

Worship Date: May 16, 2010

Worship Theme: To the Ends of the Earth

Scripture Reference: John 17:20-26

Materials: Jigsaw puzzle

Last week we talked about how Jesus is always with us and is preparing a place for us. This week I have a story about being one with each other.

Do you enjoy working jigsaw puzzles? Jigsaw puzzles can be a lot of fun. (Open the box to reveal the pieces of the puzzle.) Wow! Look at all the pieces of this puzzle. The pieces of this puzzle are in many different sizes, shapes, colors. If you look at one piece of this puzzle, you don't get very much of the picture, do you? No, the pieces are not very important by themselves, but when they are all joined together and become one, they show the total picture.

This jigsaw puzzle can teach us an important lesson about the church. The church is made up of many individual members. Like the pieces of this puzzle, the members of a church come in different sizes, shapes, and colors. Jesus himself prayed that the church would be one so that the world would see God's love in us. You and I are part of the picture. Jesus wants us to love one another, help one another, and serve one another. When we do that, we become one, just as Jesus prayed we would be, and when we are one, the world can see God's love in us.

Unfortunately, just as it is sometimes difficult to put all of the pieces of a jigsaw puzzle together, the individual members of the church sometimes have a hard time being one with each other. When we concentrate on our own likes and dislikes instead of the likes and dislikes of the congregation, we are no longer being one. We are like the individual pieces of the puzzle. The world cannot see God's love in us. They don't get the whole picture.

If you ever find yourself thinking about only yourself, rather than others in the church, remember that Jesus prayed that we would be one. When we are one, bound together by Christ's love, the world will see God's love through us.

Dear Father, help us to be one so that the world may see your love in us. Amen.