

More than a Building, Brick By Brick, Ephesians 4:11-16, 2:19-22, 8/17/25

Our kids growing up loved Legos, every Christmas, every birthday it was legos. One year we visited Legoland at King of Prussia Mall- [lego display, picture](#). The people who do these are called Lego Masterbuilders. Masterbuilders have built some mindblowing things with legos. This guy in Philly built a replica of the [USS Missouri](#) in his shed. The largest was a full-scale replica of a [Star Wars X-Wing fighter](#). It took 32 master builders, over five million LEGO bricks, and more than 17,000 hours to put together and it was displayed in the middle of Times Square a few years ago. But my favorite? The [James May Lego House](#) an actual functioning house- Built in a Vineyard in Surrey, England, the life-size lego house uses over three million bricks and features a staircase, toilet and shower. May has set a new world record: becoming the first man to live in a fully functioning house made of Legos...he lived in it for a couple of days.

It's amazing what a masterbuilder can build with enough bricks. Here's my question for you today: Take your lego brick in your hand, what could our Masterbuilder Jesus build with each of us here at Brandywine? Just like these masterbuilders had a vision and built something amazing, in eternity past, God had a vision of something extraordinary- the church. And 2000 years ago, the Messiah Jesus came to begin building that vision. [Matthew 16:18 Jesus said, I will build my church, and the gates of Hell will not overcome it](#). Even through intense persecution at times throughout history and attempts to undermine or discredit Christianity, the church prevails. The great empire of Rome is gone, you can visit the rubble, huge companies and movements have come and gone, but Jesus' church continues growing and moving throughout the world. When Jesus spoke about the church, of course Jesus was not talking about bricks and mortar, and steeples. He's talking about people. There are lots of big beautiful church buildings that are empty of people. What makes the church are people who have given their lives to Jesus and are following him together in a location. That's the unstoppable force Jesus is talking about that started in Jerusalem and moves to the ends of the world, and is right here in the Brandywine Valley today. Jesus promised he would do it 2000 years ago. Brick by brick. And here we are. 55 years ago, Brandywine Valley Church was built brick by brick with a group of people who had the vision of loving God and reaching their community for Jesus together. And each of us today, have a role to play in that.

That's what this series is all about. [More than a Building](#). While we are beginning a significant renovation in January on our building to better facilitate the vision and ministry of our church, over the next 8 weeks we are going to see Jesus' vision for the church and for each of us as part of his church.

Ephesians 2:19-21 *Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.*

Message version...

Ephesians 2:19-20 God is building a [stain glass cathedral? No!] a home.

He's using [only the ultra-talented? No!] us all—irrespective of how we got here—in what he is building. Maybe you say, I didn't grow up in church. I'm not sure I fit here... It's new to me, or I'm new to Brandywine, I got here two weeks ago... irrespective of how you got here! God wants to use you.

He used the apostles and prophets for the foundation. While Brandywine might be relatively modern, while some of the music we sing and how we dress and our technology might be modern, God's church isn't built on modern thinking. Not on trendy ideas or going along with the culture. The foundation was built 2000 years ago on apostles who walked with Jesus and were taught by Jesus and carried his message- like Peter and James and John and Paul and prophets and pastors and evangelists who came after them like Mark, and Barnabas, and Lydia, and Priscilla and Aquilla. So the church is dynamic and ever-changing, but it's also historic and built on timeless truth that doesn't shift with the winds of culture. Now he's using you, fitting you in brick by brick, stone by stone,

with Christ Jesus as the cornerstone that holds all the parts together. In ancient construction, the cornerstone was the first and most important stone laid. Here's a picture of the cornerstone of Herod's Temple, the very same one in Jesus' day that he may have had in mind when he called himself the cornerstone. The cornerstone determines the alignment and stability of the entire building. If the cornerstone is off, the whole structure would be crooked. It also often bore the weight of two intersecting walls. Paul says, this is Jesus! As Christians, we believe the Bible when it says that Jesus is God in the flesh who came and showed us a new way to be human- living with humility, love and truth. Who ultimately came to give his life as a spiritual ransom. To pay our debt of sin and rise with power from the grave so that we can be forgiven eternally and be with God forever. And if you haven't trusted Jesus as your Savior, you can do that today. We would love to help you learn how to do that, come down front after the service.

But Jesus wasn't done. He sent us on that same mission to demonstrate and declare the gospel to everyone. Paul says Now he's using you, fitting you in brick by brick, stone by stone, That's what the church is all about. He's now building each of us, brick by brick... You are not here by accident. Not a coincidence, you are here today, and you are here on this earth for divine purpose, but never as a Rambo Christian, or an Elsa Christian... an isolated Christian... doing your own thing, disconnected. To be a Christian is to be part of Christ's church. Many people say, I go to Brandywine. I like the music, kids program, students, the preacher doesn't put me to sleep... you go to Brandywine, but are you part of Brandywine? There is a big difference between the two. Between spectator and participant. And the key difference is what are you doing with your brick?

On February 13, 1997, the container ship *Tokio Express* was struck by a rogue wave about 20 miles off Land's End in Cornwall, England. The violent upheaval caused 62 containers to fall overboard—one of which held 5 million Lego pieces, many of which sank and were buried on

the bottom of the ocean floor. Some 20 years later people began spotting them **washing on shore**. So if you want free legos, head over to England.

But here's the point. **Don't bury your brick!!** Maybe you've been hesitant to get involved, or just put it off, or you've had other priorities, or maybe you used to but you burnt out, or too old and you feel like a washed up lego piece...he can still use you and we need you!

Miss Winnie was in her 90s...after decades of serving in our children's ministry, she was still serving the Lord, using her brick. One Sunday morning in walks a guy named Chip, he had a rough past, spent time in prison, an addict, but he was invited to come to church...he was so nervous to go to church that morning that he drank just to get himself in the door. So in walks this guy with tattoos everywhere, smelling like alcohol, and as soon as he walked in the doors he immediately regretted it. He thought, I don't belong here. And he was considering turning right back and going home. But little old Miss Winnie spotted him and came right up to him and gave him a big hug, looked him in the eyes and said with love, "We are so glad you came this morning, you belong here!" And in that moment Chip melted, and felt at home. That was 10 years ago, and Chip...Tim SantaBarbara came to Christ, had his life transformed and is using his brick to change lives and disciple men in our church and around the Brandywine Valley through his ministry in prison and in Broken Beginnings. Now... Imagine if Miss Winnie buried her brick.

If you bring your brick, God will build his house and use this house to reach our community and beyond. But if you bury your brick, there will be pieces missing...the rest of us miss out, the community misses out, because you are needed.

Hold your brick in your hand and look at it. Different colors, shapes, and sizes, each representing the diversity of gifts and talents and experiences and passions and abilities in this room that God wants to use. While there is some variety in these bricks, in the Church it's infinitely more. Did you know that every heartbeat is unique? No two heartbeats are the same, and that's true with us. All of us are unique and God designed us that way.

Jesus wants to use you, don't let limitations or disabilities stop you from playing your part! One of our rockstar greeters is a young adult with special needs- Caroline Cordrey. There are virtually endless ways you can use your brick to build Jesus' church. I want to challenge every one of us this morning who calls Brandywine their church home- to use their brick. So let me share with you some of the most red zone, critical needs right now in the church. In just a few weeks on September 7th we are moving to three services. Do you know that it takes about 150 people per Sunday to do what we do? And we need to add to that number for our 3rd service. So now is the time to use your brick.

Connections Team

Our connections team is far more than holding doors on Sundays. They help create a warm, welcoming, loving atmosphere that says, "You belong here!" They represent the very hands and feet of Jesus as they pour coffee, hold doors, help you with your coat, help you find a seat when you are running a little late. Help our guests find their way around our complex building.

From Rick Hammond:

"Looking back, it is difficult for me to believe that I was originally reluctant to commit to ushering. Now 20 plus years later I can't imagine not being involved with ushering! It has been a wonderful way to meet people and for them to get to know you. Also because of ushering I have developed some valued friendships. If you like to smile and are welcoming, there is no better place to serve!"

From Shon & Carol Sain: [Picture] In the Coffee Bar

We came to BVC looking for growth, fellowship and for opportunities to serve. The coffee bar ministry has met all of these goals for us. The ministry, most importantly, has allowed us to serve God while serving others. The greatest impact has been how God has given us a deeper understanding on what serving others looks like. We are relatively new to BVC. Through this ministry, we have met so many people in the church. The short conversations and expressions of gratitude from others makes it all worth it for us. We are thankful for this ministry and for how it has allowed us to become a small part of the overall mission to impact those attending BVC and those in our community.

Shout out to everyone who serves on our connections team.

Worship Arts and Production Team

Have you ever come into this room feeling overwhelmed and anxious by life's problems, and then the music starts and your eyes slowly begin moving off yourself and onto God, and you don't know why but there are tears in your eyes, and you are moved by the music and lyrics as you remember to trust God. God uses their bricks, from musicians to singers, to the tech team in the back who controls the audio, video, and slides...so critical! Imagine if we didn't have amplification...turn off my mic...all of them are critical to the experience of God and the communication of the gospel every Sunday.

Eric:

Last year, after my wife's unexpected death, I found Brandywine Valley Church, where the welcoming atmosphere and Bible-based teachings helped me reconnect spiritually and socially. Soon after, I became a member. Joining the production team has allowed me to learn new things, find solace and community at Brandywine Valley Church, and a new sense of purpose. God has used this experience to change my life for the better.

Danny:

I've been serving on the production team for about 4 years now. Over this time, I've learned many new skills such as operating cameras, running a livestream, and being a team player with others. I've always had a passion for production, and this is a way for me to use this passion for the Lord. I can honestly say that serving on the production team on Sundays always leaves me feeling fulfilled after doing the Lord's work in such a unique way. In the Bible, Proverbs 11:25 says "A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed." Serving on

the production team has not only allowed me to benefit others, but it has also allowed me to personally be blessed in so many amazing ways throughout my life.

Shout out Worship Arts and Production Team!

Brandywine Kids

At Brandywine we don't just do babysitting on Sundays. This isn't childcare while you get a break for an hour. This is discipleship. We are lodging an anchor for Jesus in kids' hearts and it's our prayer that it's never removed. A child's whole eternity can change by one brick. I think of people like **Meghan Ryle [Young]** who grew up in our church, doing Christmas musicals, Kids ministry kids programs **[Picture]**, and is now using her brick to lead in our student missions **[Picture]** teams and as a girl's small group leader. She told me some of her most spiritually formative and life changing moments and influences began in Brandywine Kids.

Mike and Melinda Watkins who serve on Sunday mornings and Wednesdays as Awana leaders for years- Melinda said, "I serve in children's ministry because I love kids and know that God blessed me with the gift of teaching! I have worked in children's ministry since I was a teenager and have been blessed by many kids through the years!"

Mike said, "I first started working in Children's Ministry when I was 15. After all of these years I still enjoy the children's genuine love for the Lord and his Word! We continue volunteering because the Lord blesses our hearts as a result of serving Him. The joy on the faces of the little ones and the challenges met are rewarding."

Shout out to our Brandywine Kids Team!

Don't bury your brick! The mission is too vital to sit on the sidelines, or to stay home in your stretchy pants on Sunday. We want you to sign up. Important, you are not locked in for life...I'm signing up from now until Jesus returns...no.

Instructions- On the screen **QR Code**, or you can use the card in person. If you are not serving currently, or if you are in another area of church but you can make space to serve in one of these redzone areas this fall, sign up. If you use the QR digitally please turn off your wifi which will make it easier. Give you some time to think and pray.

But then here's what I want to do, if you are serving or are deciding to serve in any area of our church formal or informal, I want you to come bring your brick, and click it into one of these 3 platforms as a symbolic way to show that we are part of building God's kingdom here. Extra up here. *[Music]*

[A few minutes as people come bring their brick up.]

[Nate comes back up] Will you bring your brick, or bury it? Sign up and then you show up! You can expect follow-up this week by our team so be looking for it in your email inbox, check your spam folder as well.

Shout out to my friend and fellow pastor Mark Johnston and The Journey Church who gave me this idea and allowed me to use their methods and aspects of the message.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IFM4iHH3zr0>