

From Apostolic Teaching To Communal Witness: Reframing Congregational Formation Groups Through Acts 2:42–47

Victor Kurnia Christyanto¹, Hery Susanto²

^{1,2}Sekolah Tinggi Teologi Jemaat Kristus Indonesia

Corresponding author: Victor Christyanto (victorkurnia1@gmail.com)¹

Abstract:

This study aims to examine the constitutive practices of the earliest Christian community in Acts 2:42–47 and develop a biblical-theological framework for Congregational Formation Groups (Kelompok Pembinaan Warga, KPW) in the context of Gereja Baptis Indonesia in Salatiga. Employing qualitative library research and a historical-grammatical exegetical approach, it analyzes the Greek text of Acts 2:42–47 in its literary and historical setting and engages relevant New Testament, Christian education, and small-group literature. The analysis identifies perseverance in apostolic teaching, fellowship (*koinōnia*), the breaking of bread, and prayer as interconnected practices expressed in mutual care, material solidarity, shared life, worship, and public witness. These findings inform a six-dimensional framework for congregational formation encompassing scriptural instruction, relational fellowship, communal prayer, shared life, compassionate service, and contextual witness. The study contributes an integrated conceptual account of how the ecclesial practices narrated in Acts can guide sustained Christian formation without reproducing the social arrangements of first-century Jerusalem uncritically. Its practical implication is that KPW should assess formation not solely through attendance or the frequency of meetings but also through growth in scriptural understanding, spiritual maturity, mutual responsibility, service, and witness. As a literature-based exegetical study, it does not claim to establish the empirical effectiveness of existing groups.

Keywords:

Acts 2:42–47; early Christian community; congregational formation; small groups; Christian witness.

Article history:

Submitted: 10 Oct. 2025, Revised: 10 Dec. 2025, Accepted: 23 Dec. 2025

How to cite this article:

Christyanto, V. K., & Susanto, H. (2025). From apostolic teaching to communal witness: Reframing congregational formation groups through Acts 2:42–47. *TELEIOS: Jurnal Teologi dan Pendidikan Agama Kristen*, 5(2), 223–235. <https://doi.org/10.53674/teleios.v5i2.456>

Copyright:

© 2025. The Authors. Licensee: TELEIOS. This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License.

INTRODUCTION

Congregational formation is an important dimension of church ministry, contributing to spiritual maturity, strengthening fellowship, and encouraging members to participate in communal life. Gereja Baptis Indonesia in Salatiga offers several formative activities, including Sunday worship, Bible study, early-morning prayer, and women's and youth fellowships. These activities provide opportunities for biblical instruction, prayer, and interaction among church members. Their existence alone, however, does not establish whether the principles of the early Christian community are consistently reflected throughout the formation process. This question warrants examination because congregational formation concerns not merely the frequency of activities but also the internalization of Christian values in everyday life. Acts 2:42–47 portrays a community devoted to the apostles' teaching, fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayer, while demonstrating concern for the needs of others. This account provides a biblical point of departure for examining the relationship between early Christian communal practices and congregational formation in the ministry context of Gereja Baptis Indonesia in Salatiga.

The range of ministries offered in congregational formation can support biblical understanding, nurture communal relationships, sustain a life of prayer, and cultivate social concern. Sunday worship provides a setting for the proclamation of Scripture and corporate worship, whereas Bible study enables members to examine, understand, and discuss Christian teaching in greater depth. Early-morning prayer can foster spiritual discipline through regular prayer, while women's and youth fellowships provide opportunities for formation attentive to particular groups and their needs. Alongside these activities, the church has seven *Kelompok Pembinaan Warga (KPW)*, or Congregational Formation Groups, intended to nurture relationships, spiritual development, and shared life among members. The congregation numbers approximately 250 members, with an average Sunday attendance of about 170. Thus, total membership and weekly worship attendance do not coincide.

These figures do not, in themselves, demonstrate the effectiveness of congregational formation. Worship attendance must be considered alongside participation in Bible study, prayer, KPW activities, service, and care for others. The range of existing programs therefore calls for investigation into the relationships among program objectives, ministry practices, patterns of participation, and observable changes in community life. This study does not presume that existing practices either conform to or depart from Acts 2:42–47; rather, the introduction identifies these matters as empirical questions that would require interviews, observation, and documentary evidence. Such inquiry would explore how apostolic teaching, *koinōnia*, the breaking of bread, prayer, mutual care, and communal witness are expressed in congregational formation. It could also identify areas of correspondence, patterns of practice, internal dynamics, and possible gaps between the biblical vision of *koinōnia* and members' lived experiences of formation.

Congregational Formation Groups (KPW) may be understood as settings for ongoing Christian education and faith formation through biblical teaching, fellowship, spiritual practices, and service. Pazmiño situates Christian education within an integrated framework that attends to its biblical and theological foundations as well as the various dimensions of human life. (Pazmiño, 2012, p. 67) From the perspective of New Testament theology, Acts 2:42–47 depicts the Christian community in Jerusalem persevering in apostolic teaching, fellowship,

the breaking of bread, and prayer. These four practices connect learning in faith with shared life, worship, and concern for the needs of others. They offer a theological framework for examining congregational formation while remaining attentive to both the historical setting of the passage and the context of contemporary ministry. An integrated approach to Christian education also allows formation to be considered in terms of experience, relationships, and the lived expression of faith, rather than instruction alone.

Acts 2:42–47 has been examined from several theological and biblical perspectives. In an exegetical study, Zaluchu (2018) identifies four characteristics of the early community's spiritual life: biblical teaching, fellowship, prayer, and care for others. (Sonny Zaluch, 2018) Sutoyo (2014) discusses the lifestyle of the early church as a model for contemporary congregations, emphasizing perseverance in apostolic teaching and fellowship. (Sutoyo, 2014) Nainggolan (2020) examines church growth in the New Testament and considers the roles of teaching, fellowship, worship, service, and evangelism in ecclesial life. (Bartolomeus Diaz Nainggolan, 2020) These studies provide a conceptual basis for understanding the earliest Christian community. Their emphases, however, differ from the present study's concern with the formative practices of a local congregation.

Previous scholarship on Acts 2:42–47 has developed theological accounts of early Christian communal life, its distinctive spirituality, and its relevance to church growth. These exegetical and literature-based studies have not, however, specifically articulated a framework for translating the passage's principles into congregational formation activities at Gereja Baptis Indonesia in Salatiga. Although studies of communal practice in local congregations exist, further work is needed to relate the four central practices of Acts to formation in this particular ministry setting. The proposed contribution lies in bringing the theological framework of Acts 2:42–47 into dialogue with the context of congregational formation, rather than claiming to discover previously unknown biblical principles. The relationship between this framework and actual local practices remains a question for subsequent empirical research.

In view of this background and research gap, the study examines how the principles of the early Christian community in Acts 2:42–47 may inform congregational formation at Gereja Baptis Indonesia in Salatiga, particularly teaching, fellowship, prayer, and mutual care. It seeks to articulate a theological framework for KPW and to identify considerations relevant to its contextual development. The study also identifies possible areas in which future field research could investigate enabling conditions and obstacles to these practices. Academically, it contributes to practical theology by relating biblical interpretation to questions of formation in a contemporary local church.

METHODS

This study adopts a qualitative approach combining library research with biblical exegesis of Acts 2:42–47. The primary source is the Greek text of Acts 2:42–47; secondary sources include biblical commentaries, New Testament theological monographs, peer-reviewed articles, and previous studies concerning the early church, *koinōnia*, discipleship, small groups, and congregational formation. The exegesis follows a historical-grammatical approach, examining the wider context of Acts 2:1–47, the structure of the pericope, lexical and syntactical features,

and the theological significance of key terms such as *proskartereō* (to persevere), *didachē* (teaching), *koinōnia* (fellowship), *klasis tou artou* (breaking of bread), and *proseuchē* (prayer). It also considers how the summary statement in verse 42 relates to the description in verses 43–47, which depicts the community's care, sharing, common life, prayer, joy, praise, witness, and growth.

The material is examined through descriptive-interpretive analysis. Theological principles are derived from the exegesis and subsequently related to the formative needs of Kelompok Pembinaan Warga (KPW) at Gereja Baptis Indonesia in Salatiga. *Didachē* is understood in relation to scriptural formation; *koinōnia* to relationships and solidarity; the breaking of bread to shared communal life; prayer to corporate spirituality; and the sharing of resources to care and service. The exegetical findings are then placed in conversation with literature on small groups and discipleship to construct a framework integrating Scripture, fellowship, prayer, care, service, and witness. Interpretive credibility is pursued by comparing multiple scholarly perspectives rather than relying on a single reading. The outcome is a normative theological construction, not an empirical assessment of existing KPW activities, since no interviews or field observations were conducted.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Historical and Literary Context of Acts 2:42–47

Acts 2:42–47 follows the events of Pentecost and the conversion of approximately three thousand people. Verse 41 provides a narrative transition between Peter's proclamation and the emergence of a new community. Luke then presents a concise account of that community's life, organized around significant theological themes.(Sumiwi, 2018) Verse 42 serves as a programmatic statement of its principal practices, while verses 43–47 describe their social, spiritual, and missional consequences. This sequence connects the community's life to the preceding work of the Holy Spirit. The practices described in the passage constitute a collective response of faith to the gospel they have received. In literary terms, verse 42 highlights the believers' sustained commitment to four interrelated activities: the apostles' teaching, fellowship, the breaking of bread, and corporate prayer. Verses 43–47 show how these activities took recognizable form in the community's daily life. Each involves both an orientation toward God and responsibilities toward others. Their conjunction is a significant theological basis for congregational formation.

Zaluchu identifies biblical teaching, fellowship, prayer, and mutual care as principal characteristics of the earliest Christian community.(Zaluchu, 2018) This reading supports an understanding of communal life as the integration of doctrine, relationships, spirituality, and service. It does not, however, offer a specific framework for formation groups. Such a framework is needed if the passage is to inform sustained processes of Christian formation. The task is not to reproduce mechanically the social arrangements of the Jerusalem congregation. Contemporary churches differ from the first Christian community in their historical, social, economic, and organizational circumstances. What can be retained are the underlying theological principles rather than every outward expression of those practices.

The discussion attributed to Zhang Seok-Jo suggests that the structure of Acts 2:42–47 can be approached through different interpretive emphases.(Oh, 2012) Some readings give priority to apostolic teaching, whereas others stress fellowship and the sharing of possessions. These different emphases point to the density of the passage and caution against reducing its vision to a single activity. Here, the various elements are treated as a network of practices shaping communal life. Teaching provides orientation; fellowship sustains relationships; prayer expresses dependence on God; and service gives concrete expression to love.(Sariyanto, 2023) This approach makes it possible to consider formation and witness together. KPW should therefore be conceived as an environment in which these dimensions are cultivated in an ongoing and mutually reinforcing manner. Its formative purpose begins with the identity of the congregation rather than with a calendar of programs. That identity develops through Scripture, fellowship, prayer, shared life, service, and witness. Scripture thus provides both a normative source and a criterion for evaluating formation. Group programs have formative significance insofar as they support changes in life consistent with these commitments.

Exegesis of Acts 2:42: Four Dimensions of Communal Life

The Greek verb *proskartereō* in Acts 2:42 conveys steadfast and sustained devotion within the community.(Hagelberg, 2021, p. 248) The participial form presents this commitment as a continuing feature of the believers' common life. Their fellowship was not sustained through occasional events or intermittent participation, but through practices to which they remained consistently committed. Such perseverance is important for spiritual formation because growth occurs over time. Formation groups that depend solely on isolated meetings, without sustained engagement between them, risk losing their formative purpose. The first principle emerging from the text is therefore the importance of continuity and persistent participation.

The phrase *tē didachē tōn apostolōn* refers to the apostles' teaching as a formative source of the congregation's identity.(Kappas, n.d., p. 13) This teaching did more than communicate religious information; it shaped the believers' understanding of the gospel. The noun *didachē* draws attention to the content of the teaching received and maintained by the community. Its prominent position in the list underscores the theological grounding of communal life. The believers' fellowship was rooted not merely in shared sentiment but in the truth they had been taught. KPW should accordingly approach Bible study as a process of formation rather than as the transmission of material alone.

The term *koinōnia* extends the account of community from instruction to participation in a shared life. In this context, fellowship cannot be reduced to social interaction or friendship among members. *Koinōnia* involves participation in common life, resources, responsibilities, and faith.(Manullang, 2022) Apostolic teaching thus acquires a social expression through the believers' involvement with one another. Spiritual maturity is inseparable from the quality of relationships within the community. KPW should provide opportunities for members to know one another, listen attentively, offer encouragement, and exercise mutual responsibility. Fellowship becomes tangible when participation is relational as well as physical. The phrase *tē klasei tou artou* refers to the breaking of bread as a feature of communal life.(Haans, 2024) The practice demonstrates how faith takes shape through concrete shared actions. Breaking bread

brings spiritual life into contact with the fellowship table and the ordinary experiences of believers. Meanwhile, tais proseuchais identifies prayer as a practice that orients the community toward God. (Tedjo, 2021, p. 58) Prayer is therefore not an optional supplement to formation but an integral element of the community's continuing life.

The exegesis of verse 42 reveals an organic relationship between perseverance and the community's four central practices. Teaching establishes a shared orientation toward truth, while fellowship shapes relationships that express the community's identity. Breaking bread embodies its common life, and prayer sustains its dependence on God. These elements should not be isolated into programs lacking theological coherence. Within KPW they should be integrated into a continuous process of formation, connecting biblical understanding with relationships and embodied practice.

Exegesis of Acts 2:43–47: From Communal Practice to Public Witness

Verse 43 depicts the sense of phobos that arose among the people as signs and wonders were performed. In this context, the term may denote both fear and reverent awe in response to God's work. The narrative presents communal life as taking place in an awareness of God's presence and activity. Such awareness cultivates an orientation that does not rely exclusively on human ability. The community's spiritual life therefore involves worship and reverence extending beyond the organization of group activities. KPW should retain this theocentric orientation so that formation does not become merely a form of organizational development. Its activities ought to help members discern and respond to God's work in their lives.

Verse 44 describes the believers as being together and holding their possessions in common. The Greek word κοινά (koina) conveys what is 'common' or 'shared' within the community. (Bock, 2007, p. 353) The language indicates a willingness to make personal resources available for the good of other members. It need not be read as prescribing the universal abolition of private ownership in the church. Verse 45 goes on to describe the sale of possessions and the distribution of the proceeds according to individual needs. The verb διμερίζον (diemerizon) refers to the act of apportioning or distributing resources among members of the community. (Winarto, 2025) The emphasis falls on practical solidarity with those experiencing material need.

This principle places a social responsibility upon the use of possessions within the believing community. In verse 45, κτήματα (ktēmata) denotes property or possessions owned by members. (Thayer, 1987, p. 257) Such resources are not presented as ends in themselves but as means by which the needs of others may be met. The word χρείαν (chreian), meaning 'need,' points to the specific circumstances of individuals within the community. For KPW, this entails deliberate attention to members' actual needs. Such care may take the form of accompaniment, material assistance, pastoral visits, or other forms of service appropriate to their circumstances. These responses should safeguard recipients' dignity and avoid creating unhealthy dependence.

Verse 46 portrays the believers gathering in the temple and meeting from house to house. The expression καθ' ἡμέραν (kath' hēmeran), 'day by day,' emphasizes the sustained character of communal life. The wording κλῶντές τε κατ' οἶκον ἄρτον (klōntes te kat' oikon arton) describes the breaking of bread in homes. The phrase κατ' οἶκον (kat' oikon) locates fellowship

within ordinary domestic settings as well as communal worship. Meals were shared with ἀγαλλιάσει (agalliasis), exuberant joy, and ἀφελότητι καρδίας (aphelotēti kardias), sincerity of heart. The portrayal indicates that Christian faith was expressed not only in formal worship but also in the rhythms of everyday life.

Shared life provides an important setting for nurturing faith and strengthening relationships among church members. KPW can embody this principle through gatherings that foster personal connection and engage members' actual circumstances. Rather than functioning solely as venues for delivering teaching material, the groups can cultivate mutual understanding and concern. The pattern of κατ' οἶκον (kat' oikon) offers a biblical basis for formation grounded in daily experience. Group meetings can create opportunities to share experiences and struggles, pray together, and grow in faith. In this way, participants are encouraged to relate biblical teaching to practical questions in everyday life. KPW can function as smaller communities in which sustained, personal relationships support Christian formation.

Verse 47 describes the believers as αἰνοῦντες τὸν θεόν (ainountes ton theon), 'praising God,' within their communal life. Their praise occurs alongside the favorable regard in which the community was held by those around them. The term χάριν (charin) may convey favor or goodwill received from the wider population. (Stanislas Darmawijaya, 1989, p. 45) The combination points to a relationship between the internal life of the church and its public witness. A congregation characterized by love and mutual support can make the values of the gospel visible through its way of life. Such witness is conveyed not only in speech but also through habitual practices of living together.

Luke writes ὁ δὲ κύριος προσετίθει (ho de kyrios prosetitheī), indicating that the Lord himself was adding people to the community. (Hub., n.d.) The verb προσετίθει (prosetitheī) derives from προστίθῃμι (prostithēmi), meaning 'to add' or 'to bring into association.' The statement locates the growth of the church within God's action rather than attributing it solely to human initiative. As the community's life made God's work visible, its witness accompanied that growth. KPW should therefore avoid measuring success exclusively by attendance at meetings. Assessment of formation should also consider spiritual maturity, the quality of relationships, mutual care, service, and witness.

Teaching and Fellowship as Foundations of Congregational Formation

The apostles' teaching in Acts 2:42 indicates that congregational formation begins with the truth received by the community. Teaching is not limited to transmitting information but guides believers toward a sound understanding of their faith. (Yunianto & Rohayani, 2021) The distinction between information and formation concerns the extent to which instruction shapes character and everyday conduct. A person may understand a particular doctrine without experiencing a corresponding change in life. Formation must therefore connect biblical understanding to reflection and practice. KPW can structure learning so that members bring the biblical text into conversation with concrete experiences. Such learning enables Scripture to inform decisions and the development of Christian character.

Apostolic teaching also preserves the community's identity by rooting it in the gospel. Without a theological foundation, a formation group can become a social gathering without a

clear spiritual purpose. Conversely, teaching detached from relationships may produce knowledge that never becomes a way of living together. Acts 2:42 places teaching and fellowship within the same account of the community's life.(Nicolas, 2022) Their association implies that the truth professed by believers should be reflected in how they relate to one another. KPW can encourage discussions through which members examine their understanding of Scripture in light of shared experiences. Koinōnia provides a relational dimension to teaching, creating opportunities for acceptance, responsibility, correction, support, and mutual growth. Healthy fellowship involves more than emotional closeness; it also establishes practices of accountability. Members should be free to share personal struggles within appropriate ethical boundaries. Such openness can strengthen pastoral accompaniment and help individuals recognize areas in which their spiritual lives need attention. A culture of attentive listening should therefore precede the development of more extensive group ministries.

Research on small groups suggests that smaller communities can support growth in faith and discipleship. They allow more sustained interpersonal interaction than large congregational gatherings. Group size, however, does not by itself guarantee spiritual maturity or meaningful fellowship. Leadership, the depth of engagement with Scripture, openness, pastoral support, and continuity are also important. Establishing groups without clear formative objectives is therefore insufficient. Each gathering should connect its biblical material with reflection, relationships, prayer, and practical response. The quality of these processes matters more than the number or frequency of meetings alone.

On this basis, KPW may adopt a sequential yet reflective cycle of formation. The first stage involves understanding Scripture through reading, explanation, and discussion of the biblical text. The second involves appropriating its message through personal reflection and conversation about lived experience. The third invites members to share their experiences as an expression of openness and mutual learning. The fourth concerns putting the Word into practice through concrete actions in the family, church, and wider society. Together, these stages link knowledge with transformation in daily life. The proposed cycle illustrates the potential of Acts 2:42 to inform a formation-oriented approach within KPW.

Breaking Bread, Prayer, and Solidarity as Communal Praxis

The breaking of bread in Acts 2:42 and 46 reveals the practical dimension of communal life. The practice shows that fellowship was expressed through actions embedded in everyday experience. Sharing meals creates occasions for encounter in which members become acquainted with one another's circumstances. In congregational formation, such relationships can provide space for personal and pastoral support. KPW can foster communal life through gatherings that are not exclusively organized around formal activities. Informal fellowship should nevertheless remain directed toward acceptance, encouragement, and spiritual growth.(Ton & Marbun, 2023) Prayer in Acts 2:42 also indicates that the community did not rely solely on its own resources. It expresses dependence on God amid communal needs, challenges, and responsibilities. Prayer should therefore serve a deeper purpose than opening or closing a KPW meeting. It can connect learning with participants' spiritual responses to God.(Fialay, 2015) Struggles disclosed in the group may become concerns for collective prayer,

giving practical expression to shared dependence on God. This practice also acknowledges that spiritual growth cannot be reduced to human methods. KPW should cultivate prayer that is consistent, participatory, and oriented toward God's will.

The relationship between prayer and solidarity is evident in Luke's portrayal of the community. Believers prayed together and also responded to others' needs through concrete action. In Acts, spirituality thus carries recognizable social responsibilities. Prayer that leaves others' needs unaddressed fails to reflect this portrayal of communal life. Conversely, service disconnected from prayer risks becoming social activity without a clearly articulated theological orientation. KPW should sustain the relationship between devotion to God and responsibility toward others. In doing so, congregational formation can bring personal piety into productive relationship with communal concern.

The distribution of possessions in verses 44–45 shows that the believers' care was directed toward real needs. The sale of property is not presented as a uniform legal obligation imposed on every member. Rather, the narrative emphasizes the willingness to use resources to meet the needs of others. (Diana et al., 2023) KPW may express this principle through responsible practices of care, including pastoral visits, spiritual support, emergency assistance, accompaniment of families, and social ministry. Each response should take account of the needs involved, the resources available to the group, and the dignity of those receiving support. This reading suggests that congregational formation must make room for faith to become praxis. Biblical teaching should inform members' decisions and actions. Prayer should cultivate sensitivity to human need, and fellowship should encourage members to be present for one another. Shared life should move beyond conversation toward action that benefits the community. KPW can also provide opportunities to assess whether the values of the gospel are evident in members' lives. Such evaluation concerns the quality of formative change rather than the sheer number of activities undertaken.

Witness and Growth as Missional Outcomes

Acts 2:47 associates the community's life with the favorable regard it received from the surrounding population. Praise directed toward God and patterns of shared life constituted a witness visible beyond the congregation. Mission, therefore, need not begin with a separate evangelistic program. (Perangin angin & Yeniretnowati, 2023) The community's way of life can itself communicate the character of the gospel. The quality of internal relationships consequently affects the credibility of the church's public witness. KPW should equip members to make their faith visible in daily conduct. Witness belongs to the process of formation rather than being an additional task assigned after formation is complete. Growth in verse 47 must also be understood theologically, with God as the primary agent. Luke states that the Lord added those who were being saved to the community. This account challenges the tendency to treat numerical increase as the sole indicator of ecclesial success. Quantitative growth may be considered, but it should not displace indicators of spiritual maturity. KPW should therefore attend to changes in character, the depth of relationships, care, service, and members' witness.

The missional orientation of KPW can be strengthened by equipping members to express the gospel in different spheres of life. The family offers an immediate setting for practicing

love, forgiveness, service, and faithful example. The workplace provides opportunities to demonstrate integrity, responsibility, honesty, and concern for others. The wider social environment becomes a sphere of witness through attention to community needs and constructive relations with neighbors. The church should also equip members to explain their faith responsibly when opportunities arise. Formation thus prepares believers to carry their Christian identity into different contexts. At the same time, KPW should resist becoming a closed community concerned only with its members' comfort. Fellowship requires closeness, but that closeness should foster openness to the needs of the wider community.

Acts 2 portrays the congregation's internal life as having a significant public dimension. Its witness emerged through praise, generosity, shared life, and sincerity. Formation groups should therefore connect the development of members with service beyond the group. The theological movement of Acts 2:42–47 proceeds from internal formation toward outward witness. Perseverance in the Word shapes identity, while fellowship creates mutually supportive relationships. (Nicolas, 2022) The breaking of bread and prayer bring spirituality into everyday communal practice. Solidarity demonstrates that love for God entails responsibilities within human relationships. Public witness follows as the community gives visible expression to the character of the gospel. KPW should maintain this relationship so that formation does not become limited to the consumption of religious material.

Reconstructing a Congregational Formation Framework from Acts 2:42–47

The analysis indicates that drawing on Acts 2:42–47 does not entail reproducing the life of the Jerusalem church in every detail. Contemporary congregations inhabit markedly different social and cultural settings. What should be retained is the theological pattern underlying that community's life: perseverance, teaching, fellowship, prayer, shared life, solidarity, and witness. These principles can then inform formative practices appropriate to the needs and circumstances of present-day KPW groups. Such an approach respects the biblical narrative while avoiding anachronistic prescriptions. Contextualization involves interpreting the principles for a new setting, not mechanically duplicating their historical expressions.

The proposed framework comprises six interconnected dimensions. First, scriptural formation provides a basis for the theological understanding and identity of church members. Second, fellowship nurtures relationships marked by openness, acceptance, and mutual accountability. Third, corporate prayer orients the formative process toward dependence on God. Fourth, shared life enables members to experience community through tangible acts and relationships. Fifth, compassionate care and service give practical expression to love in response to others' needs. Sixth, witness encourages members to embody gospel values within their wider social environments. This framework also reframes leadership in congregational formation groups. Rather than occupying the center of every activity, leaders facilitate a shared formative process. Their responsibilities include fostering fidelity to Scripture, supporting relationships, guiding prayer, and developing opportunities for service. (Diana et al., 2023) This role enables members to participate actively in the community's growth. Such leadership is consistent with a communal identity sustained through shared participation. KPW should therefore prepare facilitators capable of guiding discussion, pastoral accompaniment, prayer, and service.

Evaluation within KPW should likewise shift from indicators of activity toward evidence of change in members' lives. Assessment should extend beyond the number of meetings, attendance figures, or the amount of teaching material completed. It should consider whether members are deepening their understanding of Scripture and acting upon it. Attention should also be given to relationships, prayer, care for others, service, and witness. Development in these areas may indicate that formation is producing more substantial outcomes. This evaluative approach helps distinguish the organization of religious activities from the formation of disciples. KPW fulfills its formative purpose when its activities contribute to recognizable change in everyday life.

The study's theoretical contribution lies in connecting exegesis of early Christian communal life with the formation of congregational small groups. Previous studies have frequently addressed the characteristics of the earliest church or the effectiveness of small groups as separate questions. The present reading draws these concerns together through an integrated interpretation of Acts 2:42–47. It suggests that KPW may be understood as an environment of formation encompassing theological, relational, practical, and missional dimensions. The process begins with sustained engagement with Scripture and the shaping of communal identity. That identity finds expression in fellowship, solidarity, service, and public witness. The resulting framework offers conceptual guidance for the development of KPW as communities oriented toward transformation in members' lives.

CONCLUSION

Acts 2:42–47 depicts an integrated pattern of communal life grounded in perseverance in the apostles' teaching, fellowship, the breaking of bread, and prayer. The exegesis indicates that these practices were not independent activities but constituted a shared identity oriented toward God and other people. The community embodied this identity through material solidarity, attention to members' needs, hospitality in homes, and public witness. These findings indicate that congregational formation should extend beyond increasing biblical knowledge to encompass character, relationships, spirituality, service, and witness. For Congregational Formation Groups (KPW), the passage provides a basis for sustained scriptural learning, fellowship, corporate prayer, shared life, care, service, and witness. The study's contribution is a biblical-theological framework that brings the exegesis of Acts 2:42–47 into conversation with the aims of congregational formation across theological, relational, practical, and missional dimensions. The framework invites KPW to move beyond organizing meetings toward nurturing believers whose growth is expressed in service and faithful witness in everyday life. Its relevance to current group practices and its effectiveness in specific congregations should be investigated through future empirical research.

REFERENCES

- Bartolomeus Diaz Nainggolan. (2020). The Growth of the Church in the New Testament. *Koinonia*, 12(1). <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.35974/koinonia.v12i2.2567>
- Bock, D. L. (2007). *Acts, Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament*. Baker

Academic.

- Diana, R., Desi, E. T. I., & Sagala, L. D. J. F. (2023). Kehidupan Jemaat Mula-Mula sebagai Teladan dalam Kesejahteraan Ekonomi Jemaat. *Proceeding National Conference of Christian Education and Theology*, 1(1), 62. <https://doi.org/10.46445/nccet.v1i1.699>
- Fialay, H. I. (2015). *PERANAN DOA JEMAAT BERDASARKAN KISAH PARA RASUL 4:29-31 BAGI PENGUTUSAN*. 17, 240–269.
- Haans, W. and A. L. J. (2024). “Transformasi Misi Perkotaan melalui Pendekatan Jemaat Mula-Mula: Implementasi Kelompok Sel Berdasarkan Kisah Para Rasul 2:41–47,.” *Jurnal Gereja*, 1(1), 44–77.
- Hagelberg, D. (2021). *Tafsiran Surat Kolose dari Bahasa Yunani*. Andi.
- Harita, N. S. (2020). Pentingnya pemuridan bagi pertumbuhan gereja pada masa kini. *OSF Preprints*, 2(1), 18–20. <https://doi.org/10.51770/jm.v3i1.125>
- Hub., B. (n.d.). “Acts 2:47 Greek Text Analysis.” *Bible Hub*.
- Kappas, A. P. (n.d.). *The New Testament: Greek-Transliteration-Translation: 3 Line Segments*. Seth L. Hunerewadel,.
- Manullang, M. (2022). “Pelayanan Koinonia yang Berkualitas dan Implikasinya di Gereja Masa Kini.” *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Katekese Dan Pastoral (Lumen)*, 1(1), 133–144.
- Nicolas, D. G. (2022). Analisis Model Pelayanan Jemaat Mula-Mula Berdasarkan Kisah Para Rasul: Suatu Teladan bagi Gereja Masa Kini. *Formosa Journal of Multidisciplinary Research*, 1(3), 521–532. <https://doi.org/10.55927/fjmr.v1i3.725>
- Oh, Y.-S. (2012). “Was the Author of Epistle to the Hebrews an Philonist?—As Regards the Meanings of Skia & Eikon in Heb. 10:1.” *Journal of Mediterranean Area Studies*, 14(3), 35–59. <https://doi.org/DOI: 10.18218/jmas.2012.14.3.35>
- Pazmiño, R. W. (2012). *Fondasi Pendidikan Kristen: Sebuah Pengantar dalam Perspektif Injil*. BPK Gunung Mulia.
- Perangin angin, Y. H., & Yeniretnowati, T. A. (2023). Pemahaman Makna Misi dan Penginjilan Serta Implikasinya Bagi Orang Percaya. *Ritornera - Jurnal Teologi Pentakosta Indonesia*, 2(3). <https://doi.org/10.54403/rjtpi.v2i3.56>
- Sariyanto, S. (2023). Studi Teologis Pentingnya Pemberitaan Firman Berdasarkan Kitab 2 Timotius 4:2-3. *Ritornera - Jurnal Teologi Pentakosta Indonesia*, 3(1), 35–47. <https://doi.org/10.54403/rjtpi.v3i1.61>
- Sonny Zaluch, E. (2018). Eksegesis Kisah Para Rasul 2:42-47 untuk Merumuskan CiriKehidupan Rohani Jemaat Mula-mula di Yerusalem. *EPIGRAPHE: Jurnal Teologi Dan Pelayanan Kristiani*, 2(2), 72–82.
- Stanislas Darmawijaya. (1989). *Kesetiaan, Suatu Tantangan*. Kanisius.
- Sumiwi, A. R. E. (2018). Analisis Biblika Baptisan Roh Kudus Dan Penuh Dengan Roh Kudus. *FIDEI: Jurnal Teologi Sistematika Dan Praktika*, 1(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.34081/fidei.v1i1.1>
- Sunarko, A. S. (2021). Fungsi Keluarga dalam Persepektif Alkitab sebagai Basis Pendidikan Agama Kristen. *Jurnal Pendidikan Agama Kristen (JUPAK)*, 1(2), 92–107.

- Sutoyo, D. (2014). Gaya hidup gereja mula-mula yang disukai dalam kisah para rasul 2: 42-47 bagi gereja masa kini. *ANTUSIAS: Jurnal Teologi Dan Pelayanan*, 3(6), 42–47.
- Tedjo, T. (2021). *Church Growth Through Cell Group*. Andi Offset.
- Thayer, J. H. (1987). *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. Baker Book House.
- Ton, D., & Marbun, S. (2023). Internalisasi Nilai-nilai Teologis Shema Israel dalam Implikasi Pendidikan Anak Masa Kini. *MANTHANO: Jurnal Pendidikan Kristen*, 2(2), 117–129. <https://doi.org/10.55967/manthano.v2i2.38>
- Winarto, K. (2025). “Eksegesis Kisah Para Rasul 2:4–47: Pertumbuhan Gereja Mula-mula sebagai Model bagi Pertumbuhan Gereja Masa Kini.” *Pragati: Jurnal Ilmiah Mahasiswa*, 2(1), 76–89.
- Yunianto, Y., & Rohayani, H. (2021). Alkitab Sebagai Buku Pegangan Orang Kristen (Ketidakbersalahan Alkitab). *Fidei: Jurnal Teologi Sistematis Dan Praktika*, 4(1), 141–158. <https://doi.org/10.34081/fidei.v4i1.243>
- Zaluchu, S. E. (2018). “Eksegesis Kisah Para Rasul 2:42–47 untuk Merumuskan Ciri Kehidupan Rohani Jemaat Mula-mula di Yerusalem.” *EPIGRAPHE: Jurnal Teologi Dan Pelayanan Kristiani*, 2(2), 72–82.