

For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

In today’s Gospel, we hear a lot. It’s a loaded one. Which can sometimes be hard to decipher. But at the end, Jesus says something that has always been stuck in the back of my head: “for where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them.”

When most people think of this, the first thing that comes to mind is the church. But what is the church actually? Is it the people or is it the building where we gather? The physical church is just a building. It doesn't matter that we all haven't been in the church all together since March, what matters is that we are still gathering in the name of Christ and worshiping and praising him. We the people are the embodiment of the church. We define what church is, not the building.

It's been trying times these past few months and we are all still suffering together, but we are not alone. We are never alone because Christ is with us. We hear Jesus say that as long as two or three are gathered in his name he is there also. Even when you gather at your family dinner table and say grace, Christ is there. You may not realize it but Christ is always there. Even on zoom, or at the dinner table or over Facebook or youtube.

It's our time to go out of the building now and become disciples of Christ. Jesus wasn't confined to a building and we shouldn't do that to ourselves either. Jesus didn't work out of a church. He personally went out to people and met them where they were and made disciples. And he calls each of us to do the same. In these trying times, we are called even more so to go out and make disciples out of others. Now more than ever people need church and Jesus, but what happens when we can't always be in the church? We bring the church to people and meet them where they are.

There was a church in Rahway that for some time had no building, the people met at someone's house and worshiped there, and eventually raised money to rent a storefront and that's where they worship. Their building was just that, a building. They learned alebit the hard way that the church is mre than just the building, its the people.

The church is so much more than the building. It's gathering together and worshiping, its going to meetings, its listening to the choir, its going to coffee hour and catching up with your friends every Sunday, it's volunteering at the food pantry, its seeing the regulars at the tricky tray. Christ is working through each of us all the time and we just need to take a step back and realize it.

Although we are not all gathering in person, we are still working as a church. One way our way of Saint Paul team has continued to be a church is calling to check in those we have not seen as much or heard from. They are calling , checking in, nand praying with other members of the church. The Way of Saint Paul team has hosted two Fellowship Prayer Meetings so far. During these meetings, we break up into small groups and talk abiuat things that we might need prayer for. For some, its going back to work during this panemic, for others, its helping their kids during remote learning, and for others its just dealing with the state of the world right now. But we are atill together and we are still gathering in the name of Christ. We then end the meeting with Compline.

The Daily office is also a great way to stay connected to others while we are apart. It is a series of prayers, throughout the day that a person can say. It starts with morning prayer, then noonday prayer, evening prayer and ends with compline. They help you stay conneted becausethe whole Episcopal Church uses them so no matter if you think you are alone in doing the Daily Office, you're not.

As a chruch, we are still together, although we are apart. We are still having those connections that could have eaisly have been lost. So while the church is just the building, we are the church as well. We make

the church what it is, we are the ones that stay connected with each other. We are still gathering in person, on zoom, on youtube, or on facebook. And just remember that Jesus said “For where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them”.