

## **Church on Purpose**

### ***Questions for Reflection & Discussion:***

#### **I am the Church - Acts 9:36-42**

1. Why do you think Dorcas/Tabitha's story is not more commonly told in churches?
2. Why do you think Luke chose to write this account in this way, leaving out many of the most common elements of miracle and healing stories? What would have been gained or lost with more explanation?
3. Who are people that come to mind for you who lead their lives like Dorcas/Tabitha? Who would pray for their resurrection if they were to die?
4. What are the messages that the 21st century church needs to hear in this story, both from Peter and Dorcas/Tabitha?

#### **You are the Church - Acts 15:1-21**

1. What are the conflicts that come to mind for you in the modern church that might be as significant as the question of the circumcision of Gentiles for early Christians? How have you been taught by the church to navigate these kinds of conflict (or not)? What has been the result of those teachings in your life, and the church?
2. Peter and Paul were more often serving in different mission fields and had differing practices in their evangelism, but in this moment they became allies in naming their experience of God's work in the world. When have you found yourself surprised by someone who shared a similar conviction to you? Why might it be important for us to find common ground with others, even if we have other subjects on which we disagree?
3. James identified the importance of sexual purity and certain food prohibitions as still valid and important for all early church members, even Gentiles. What might the core practices be that we need to take into this era of the Christian story, to be a church on purpose?

#### **We are the Church Together - Acts 2**

1. When you think about the Holy Spirit and what your experience learning about the Trinity growing up might have been, what are the key characteristics you think of? What is the role of the Holy Spirit in the church?
2. What do you think the conversations might have been like with people who observed the Pentecost moment? What might their questions have been, and why?

Why might that event have been challenging to them? Why might it have been inspiring?

3. What do you think are the main barriers to the modern church living by the principles outlined in Acts 2? What would hold you back from living in this way? Why would you want to live with those practices and values? How might the church be different if we did?