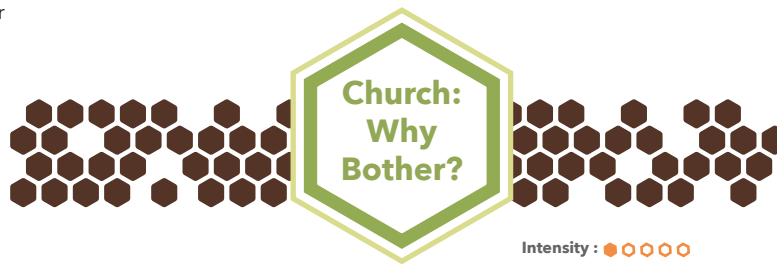


* Recommended for use with the Historic Diversity of the Church explainer



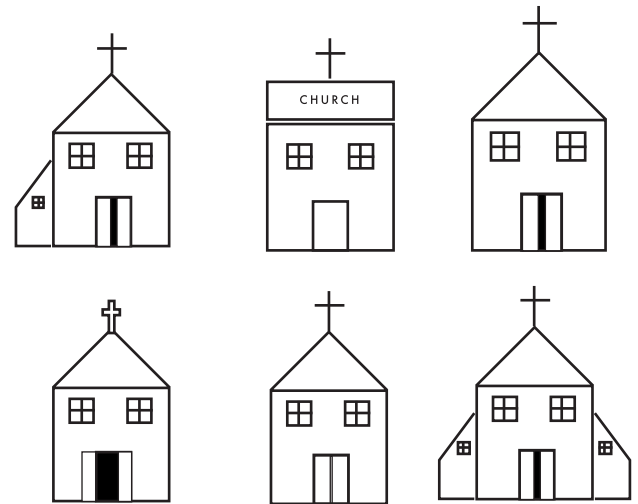
Getting Started

Among the leading reasons that people say they go to church is *the community they experience*.

Among the leading reasons people say they don't go to church is *the lack of welcome and acceptance that they feel there*.

And yet "church" is hard work. Everyone is busy. People differ in their needs, values, political preferences, and stages of life. Sermons and singing can be boring and dogmatic. There are a lot of other activities to get done on the weekend.

Why should being part of church community be a priority?



*"I'll be there for you;
When the rain starts to pour.
I'll be there for you;
Like I've been there before.
I'll be there for you;
'Cause you're there for me too."*

Friends Theme Song

*"Sometimes you want to go,
Where everybody knows your name,
And they're always glad you came.
You want to be where you can see,
The troubles are all the same.
You want to be where everybody
knows your name."*

Cheers Theme Song

Choose one

Imagine you are about to walk into a new church... What is your hope?

Imagine you are about to walk into a new church... What is your fear?

Where is the place you go that everybody knows your name?

What are your first and most powerful memories of church?



The Christian New Testament is filled with directions on how Christians should behave in the larger world and towards one another. Below is a sampling of some of the guidance provided.

Love One Another

During the last supper that Jesus had with his disciples, he said that one command should rule their behavior together and beyond the church:

34 A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. 35 By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.

(John 13:34-35, NIV)

We have a picture in the book of Acts of what the first churches were like:

46 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, 47 praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

(Acts 2:46-47, NIV)

What is a group you have been a part of where everyone belonged?

In groups, how do you make others better?

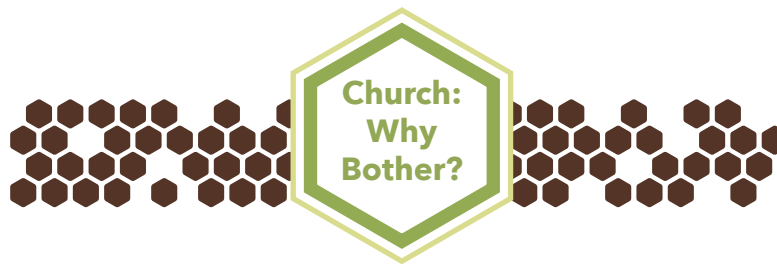
The Apostle Paul tells the church at Corinth that the church community is made up of many parts.

12 Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. 13 For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. 14 Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

15 Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. 16 And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. 17 If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? 18 But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. 19 If they were all one part, where would the body be? 20 As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

21 The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” 22 On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, 23 and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, 24 while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, 25 so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. 26 If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

1 Corinthians 12: 12-26, NIV



Church: Why Bother?

Going Deeper

We have such fixed ideas of what churches should be—bench pews, a pulpit, candles, and church brochures by the front door. But what if one started from scratch? What might be a completely different way to see and do church?

Throughout history, people in their early adult years have led changes in churches. Martin Luther King, Jr. was 26 years old when he took his first pastorate and led the Montgomery bus boycott. Where is a place in the church where young adults can make others better?

Choose one

If churches didn't have bench pews, how would you design a church?

If you were to start from scratch and build the ideal church community, what would it look like?

Imagine a multi-generational church. What is a unique place where young adults can lead the community?

The Journey Ahead

After attending a church service, how would the people you meet describe you?

If you attend church, initiate a conversation and friendship with someone at church from a different generation.

Young adults lead at work, school, and in the military. Rather than being a church consumer, find something within the church that you can help lead.

To Learn More



Must Christians Attend Church?
by oneminuteapologist or
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sX2QlTf4gXE>

The Bible Project <https://thebibleproject.com/>
<https://www.youtube.com/user/jointhebibleproject>



The Good Christian Music Blog
<https://www.youtube.com/user/TheGCMblog>

Dear Young Adults: 6 Reasons Why You Need the Church
by Fr. Michael Cummins <https://www.wordonfire.org/resources/blog/dear-young-adults-6-reasons-why-you-need-the-church/>



Church: Why Bother? by Philip Yancey [A personal reflection on leaving and returning to church.]

Leaving Church: A Memoir of Faith, by Barbara Brown Taylor [A reflection on the author's move into church, burnout, and reflection on faith outside of church.]

Searching for Sunday: Loving, Leaving, and Finding the Church, by Rachael Held Evans

A Faith of Their Own, by Lisa Pearce & Melinda Lundquist Denton [The changing understanding of faith and spirituality among American youth.]

Almost Christian: What the Faith of Our Teenagers is Telling the American Church by Kenda Creasy Dean