

Ephesians 2: A Temple to God

The Big Idea

The ancient world had many examples of extravagant and magnificent temples. In the book of Ephesians, Paul shifts the focus away from temples of stone and wood to the temple God is creating in the church. Whether we meet in a beautiful church building, or gather with holy friends around cups of coffee, when gathered as the church we are the temple of God's own handiwork.



Opening discussion question: What places are sacred to you? Home? A place you visited? A church building?

Paul shifts our focus from holy things to holy people. The church, composed of diverse peoples, has become the quintessential expression of God's dwelling on earth. How do you celebrate and honor THAT sacred dwelling?

As our congregation adjusts to the idea of new pastoral leadership, as a "living stone" in this temple, what do you need to take hold of spiritual to keep from "tumbling away"?

What questions or concerns do you have about the leadership transition process to come?

Closing prayer:

Almighty God, You who called the universe into being, You who formed our inmost being and called us to be your people:

We give you thanks for your constant presence. Through seasons of constancy and even change, you are with us – calling us into deeper waters, calling us together in your spirit of unity, calling us out of ourselves into the world to serve others.

Grant that the pastor being called into new waters might hold fast to unending love and mercy as a buoy – a love that promised to hold onto us even as we go where your Spirit leads us. May the churches that receive them be communities of mercy and grace.

May this church, experiencing change, hold fast to the promise that your mission is bigger than any single pastor, local church, or denomination. Grant that such a promise would bring both comfort and discomfort – comfort in a season of change and discomfort as it drives us all to love you and each other more.

Strengthen us to be your Church in all times and seasons of life – a place where all are truly welcomed and embraced in your love (even a new pastor and new church members); a place where we find ways you are active among us and calling us to join in your saving work; a place where the story of your love and grace and mercy are embodied, even if it comes in shapes and sizes and languages that are new to us. We offer our prayers in the name of the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.