDE

- Icebreaker -

What's one thing that has been bringing you joy lately?

1. Why do you go to church: do you see it as an obligation, an option, or is there another reason; and how much of the reason why you go to church is focused on Jesus and not on yourself?
2. Pastor Kyle stated that Jesus, "invites us to build it [the church] with Him" and "He gifts each of us in such a way that we can be co-laborers with Him." What opportunity and gift has Jesus given to you to join Him in this mission?
3. Pastor Kyle said, "If you love Jesus, you'll love what Jesus loves. And Jesus loves the church." But "what do we do when the church hurts us? Or falls short? Or covers stuff up? Because that's real." How do we love what Jesus loves when what Jesus loves can cause heartache? Is there a past hurt done to you by someone through the church or a personal expectation that, guided and empowered by the grace of Jesus, you need to address?
4. When we are awake to grace, The Church becomes to us an invitation from Jesus to be with Jesus. What is an experience you've had with Jesus through your local church that you can share with others when inviting them to church?
5. If belonging to Jesus' Church has seemed to you to be more obligation or option, rather than excitement and desire to be in the presence of Jesus, then to where and to whom do you need to go to create in you a want for Jesus?

PERSONAL GUIDE

This Personal Guide has been adapted from Professor Grant Horner's Bible Reading System.

Day One: John 17; Psalm 29

Day Two: Deuteronomy 26; Proverbs 24

Day Three: 1 Chronicles 7; 2 Corinthians 12

Day Four: Revelation 6; Daniel 8

Day Five: Song of Songs 1; Acts 11



"Alive to The Church"

Pastor Kyle Asmus | Aug 9, 2026

Why Church?

Because of grace:

We're alive to God.

We're alive to Mission.

We're alive to Power.

BIG IDEA

Because of grace, I'm _____ to The _____

To belong to _____ is to belong to _____.

...people tend to think of church either as _____ or

_____.
If you think church is obligation, you
will eventually _____.

If you think church is optional, you're
going to _____.



1 Come every Sunday

2 Be part of a group

3 Serve on a team

4 reasons _____:

1. Jesus is _____ of The Church.

(Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 3:16)

a. You and me...we are not the point! The Church is not primarily about us.

b. Church matters because Jesus matters.

The church exists for nothing else but to draw men to Christ... If [churches] are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, and sermons are simply a waste of time. (C.S. Lewis)

c. Said a little differently, The Church is from Jesus, for Jesus, about Jesus, and meant to bring people to Jesus. He is the point... and here's the surprisingly good news, that means we don't have to be the point.

2. Jesus is _____ The Church.

(**Matthew 16:18b**; **1 Corinthians 3:7**)

- a.** As He builds it, He wants all of us to build it with Him.

3. Jesus _____ The Church. (**Ephesians 5:25**)

- a.** If we love Him, we will love what He loves.

- b.** The Church has always been _____ people being _____ by the perfect Savior.

The Church is always God hung between two thieves. Thus, no one should be surprised or shocked at how badly the church has betrayed the gospel and how much it continues to do so today. It had never done very well. Conversely, however, nobody should deny the good the church has done either. It has carried grace, produced saints, morally challenged the planet, and made, however imperfectly, a house for God to dwell in on this earth. To be connected with the church is to be associated with scoundrels, warmongers, fakes, child-molesters, murderers, adulterers, and hypocrites of every description. It also, at the same time, identifies you with the saints and the finest persons of heroic soul within every time, country, race, and gender. To be a member of the church is to carry the mantle of both the worst sin and the finest heroism of soul... because the church always looks exactly as it looked at the original crucifixion, God hung among thieves.

(Ronald Rolheiser)

- c.** To love what Jesus loves is to not dismiss the hurt it can cause.

4. Jesus is _____ in The Church.

(**Matthew 18:20**; **1 James 4:8a**)

- a.** Jesus is most _____ where Jesus is most _____.

The Church is an _____ from _____ to be with _____.

When we think of Church as the weekly invitation from Jesus to be with Jesus... where on Earth would we rather be?

Be _____, be _____, and stay _____.

Tell us about the next step you took today in your spiritual journey!

App: Message Notes/Connect Card **Or:** MYRC.LINK/CONNECT



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Why Church?

Because of grace:

We're alive to God.

We're alive to Mission.

We're alive to Power.

BIG IDEA

Because of grace, I'm alive to The Church

To belong to Christ is to belong to The Church.

...people tend to think of church either as obligation or optional.

If you think church is obligation, you will eventually burn out.

If you think church is optional, you're going to miss out.



1 Come every Sunday

2 Be part of a group

3 Serve on a team

4 reasons why church matters:

1. Jesus is the point of The Church.

(**Colossians 1:18**; **Ephesians 1:22-23**; **Colossians 3:16**)

a. You and me...we are not the point! The Church is not primarily about us.

b. Church matters because Jesus matters.

The church exists for nothing else but to draw men to Christ... If [churches] are not doing that, all the cathedrals, clergy, missions, and sermons are simply a waste of time. (C.S. Lewis)

c. Said a little differently, The Church is from Jesus, for Jesus, about Jesus, and meant to bring people to Jesus. He is the point... and here's the surprisingly good news, that means we don't have to be the point.

2. Jesus is building The Church.

(**Matthew 16:18b**; **1 Corinthians 3:7**)

- a. As He builds it, He wants all of us to build it with Him.

3. Jesus loves The Church. (**Ephesians 5:25**)

- a. If we love Him, we will love what He loves.
- b. The Church has always been imperfect people being perfected by the perfect Savior.

The Church is always God hung between two thieves. Thus, no one should be surprised or shocked at how badly the church has betrayed the gospel and how much it continues to do so today. It had never done very well. Conversely, however, nobody should deny the good the church has done either. It has carried grace, produced saints, morally challenged the planet, and made, however imperfectly, a house for God to dwell in on this earth. To be connected with the church is to be associated with scoundrels, warmongers, fakes, child-molesters, murderers, adulterers, and hypocrites of every description. It also, at the same time, identifies you with the saints and the finest persons of heroic soul within every time, country, race, and gender. To be a member of the church is to carry the mantle of both the worst sin and the finest heroism of soul... because the church always looks exactly as it looked at the original crucifixion, God hung among thieves.

(Ronald Rolheiser)

- c. To love what Jesus loves is to not dismiss the hurt it can cause.

4. Jesus is uniquely present in The Church.

(**Matthew 18:20**; **1 James 4:8a**)

- a. Jesus is most present where Jesus is most wanted.

The Church is an invitation from Jesus to be with Jesus.
When we think of Church as the weekly invitation from Jesus to be with Jesus... where on Earth would we rather be?

Be present, be expectant, and stay desperate.

Tell us about the next step you took today in your spiritual journey!

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