

# The Church

by Pastor Jim Preisig

“Where is your church?” the little lad asked. I had just been introduced as a pastor to a precocious little boy and he wondered aloud where I served. Without thinking I said, “The corner of 2<sup>nd</sup> and Douglas in Lee’s Summit,” but then having said it, found myself pondering the inaccuracy of that description. With half of our people attending worship in the Lee’s Summit High School Performing Arts Center, it struck me how misleading it can be to think of the Church as a structure of bricks and mortar placed at a particular geographical location. It reveals, I believe, a subtle fallacy that has gripped the American Church, and led to missed opportunity.

When you read the scriptures, it is evident that the Church was never defined by mere buildings or structures, regardless of how beautiful. The Church for Christ was that which would be built upon a human profession of love and faith. Paul described it as a living body revealed in all its unique dimensions of love. And James described it as a community of faith that practices radical hospitality.

Pushing that thought, it becomes obvious that the Church is the women and men of faith and courage who go into the world to share God’s love. The Church is the youth and children who grasp the truth that God loves them, and then try to live so that others might know that truth. The Church is not defined by age, or class or color. It is wherever two or three are gathered in Christ’s name.

That means that Church happens to gather on Sundays at the high school or the sanctuary, but for the rest of the week the Church is simply YOU offering Christ to the world! What a radical concept.

Such an understanding sets us free to see every workplace, school and home as a mission field where God’s love is entrusted to us to share. You are the Church! And when we finally believe it, we will change the world.