

Sensing Awe

Acts 2:42–47

Early Church

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Making Paper Beads

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Today's Bible Reading

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Additional Bible Readings

Psalm 23

John 10:1–10

1 Peter 2:19–25

**God, in whom we find
shepherding love, may
we feel, hear, and see
this love in our lives.
May words and
actions joyfully testify
to the abundance of
your faithful love for
us and for all. Amen.**

In Acts 2:42–49, we glimpse the early church before internal conflicts, persecution, and inter-faith tensions present the fledgling community with the challenges that will define and refine it.

“They” in 2:42 refers to those who responded in faith to Peter’s Pentecost address, being baptized and joining the early Christian community. “They” were eagerly awaiting Christ’s return in glory with the passion of recent converts embracing a new way of life. The focus on Peter’s preaching, and this week’s reading from the letter bearing his name, remind us that Peter was the first leader of the early church before the conversion and subsequent influence of Paul.

A sense of awe and reverence characterized the mood of the moment (2:43). Often, we associate these feelings with our response to the mystery and otherness of a God far beyond us; here, however, these come about through the immediacy of “wonders and signs,” tangible, practical changes to daily life that made a difference.

The church’s unity is emphasized. However, the description of having all things in common is acknowledged as past rather than an ongoing practice. Still, these early Jesus followers enjoyed the “goodwill of all the people” (Acts 2:47). “Goodwill” is a translation of a Greek word that also means “grace.” Perhaps such feelings of goodwill made it easier for the Body of Christ in that place to make God’s grace known to their neighbours. Their words of praise and deeds of mercy testify to the abundance and wholeness found in their shared devotion.