

CHURCH DEFINED: WEEK ONE – ECCLESIA
Matthew 16:18, 1 Peter 2:9–10, Romans 12:4–5

CHURCH IS...

A PEOPLE NOT A BUILDING...

...AN ORGANISM NOT AN ORGANIZATION...

...BOTH GLOBAL AND LOCAL IN MAKE-UP AND MEMBERSHIP.

QUESTIONS FOR INDIVIDUALS AND COMMUNITY GROUPS:

FOR STARTERS: Discuss following statements about church: 1. *The church is irrelevant today, I can find community and purpose elsewhere* 2. *I don't need to go to church to be a Christian.* 3. *The church is full of hypocrites, why would I want to go?* How has church made a difference in your life? Be specific as you share your church experiences.

THE BASICS: Read Matthew 16:18, Acts 4:11–12, Colossians 1:18 and 1 Corinthians 3:11. Define “church”. What does it mean to you that Jesus is the foundation stone, cornerstone, and head of the church? Can one *do church* without Jesus? Discuss.

QUICK FIRE ROUND:

1. Read 1 Peter 2:4–5, 9–10, Colossians 3:12, Acts 19:41. The Greek word for church, *Ecclesia* means assembly, called out ones, or congregation. Therefore, is the church a place or a people, or both? Is the church primarily for believers, attenders, or seekers? What difference does this make?
2. Read Colossians 1:24, Ephesians 1:21–22 and Romans 12:4–5. Explain the imagery of the church as a body (organism) rather than an organization. What are the implications regarding being a member of the church? Is it possible simply to attend church according to these Scriptures?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 12:12–13, Romans 8:16–17, Ephesians 4:1–6 and Revelation 7:9–10. What is the “Big C” church in make-up and membership? How can you think, act, and pray being part of the global church and greater Kingdom movement? How could this change, even improve, your perspective on life?
4. Read Acts 11:19–30 and Hebrews 10:24–25. Does it matter what local church one belongs to? What draws people to certain local churches? What brought you (and keeps you) at North Metro Church?
5. How can the “church” best worship Jesus and serve others today? How can you act upon your answers?

WORD-BASED PRAYER: Chose some of the above verses to pray through together. Pray for the global church, specifically in countries facing persecution. Pray for the local churches in Thornton and north Denver – together reaching this community for Christ. Pray for North Metro – to stay focused and on mission, to be a place for people to become and then make disciples, *Discovering Life Together*.

CLOSING PRAYER – *Father God, thank you that your church won't fail. It is the hope of the world. Amen.*