

**“Tribal Knowledge”**  
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**Matthew 4:17-22**  
**Esther 4:14**  
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For those who may not know me, my name is Sabrina Daluisio. I wear many hats here at Lima Church. I am the Digital Ministries Coordinator. I am one of the Lay Leaders. I am a Certified Lay Minister. I am a Leader. I am a servant. But outside of this I am a Data Services Technology Administrator for the Montgomery County Intermediate Unit. In other words, I am technology in PA public education.

A few years ago, when I started working at MCIU, I heard for the first time something called TK. Something called Tribal Knowledge. I soon grew to understand that in industry, Tribal Knowledge is knowledge gained from a gathering of individuals that have specialize knowledge that needs to be handed down or shared with others. Individuals on a team, in a department, or in an organization can not only be more successful by having that knowledge, but can continue the work even after those contributing individuals are retired or have left the organization. MCIU identified the tribe, gathered the knowledge and shared it with each member of the tribe.

Tribal Knowledge.

Isn't that what Jesus was doing when he started to gather his disciples? Listen to this version of our gospel lesson but keep in mind that in Matthew 4:14 Jesus realizes he needs to fulfill the prophecy of Isaiah where the future will honor those from Galilee by the way of the sea...

Matthew 4:17-22 (paraphrased)

*Jesus went down and walked beside the Sea of Galilee. He saw two brothers casting their nets into the water for they were fishermen. Jesus called out to them, “Come! Follow Me! I will make you fisher of men!”*

*They left their nets... and followed him.*

*As Jesus continued walking beside the Sea of Galilee, he saw two more brothers working with their father and mending nets. Jesus called to them in the same way as the first two brothers.*

*They left their nets and their father... and followed him.*

It is not entirely clear why Simon, Peter, James, and John chose to follow Jesus. Maybe they had Tribal Knowledge handed down within their families about the prophecies of Isaiah. Maybe God helped them to see something in Jesus that made them want to know more. The specifics we may never really know. But for the Jesus the reason was clear. He was following the prophecies like a recipe to find his disciples, in other words, to find his tribe, and start sharing his tribal knowledge to those who would carry on after his death and resurrection.

We all need a familiar group. We all need to surround ourselves with people that accept us as we are, that will share knowledge and advice, and that will make us feel safe. We all need a tribe.

Dr. Saul Levine, MD writes a blog, or online articles, for Psychology Today. In his blog post titled "Belonging is our Blessing, Tribalism Is Our Burden" he says:

*"We humans are a social species, tribal by nature. We're given to gathering and communing in familiar groups. 'Belonging,' our capacity and need for empathy, compassion, and communication, is in our DNA." <sup>1</sup>*

He goes on to say in this article, there can be a dark side of the need to belong that drives us to be a part of a group that may not contain empathy, compassion, communication or even kindness. I argue that this kind of group is not really your tribe. But for whatever reason you belong to this group.

In the LGBT+ community, one of the core tenets is that you can choose your own family. This is really true for anyone that may, for whatever reason, not have a family they can rely on or talk to. For me, this is just another way of saying choose your own tribe. Surround yourself with people to support you and encourage you unconditionally. In 2020, Elton John and Rina Sawayama released a song called "Chosen Family." Some of the lyrics really speak to the idea of chosen family for the choosing of your tribe.

*"We don't need to be related to relate  
We don't need to share genes or a surname...  
You are my chosen... family  
We've been going through the same thing...  
I choose you, you chose me... chosen family"*

<sup>1</sup> Levine, S. (2018, February 24). Belonging Is Our Blessing, Tribalism Is Our Burden [web log]. Retrieved January 13, 2022, from <https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/our-emotional-footprint/201802/belonging-is-our-blessing-tribalism-is-our-burden>.

Let me tell you a story about someone who not only chose their tribe, but utilized tribal knowledge to stop a disaster from happening to the Jewish people in Persia. Here this story of Esther.

Hadassah was a Jewish girl who possessed great beauty. Through a set of unusual events, she caught the eye of the King of Persia who crowned her as his queen and renamed her Esther. Esther means Star. At first, she did not reveal her heritage to the king. During the course of her reign as queen, the king's second in command, because of his ancestry and evilness, considered the Jewish people to be his enemies. A threat. He plotted to exterminate the Jews in Persia. He plotted Genocide.

This is where Esther's tribe comes in.

Before she had become queen, Esther had lost her parents and had come to live with her relative Mordecai. As she grew up in Persia, many of her neighbors became a part of her life in positive ways and eventually were members of her tribe. When Esther became queen, her tribe became the eyes and ears outside the palace walls. Even her beloved servants became part of her tribe. Esther was afraid to call upon the king without being summoned but her tribe urged her to take action. Esther was afraid to reveal her true heritage but her tribe urged her to take action.

*They said, "...if you remain silent at this time, relief and deliverance for the Jews will arise from another place, but you and your (tribe) will perish. And who knows but that you have come to your royal position for such a time as this?" (Esther 4:14)*

In other words... Maybe you were made for such a time as this!

Esther found comfort and courage in those words. The tribal knowledge that was shared with her gave her the confidence and connection to her faith that was needed in that moment. She met with the King and she shared with him all that she knew about his second in command and who she really was. Disaster was averted.

Fast forward to 2022. We are still in this COVID-19 Pandemic. At this time, we are on a wave that seems to be worse than the last. We are forced to mask again and we are forced to remain separate. Zoom™ fatigue is a real thing. How are we going to deal with this? What can I do to take care of myself? What can I do to help others?

The answer is Tribal Knowledge.

Regardless of whether to feel you have a tribe, a chosen family, or a given family...

Regardless of whether you have more than one tribe you consider yourself to be a member of...

Regardless of whether you feel you have no tribe at all...

I want you to consider yourself a member of the Lima Church Tribe.

Pause for a moment and think about all the individuals that make up our Lima Church Tribe. We have multiple generations, we are inclusive, we are in-person, we are online, we are professionals, we are tradesmen and tradeswomen, we are retirees, we are married, we are single, we are parents, we are students, we are grandparents, we are infants. We each hold knowledge via our life stories and our life experiences. Put all that knowledge together and we have an abundance of Tribal Knowledge. This tribal knowledge helps us to reach out to the world, to reach out to our community, and to reach out to each other.

One of the biggest frustrations during these crazy times of the pandemic is trying to find a way to reach out and connect to other people. For me in the beginning of the pandemic in early 2020, I was scared. My youngest daughter was living with me because she had just graduated college, I had my husband, and me. Sounds good right? But my daughter's dog and my dog did not get along. After two dog fights something had to change. Because of a small family home in New Jersey that we had access to, my dog and I took a break and went down there. We spent seven weeks down there. All I did was work from that location remotely, start the process of learning how to create online worship videos, and walk the dog. My husband would travel between the two homes, which suited him, and for that moment it worked.

Where does my tribe come in? My family of course was great. But the Lima Church Tribe was invaluable. I could reach out to either Pastor Dorry or Pastor Karen to just simply talk. I found myself helping to facilitate virtual meetings and training folks on recording video. I found that I was able to start creating worship content that was really helping individuals feel connected. In that moment I found a purpose. I was utilizing all my technology knowledge in a new way and adding it to the Tribal Knowledge of Lima Church. My Lima Church Tribe encouraged me and lifted me up in a time when I felt quite helpless. Through their collective Tribal Knowledge, they posed this question to me... "Maybe you were made for such a time as this?"

Lima Church has many individuals you can reach out to if you need to connect. If you need someone to talk to, reach out to the Lima Church Tribe and connect with a Stephen Ministry Member (aka The Listening Ministry). If you have a mission idea but don't know how to get started, reach out to our pastors or to the Outreach Ministry Team. If you want to connect to a group of people virtually or in-person, reach out to the pastors and get connected to a small group. Small Groups include bible studies, support groups, music ministries, tech ministries, knitting club, and more.

You do not need to feel alone. Everyone needs a tribe. Find your tribe, share your story and add to their Tribal Knowledge. Learn from their Tribal Knowledge. And when it is your turn to step up in whatever way you are called, Tribal knowledge will not only help you get there, but it may be the very thing you will need to share.

To God be the Glory. Amen.