**Why We Commune**

August 20th, 2016

Language changes fast & often. Etymology (the study of words) is really an ever evolving study because words change as the culture in which they’re used changes their meaning. (Just don’t get that confused with entomology, which is the study of bugs…) For example, a “googol” is actually a number, 1 followed by 100 zeros. Now you “google” things. One of many examples…

The word “commune” has had the same thing happen to it. In the dictionary it’s defined as “an interchange of ideas” or as a verb “to converse of talk together with profound intensity, intimacy, or to be in intimate communication or rapport.” We don’t often refer to “communing” with each other. “Hey Joe, want to commune tonight?” It doesn’t have the same feel as “hang out.”

In the church when I say commune you probably think of Communion, also called by the majority of early church fathers the Eucharist, which means the thanksgiving. We often approach communion as a very individual time of reflection, but that’s not how the early church took it. In fact, sources say it would often be taken in the middle of a meal together, possibly a love feast (see Jude) and wasn’t separated into its own separate time until the 2nd or 3rd century. Paintings & writings suggest that for many early Christians the common meal where the Eucharist was given was their center of Christianity.

The point is this: when we take part in Communion, which is very much about our communion & our intimacy with Christ, do we forget or even think that the concept of communion also applies to the person next to us as well? As in, we, they and I, are in communion by & through Jesus? The close relationship *MUST* extend to them as well as Christ if communion is to have its full effect. Let’s put this another way – do you *eucharist* the people around you as you give thanks to & for Christ? Eucharist in Greek actually literally means, “I give thanks.” Do you for Christ? Do you for your neighbor? Do you for everyone whom you’re communing with in Christ? Should we? Consider this the next time you take the communion trays from your neighbor. Grace to you.