

Corinth

Post

Modern

Faith

One Word

Recap

What **satisfies** you?

You think you already have everything you **need (full)**. You think you are already rich. You have begun to **reign (kings)** in God's kingdom **without us!** 4:8a

Corinth is **satisfied** with their current spiritual state. And this is the **problem**. It is one thing to be 'in' sin and aware and seek repentance. It is all together something different if you are 'in' sin and **content** with that posture

Recap

Corinth is **satisfied** with what the **world** has to offer. And in this, they no longer **grow** or **hunger** for what God has for them

Recap

Most Christians are satisfied living as **common** Christians, without an **insatiable hunger** for the deeper things of God. **AW Tozer**

Recap

Corinth is **sensual**

Corinth is **immature**

Corinth is **struggling** with **transformation**

Corinth is trying to **blend** the Gospel and culture

If you ask the wrong **question**, you will always get the wrong **answer**

Paul will give us a **biblical** perspective on intimacy and relationships

He will also give us **boundaries** for applying this paradigm

Arguments for Hedonism: Pleasure for Individual Salvation, Peter Prevos, 2021

Hellenistic ethical theory revolves around the notion of the most **final good**. This concept originates with Aristotle who argues that if our pursuit of the good is to make sense, there must be a most **final good**, which he calls the **goal or telos of living**.

Epicurus writes that he does not know “how to conceive the good apart from the **pleasures of taste, sexual pleasures,** the pleasures of sound and the pleasure of **beautiful form**.”

Why Hedonism Doesn't Lead to Happiness, Steve Taylor Ph.D

Our time in this life is limited and could end at any moment, so surely we should treat ourselves to as much enjoyment, adventure, and experience as we can. What would be the point of putting ourselves through suffering and hardship? You could compare life to a long **vacation**. When we go on vacation, we usually try to have as much of a "good time" as we can, so surely we should do the same with the **"long vacation" of life?**

Positive psychologists have established that merely to have a "good time" in the present moment does not provide the **basis** of a life of well-being.

In the long run, trying to find happiness solely through hedonism leads to a sense of **meaninglessness** and **emptiness**.

In our culture, **hedonism (pleasure/desires)** has become the highest truth/
value. It is no wonder that our **intimacies** have become what **define** us.

Caveat (clarification)

Unity of scripture means clarity of belief and behaviour

We are **exiles/ambassadors**

Christianity is a '**reformed Judaism**'

I can hardly believe the report about the **sexual immorality** going on among you—something that even **pagans** don't do. I am told that a man in your church is living in sin with his stepmother. You are so **proud** of yourselves, but you should be mourning in **sorrow** and **shame**. And you should remove this man from your fellowship. **1 Corinthians 5:1-2**

Your **boasting** about this is terrible. Don't you realize that this sin is like a little **yeast** that spreads through the whole batch of dough? Get rid of the old "yeast" by removing this wicked person from among you. **Vs 6-7a**

You say, “I am **allowed** to do anything”—but not everything is good for you. And even though “I am allowed to do anything,” I must not become a **slave** to anything. You say, “Food was made for the stomach, and the stomach for food.” (This is true, though someday God will do away with both of them.) But you can’t say that our **bodies were made for sexual immorality**. They were made for the Lord, and the Lord cares about our bodies. **6:12-13**

Background

Roman Emperors

Caligula (37–41 CE) had incestuous relationships with his three sisters and converted the palace into a brothel forcing senators wives to serve as consorts

Background

Roman Emperors

We would probably know more about **Claudius's (41CE–54CE)** sex life if it didn't completely pale into insignificance when compared to that of his wife, Messalina. What the empress allegedly managed to get away with is astounding. Pliny the Elder records that she held a competition in the imperial palace with one of Rome's most notorious prostitutes to see how many men they could sleep with.

Background

Roman Emperors

“**Nero (54–66CE)** murdered his mother, and Nero fiddled while Rome burned.

Nero also slept with his mother, Nero married and executed one stepsister, executed his other stepsister, raped and murdered his stepbrother. In fact, he executed or murdered most of his close relatives. He kicked his pregnant wife to death. He castrated and then married a freedman. He married another freedman, this time himself playing the bride. He raped a vestal virgin. He melted down the household gods of Rome for their cash value.” **Nero, Edward Champlin**

Background

"Korinthos, there, on account of the multitude of **courtesans**, who were sacred to Aphrodite, outsiders resorted in great numbers and kept holiday. And the **merchants and soldiers** who went there squandered all their money so that the following proverb arose in reference to them: 'Not for every man is the voyage to Korinthos.'" *Strabo, 20 AD , Geography 12. 4. 36*

"Guest-loving girls [courtesans and prostitutes]! Servants of Peitho (Suasion) in wealthy Korinthos! Ye that burn the golden tears of fresh frankincense, full often soaring upward in your **souls** unto Aphrodite." *Pindar, Eulogies Fragment 122*

Strabo also tells us that "the 1,000 prostitutes were **donated** to the temple". This means that wealthy citizens donated their **slaves** to the temple of Aphrodite.

Background

Men owned the bodies of their male and female servants. Within the walls of a great rambling house, filled with young servants, over whom the master ruled supreme, fidelity to one's wife remained **a personal option**. Despite harsh laws punishing married women for adultery, infidelity by their husbands incurred no legal punishment and very little moral disapprobation. **Peter Brown, The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity**

Additionally, according to John Chrysostom, a renowned Christian leader from the fourth and early fifth centuries, Roman laws allowed “dealers to enslave **children** and to train them in sexual specialties for sale as prostitutes.”

Biblical Perspective

At the heart of Paul's conversation with the church in Corinth comes an understanding of one word in the first century, **porneia**

Gospels, **5x**

Acts **3x**

Pauline Letters, **10x**

Revelation, **7x**

Biblical Perspective

It is actually reported that there is **sexual immorality** among you, and of a kind that even pagans do not tolerate: A man is sleeping with his father's wife. **5:1**

You say, "Food for the stomach and the stomach for food, and God will destroy them both." The body, however, is not meant for **sexual immorality** but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body **6:13**

Flee from **sexual immorality**. All other sins a person commits are outside the body, but whoever sins sexually, sins against their own body. **6:18**

But since **sexual immorality** is occurring, each man should have sexual relations with his own wife, and each woman with her own husband. **7:2**

Biblical Perspective

But I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for **sexual immorality**, makes her the victim of adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery. [Matthew 5:32](#)

For out of the heart come evil thoughts—murder, adultery, **sexual immorality**, theft, false testimony, slander. [Matthew 15:19](#), [Mark 7:21](#)

I tell you that anyone who divorces his wife, except for **sexual immorality**, and marries another woman commits adultery.” [Matthew 19:9](#)

No, you are imitating your real father.” They replied, “We aren’t **illegitimate** children! God himself is our true Father.” [John 8:41](#)

Biblical Perspective

Instead, we should write and tell them to abstain from eating food offered to idols, from **sexual immorality**, from eating the meat of strangled animals, and from consuming blood. You must abstain from eating food offered to idols, from consuming blood or the meat of strangled animals, and from **sexual immorality**. If you do this, you will do well. Farewell.”

Acts 15:20, 29, The Council of Jerusalem

Biblical Perspective

The Didache (Koine Greek: διδαχή), also known as “The Teaching,” or, “The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles,” is an enigmatic primitive Church document describing early Christian ethics, practices, and order. There is, however, a consensus for a mid to late first-century dating (**50–70 CE**)

The early Christian document Hermas, or **Shepherd of Hermas**, was known to the early Church Fathers. The Muratorian canon, a list of canonical books from about the 3d century, says Hermas was written by the brother of Pius, Bishop of Rome, about **140–154**, second century

Biblical Perspective

The Didache

The Lord's Teaching Through the Twelve Apostles to the Nations.

There are **two ways**, one of life and one of death;
but a great **difference** between the two ways. **1:1**

And the second commandment of the Teaching; You shall not commit murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not commit **pederasty**, you shall not commit **fornication**, you shall not steal, you shall not practice magic, you shall not practice witchcraft, you shall not murder a child by abortion nor kill that which is begotten. You shall not covet the things of your neighbour, **2:2**

Biblical Perspective

Shepherd of Hermas

“‘Sir,’ I respond, ‘what are the kinds of evils over which it is necessary for us to exercise self-control?’ ‘Listen,’ he said: ‘adultery and **fornication**, lawless drunkenness, wicked luxury, many kinds of food and the extravagance of wealth...’ **Commandment VIII, 1, 3,**

Biblical Perspective

But what does **porneia** mean? There are two basic meanings: (1) sexual relations with a prostitute or, in a more general sense, (2) sexual immorality, which for a **Jew** refers to prohibited degrees of intercourse. When you double-click on the term **porneia**, then, it takes you to **Leviticus 18 (21)**.

So, while **porneia** can be a sweeping generalizing term referring to any kind of sexual immorality, for the **Jew** there was an **established list** of what was meant. If one wants specifics, no better listing can be found than in Leviticus 18. In fact, the importance of this chapter for defining what **porneia** would have meant for a 1st Century Jew cannot be exaggerated. Leviticus 18 was for the Jewish world of Torah observance God's covenant gift to the Israelites (18:1-2) that both clarified how to live and set them apart from pagans. **Scot McKnight**

Biblical Perspective

If God is the author of Leviticus 18:22, then God knows what God is doing. This may pose an immense challenge, but it shouldn't lead to **altering** the Torah...Rabbi Ari Segal published an article titled: "The biggest **challenge** to 'emunah' [Jewish faith] of our time."...Many **Orthodox** Jews do not believe in reinterpreting the Torah to adapt to this reality and are unaccepting of those who do—either explicitly or implicitly. **Rabbi Eli Yoggev**

Biblical Perspective

The search for a universal statement on divorce from the entire Scripture created the need to determine the exact meaning of the word **porneia** as used in the Matthean exceptive clause. Many different interpretations have been proposed. These include polygamy, incest, adultery, sex before marriage, and prostitution. Each of these is correct because the basic meaning of porneia is “to engage in **any type** of sexual immorality.” Porneia captures the nuance of ‘ervah in the legal idiom “except for sexual indecency/immorality.” The word introduces a sense of universality in that it encompasses **all types of sexual immorality**, not one specific form. Thus, in answering the Pharisees’ specific question about the grounds for divorce based on Deuteronomy 24:1-4, in its first century context, Yeshua repudiates any grounds (“any matter/cause”) for divorce “except [for any type of] sexual immorality.” **Rabbi Dr. Vered Hillel**

Biblical Perspective

As the early church was surrounded by a sexually diverse culture, they adopted a “**Jewish**” model of relationship and intimacy. This can not be overstated enough because in many ways, this was as **counter cultural** as anything Christians could do

Porneia and its derivatives was **widely established** in the early church and understood by the **Gentile church**. But it should be noted that Christianity grew, thrived in a **Roman** context. One of the main reasons was the **dignity** given back to women and children. Christianity has thrived where the **vulnerable** see the Gospel as a safe place.

The First Sexual Revolution, Kyle Harper

This was the scene onto which the Christians came loudly striding. The Christian movement's sexual demands were not just austere or unusual. They were **jolting**, and deliberately so.

Paul's letters show us that Christian sexual morality was settled on the go, adapting the gospel's **searing ethic of radical love** and **interior purity** to the realities of life in the towns of the empire. Paul's letter to the fledgling Christian community in **Corinth** provides the clearest example. It is the most direct entrée we have to the **confrontation** between the nascent Christian Church and the habits and half-articulate expectations that governed sexual life in a Greek or Roman city.

The First Sexual Revolution, Kyle Harper

First Corinthians shows that Paul's message was heard in the most **contradictory** ways, even by sympathetic ears. Some of the new adherents to the faith had drawn startlingly libertine conclusions from Paul's language of Christian **freedom**

So it stood to reason that just as the Gentile Christians were freed from the magnificently intricate regulations of the Jewish dietary code, so too they might expect a certain **laxness** in erotic matters.

The First Sexual Revolution, Kyle Harper

Paul's use of porneia fuses two very different frames of reference, one **biblical** and the other drawn from the experience of life in the **Greco-Roman** towns where the apostle preached.

Paul's ban on porneia restricted one of the slave-owner's most ordinary prerogatives: sexual access to his slaves. We can trace a dawning awareness in the early Church, unlike anything in pagan antiquity, of the **sexual integrity of all persons**. By the fifth century, Christian emperors were actually taking proactive (if still, by our standards, limited) measures to protect the bodily integrity of **vulnerable** women.

Marriage: Covenant or Contract?

Contracts are often made for a **limited** period of time

Contracts often deal with **specific** actions

Contracts are based on an "**If..., then...**" mentality

Contracts are motivated by the desire to **get/keep** something

Covenants are initiated for the benefit of the **other** person

In covenant relationships people make **unconditional** promises

Covenant relationships are based on **steadfast** love

Covenant relationships view commitments as **permanent**

Covenant relationships require **confrontation** and **forgiveness**

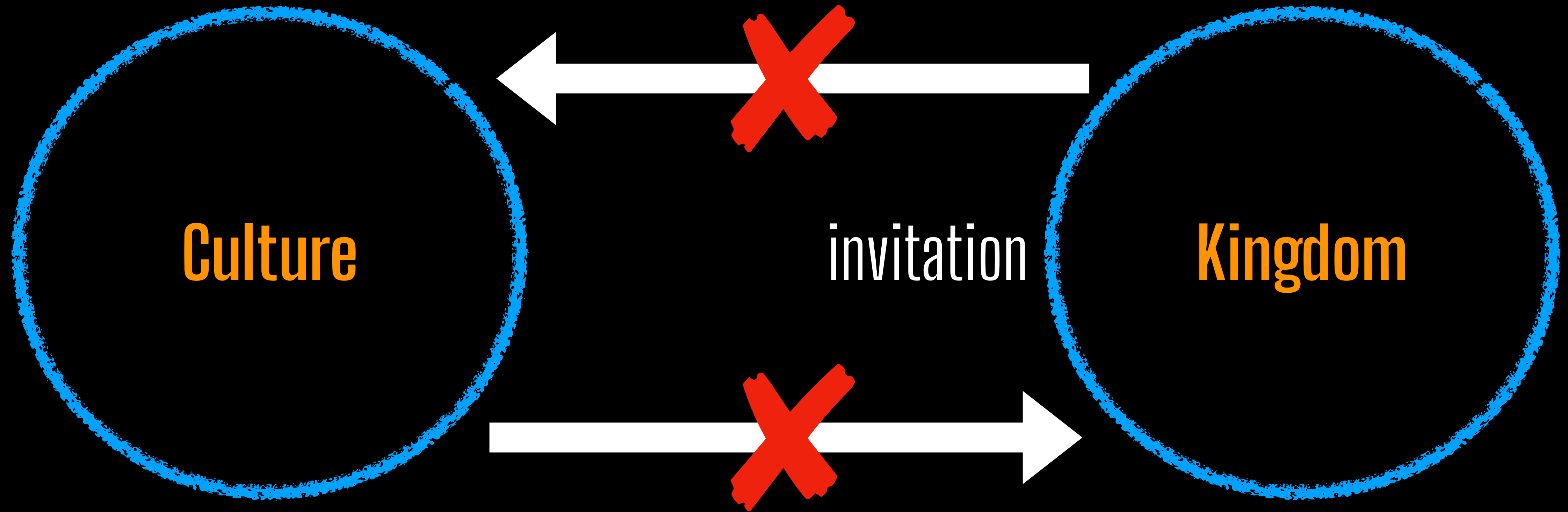
“The **church** is composed of the **single** and the **married**. Both are called to a life of **faithfulness**. All are called to be friends, defying the loneliness that threatens anyone not married.” **Stanley Hauerwas**

Boundaries

When I wrote to you before, I told you not to associate with people who indulge in **sexual sin**. But I wasn't talking about **unbelievers** who indulge in sexual sin, or are greedy, or cheat people, or worship idols. You would have to **leave this world** to avoid people like that. **Vs 9-10**

It isn't my responsibility to judge **outsiders**, but it certainly is your responsibility to judge those **inside** the church **who are sinning**. God will judge those on the outside **Vs 12-13a**

Boundaries



Authentic Christianity is seen in our **alignment** with the **Bible's framework** of living our faith amongst those who do not believe

If you ask the wrong **question**, you will always get the wrong **answer**

“What do you **believe** about the bible?”

Don't you realize that your **body** is the **temple** of the **Holy Spirit**, who lives in you and was given to you by God? You do not belong to yourself, for God bought you with a high price. So you must **honour** God with your body. **6:19-20**

Don't you realize that **all of you** together are the **temple of God** and that the **Spirit of God** lives in you? **1 Corinthians 3:16**

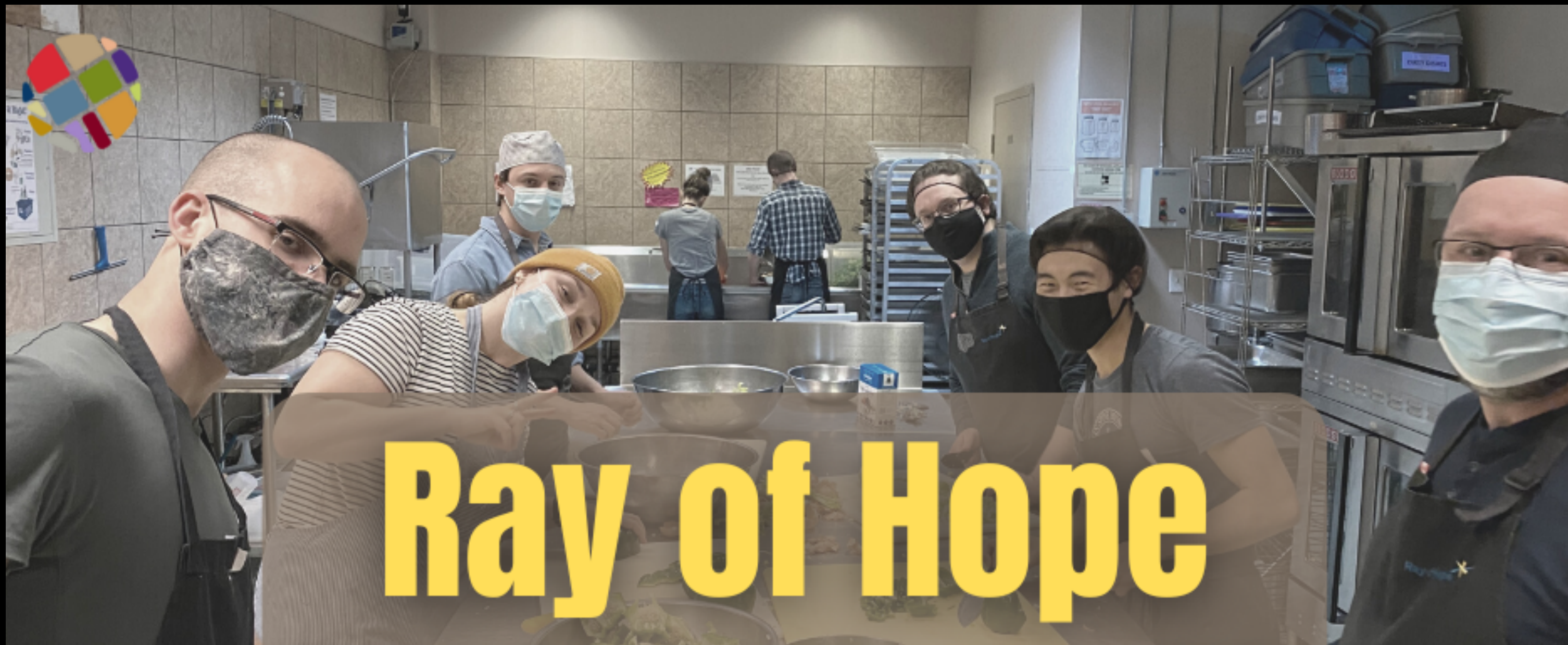
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Kids Program

Greeters

Journey Young Adults

Worship Director (staff position)



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MAY 8

Half life part 2


UCC Waterloo Sermons

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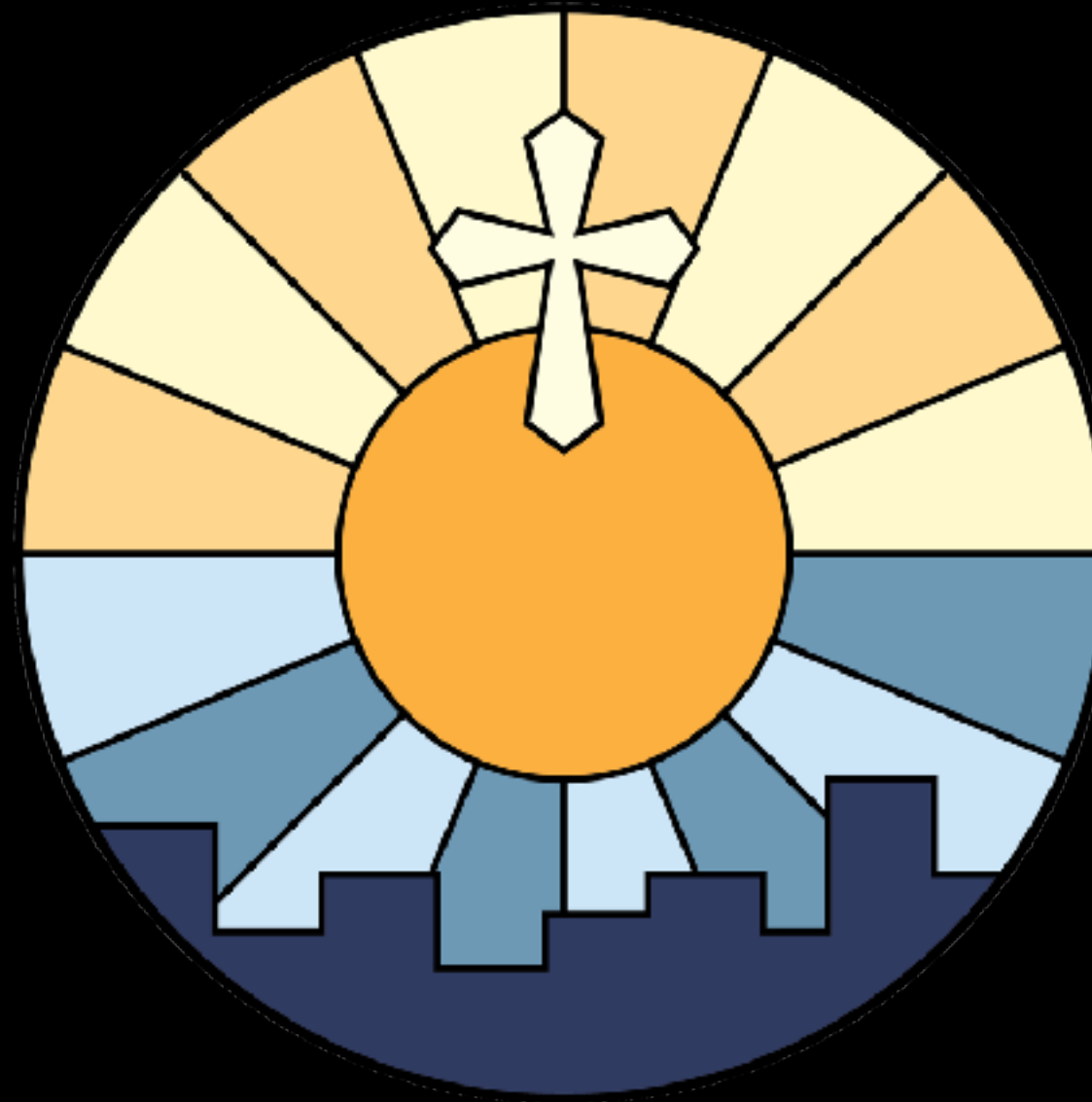
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