

Visions United  
*"Acts" Now*  
 Stories of Making Church Outside a Building

Before there is a Church... Before there is a building... There is a community  
 Born of the Spirit at Pentecost

Our new Spirit Gathering theme series is based on the 'Acts of the Apostles'.

These are the first stories of making church outside a building.

These are our stories!

We are entering the homestretch as we wait for the opening of the Community Hub on Joyce Ave this August. So, as we read through this final section of Acts we will be thinking about how we will *act*: how will we pray, worship, give and serve as part of the new Community Hub ministry? Our series ends with a celebration of Pentecost on May 23<sup>rd</sup>.

This is the third part of our theme series where we've been asking ourselves, *How may God be using a story to have a conversation with us about 'who we are' and 'how we are church' together in these days of on-line recordings and engaging ministry in a new neighbourhood as part of the Community Hub project?*

You can find previous outlines on the 'Acts Now!' webpage:

'Act 1': October 18 - November 22, 2020

'Act 2': January 10 - February 14, 2021

'Act 3': April 18 - May 23, 2021

Below is an outline of suggested weekly readings for 'Act 3':

Week	Reading	Theme
Week 1 - April 18	Acts 17:1-15 (Acts 19)	<b>Turning the World (and the Church) Upside Down!</b> <i>You may want to go back and reread chapter 16 and the story of the slave girl. You can also look ahead to Acts 19.</i>
Week 2 - April 25	Acts 17:16-24 (Acts 18)	<b>Making the Unknown God... Known... In New Ways</b> <i>Paul's speech in Athens. (You can also read chapter 18 &amp; 19 to continue the story of Paul visiting the communities at Corinth and Ephesus)</i>
Week 3 - May 2	Acts 20	<b>The Story of Eutychus: Who's sitting on our windowsills?</b> <i>Acts 20:7-12 (Additional reading: Acts 21 &amp; 22)</i>
Week 4 - May 9	Acts 23 - 26	<b>Letters to the Church</b> - <i>What letters or messages of encouragement, gratitude, challenge might we offer to each other as 'church' during these days and months of pandemic isolation, restrictions and separation?</i> These chapters tell the story of Paul's witness before the 'powers' of the day, his trials and imprisonment, and his transfer to Rome. It is believed that during these years Paul wrote many of his letters to the early churches, which we can read in the New Testament. (Romans, Corinthians, Thessalonians, Philippians, Galatians).
Week 5 - May 16	Acts 27 & 28	<b>Headwinds, Detours and Open Horizons - Paul sails to Rome</b>
Week 6 - May 23	Acts 2	<b>The Spirit of Pentecost - Pentecost Sunday</b> <i>In every ending is a beginning. We end where we began the series with the story of Pentecost. Where is the Spirit moving, now?</i>

*(Bible Study Questions on next page)*

## **Bible Study Wondering Questions**

*As you read through Acts, linger with the stories and the people you encounter.*

*Spend some time wondering about some of these questions:*

Where does this story take place - what is the setting?

Who are the characters and what is the relationship among them?

How is the Spirit of Christ at work in the story?

How is this a story of making church, making gospel community?

Is there a phrase or image that captures your imagination?

What puzzles you in this story? What would you like to learn more about?

What assumptions may be challenged?

Where are you in the story?

Where is Visions in this story?

Recall your own stories of making 'church' outside a building; give Rev Shawn a call if you have a story you'd like to share (506-588-0326).