

Living Out Our Lutheran Identity

Connecting to Your Community

December 1, 2020



1. Share one thing Pastor Bourman said that resonated with you.
2. Share one thing Pastor Bourman said that you found to be thought-provoking (for whatever reason).
3. Read John 17:20-26. Pastor Bourman said, “You can’t talk about community until you understand that God is community.” And, “In Christ, God has brought us into community with God, so that our hope and our future is that we are going to know God and be in a relationship with him forever.”

John 17:20-26 - ²⁰ “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, ²¹ that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. ²² I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one—²³ I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. ²⁴ Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. ²⁵ Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. ²⁶ I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them.”

- a. Explain how the nature of the church reflects the nature of God.
 - b. Describe the blessings that God intends to come through our community with him.
4. Read 1 John 1:1-4. React to this statement from Pastor Bourman: “You haven’t yet fully enjoyed the gospel until you’ve shared it with someone else.”

1 John 1:1-4 - ¹ That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked at and our hands have touched—this we proclaim concerning the Word of life. ² The life appeared; we have seen it and testify to it, and we proclaim to you the eternal life, which was with the Father and has appeared to us. ³ We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ. ⁴ We write this to make our joy complete.

5. Pastor Bourman talked about strategically creating spaces for community and suggested that we might do so architecturally, organically, and programmatically. Write down two ideas for how we might more strategically create such spaces at Riverview.

6. Read Ephesians 2:10. Describe how this verse impacts your efforts to connect with our community.

Ephesians 2:10 - ¹⁰ For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

7. What way(s) have you personally found to know and connect with the community where God has placed you? In what other ways might you try to connect?

8. Paul identified a cultural "center" in Athens (Acts 17:16ff) and shared the gospel there. Pastor Bourman also spoke about networks that connect people in communities. What are some "centers" and/or "networks" in our community, and how might we use them in our gospel outreach?

9. Pastor Bourman's advice was to "be the most 'you.'" What unique strength(s) do we have at Riverview, and how can we use them to reach our community?

10. Below are Pastor Bourman's "Ten Commandments" for connecting to your community. Choose the three "commandments" that you think are most important for our ministry in Appleton. Explain why you think they are important, and describe what (if anything) we can do to better carry out each.

- Clean up social media.
- Be done with poor websites.
- Everything you do is messaging and messaging is everything you do. Message exactly what you mean to message.
- Less is more
- Take mini-sabbaths.
- Be relentless.
- If you need wisdom, ask our generous God, and he will give it to you.
- Deeply love your church.
- Deeply love your city.
- Trust the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding.