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## *The Church As Good Community: Koinonia and Acts 2:42*

**An article from the *Cathedral Times* by Dean Sam Candler**

Given so many worries about “the state of the church” these days, I am excited to announce a special theme for “The Dean’s Forum” Christian Education series this fall! The worries I note are such things like: church attendance is declining, young people are no longer interested in church, and society has turned more to “virtual” community with our time.

While those types of concerns are legitimate, I am gratified, truly gratified, to note that many individual Christian churches defy those trends. (The Cathedral of St. Philip is certainly among that more positive group!) I believe that vital churches have something to teach others; indeed, they have something to teach the wider world.

Thus, this fall, I am devoting The Dean’s Forum to a special theme. That theme is “The Church as Good Community.” We will study, especially, Acts 2:42 and what the word “Koinonia” as good community means. Good churches produce good community!

Acts 2:42 notes that the earliest community of Christians “devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, the breaking of bread, and the prayers.” Each Sunday this fall, then, I will examine a particular feature of that verse—from apostolic history to prayer, to Eucharist, to mission. Those are the critical features of a vital church community!

So, the topics for some particular Sundays are these:

**September 13:** “Community and Koinonia” What is the nature of Christian community? What is apostolic teaching and fellowship?

**September 20:** “Prayer” What is prayer? How do we pray? What are the various types of prayer?

**September 27:** “The Breaking of Bread” What is the Eucharist? We will examine the history of this beautiful and mysterious corporate act of worship: The Lord’s Supper.

On **October 4**, we will bless animals in honor of St. Francis’ Day! And on **October 11**, the Bishop of Atlanta will be our special guest at the Dean’s Forum, as he makes his regular visitation. Then, **October 18**, we will resume our study of “The Church as Good Community” with reflection on mission, especially on how contemplation leads to action (with a nod to Richard Rohr!).

On **November 1**, All Saints Sunday, we will turn to saints! During that month, we will examine “Apostolic Tradition” and the history of our Christian community.

Join us each Sunday for The Dean’s Forum! You do not need to have attended previous sessions in order to benefit from our community, our Koinonia! The Dean’s Forum is held every Sunday, at 10:10 a.m., in Child Hall!



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