

Community Group Plan Summary 2015

Family on Mission Groups

Vision

Treasure Christ, Love the Church, Love the City, Love the World

Being Before Doing

We would like every member to *be a* motivated, servant-hearted follower of Jesus who is on a mission of generous global love. This is nurtured through being a corporate worshipper, living in community through community groups, being generous in giving, being a servant among one another and being intentional with the gospel in the everyday.

Church-wide Goals for Being/Making Followers of Jesus (how will we carry out the vision)

We will seek to grow in Being and Making Followers of Jesus by...

1. Learning how to study the Bible
2. Listening to the Holy Spirit through praying the word and fasting
3. Applying the gospel (putting off sin and putting on Jesus)
4. Living in Community
5. Being on Mission

Structures for Making Followers of Jesus

- Corporate worship
- Community Groups
- O2 Groups; Increase- seminars, workshops, studies, fellowships
- Outreach Opportunities and Partnerships

Structures like O2 groups, increase classes, partnerships and service opportunities are all tools in the tool belt, taking a secondary place to corporate worship, community group, and organic gospel intentionality and designed to help you shift away from consumerism to being an engaged follower of Jesus.

Our Community Groups are “Family on Mission” Groups

Goals for Community groups are the same as the above list; Striving for a Healthy Balance of Group life

- **Family on Mission**: Community groups at TCC are designed to cultivate spiritual family and to propel one another to be on mission through relationships in our everyday life, a specific ministry or through specific events to our immediate church community.
- Structurally community groups are both Organized and Organic
- **Organized Summarized**- organized means every group is committed to these principles:
(We do not believe these structures below are sacred. However, we are committed to the principles that drive our structures. So if over time a structure proves not to

be serving the people then we as pastors want to lead the church to pray, to follow the leading of God's Spirit as best we can discern, and adapt as seems beneficial to cultivate families on mission.)

○ Mission

Principle	Action
▪ Multiplication	Committed to raising up an assistant (ie. future leaders who begin to embrace our vision and values. An assistant is not one who is promising to lead the next community group but one who can help the leaders care for the group through facilitating discussion and joining the leader in fostering community care for the group)
▪ Mission	Make a concerted effort to talk about gospeling unbelievers and praying for unbelievers by name. <i>Other possible options:</i> Some could even adopt a neighborhood, people, ministry, or make other opportunities for your group to grow in relationships with unbelievers. (<u>To the Group leaders:</u> if you choose to adopt a neighborhood, people, ministry, or make other opportunities for your group, leaders- elders, staff, interns, ministry leaders- will seek to advise or potentially resource- but will expect you to lead these endeavors; If you desire to do this please talk to your sphere pastor about ways to carry this out).
▪ Unbelievers welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ We need to make sure we love our neighbor by making sure our language is accessible (the best we can) ▪ Everyone should consider community group as a place to invite unbelievers to their group just like they do corporate worship, fellowships, their house, sporting events, etc.

○ Family

Principle	Action
▪ Primary Care structure	We strongly encourage every member of TCC to be in a community group for care, encouragement, growth, and accountability. This is our primary means of care for you.
▪ Meeting together	Every group should meet 2-4 times a month. Why? ¹ (see footnote below)

¹ This is church for us too. The Sunday morning gathering alone is not church. You cannot fulfill the one another commands on Sunday alone. Community groups provide a context for "church" to happen. Both corporate gathering under pastor-led preached word and small group one anothering is essential for "doing church. 2. Gathering together allows the diversity of giftings (from male and female) to be cultivated and used in serving one

We also highly recommend a meal together when you gather because food is more than just function. It breaks down barriers, provides context for conversation, and fosters relationship among believers and unbelievers alike.

(The goal of meeting together is to foster deeper community that might lead to relationships that are growing in doing everyday life together. Community groups are not simply adding to your schedule but providing a context for genuine relationships to be cultivated.)

Every leader should commit to Invest Training and Care Events such as Invest Night, Sphere Care, and CG Leaders Retreat.

- Training and Care

- General Guidelines

- 6-8 minimum- 20-25 adults maximum
 - If it takes 3 people to do childcare you should consider: multiplication or restructuring.
 - Paying childcare could even be an option
- If you are going to encourage O2 group participation we recommend 2-3 meetings a month for schedule balance.
- Groups meet any night of the week but Tuesday night (Leadership training) and Friday night (Increase- seminars, workshops, some fellowships, etc.)

- Annual Renewal: To prioritize the spiritual health of our group leaders, every group leader will be asked in July about their energy for the upcoming year, their agreement with the vision, values and expectations of the church, and their desire to fulfill the expectations of community group leaders. At that point they will affirm their desire to continue for another year or they will ask for a reprieve. If any of you leaders are considering a reprieve, please take the responsibility alongside your sphere pastor to pray for and help equip someone to take your place.²

another. 3. Keeps us from just being with those like us. It fosters unity amidst the diversity of background, ethnicity, economics, and even opinions 4. Co-ed meeting together for couples has its practical benefits because when men meet with men only and women with women only it can breed suspicion of each other- (ex. wife shares a struggle about her husband and if that husband is not related to in a casual safe setting by the other women, the women's view might be distorted.)

² **Finally, the clarified structure** moving forward recommends leaders giving us an "energy for the task and for life" update in our February Sphere Care meeting and then recommitting to the group or equipping the assistant to take their place in July. After July we encourage people to either look at new or existing groups or recommit to their present groups in August and September and then try to stick with that group until next July. We do this because some people struggle to stick with groups through hard things and that is what best fosters family and cultivates deeper relationships. However others were valuing commitment but thought they could never transition out of groups or that it was awkward to do so. This structure seeks to strike a balance seeking to serve the majority. We all must be sensitive to the Spirit's leading in our lives or the lives of those in the group, which means we must make decisions bathed in the word and prayer and in conjunction with counsel from one another.

Healthy Components of a Group *(They match our Goals for Being and Making Disciples listed above)*

- Bible- Learning and applying God's word to everyday life.
- Prayer- Listening to the Holy Spirit through praying the word
- Applying the gospel- learning how to put off sin and put on Jesus
- Living in Community- Seeking to cultivate family through meals together, life on life relationships outside of group.
(ex. O2 groups, having people over for meals, just hanging out, etc. where we can share at varying times in varying degrees food, laughter, and tears to build supportive, mutually accountable relationships)
- Intentionally on Mission- Taking personal and/or group steps to engaging the lost with the gospel

- **Organic Summarized**
 - Mission
 - Type of emphasis on sharing the gospel, Type of serving, type of projects, type of outreach are all up to the prayerful discernment of each group. (see organized principle of "mission" above for examples)
 - What nights you meet is up to your group. How long you meet
 - What you study- Scripture from the sermon, book studies, etc.- are up to what the leaders thinks is best to foster spiritual growth (Please inform the sphere care pastor of the direction)
 - Family
 - How often you do a general fellowship?
 - How you foster accountability and gospel application to the heart- ex. men's and women's time, O2 groups, etc.
 - The format of the groups (see healthy components of a group below) are up to the leaders. We are providing you with templates as examples to follow.

Missional Community Group: 1 exception to the groups above [IN BETA TEST with a few]

- In order to foster deeper relationships with a few believers and to more focus their mission, some groups may choose a missional community group. That group will look like the following:
 - Organized Components:
 - At the beginning this group will only include 6-8 believers.
 - These believers will meet every other week for men's and women's accountability and Bible time (men together one week while the women watch the kids and the women together another week while the men watch the kids). This time will have as its goal what O2 groups have as their goal- Word, prayer, and accountability.
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- This group will be closed to all other believers initially in order to prioritize mission
- The group would then meet together 2 times a month to eat together. The believers in the group would intentionally invite unbelievers to eat with them and spend time doing something to get to know one another- football game, game night, etc.
- Regarding mission the group must specifically invite an unbeliever every week from individual relationships or from a ministry that this group adopts together- such as a school, a neighborhood, a ministry, playing a certain sport together with unbelievers- soccer team, softball, etc. (That meeting doesn't just have to be in a home but can be around common interests- going hiking, cook outs, watching a sporting event, playing a sport together, concert, etc.)
- Eventually the meal night (or other events) would turn into or lead to a meal and Bible study as you have enough consistency with the unbelievers.
- When unbelievers come to faith, they will be connected to someone inside the group or to another mentor type person that will walk them through the first steps plan of growing in Christ.
- The group will then look to get these individuals into O2 like settings:
 - Being committed to growth and multiplication:
 - Either where the original 4 will multiply into 2 groups of 2 couples and bring in these new believers.
 - Or bring in other believers who will join them in O2-like portion of the group.
 - This group will multiply by having 2 of the original couples hiving off to form a new group with 2 other couples.
- Organic options (suggestions):
 - Believers can cook together prior to the meal the being eaten if they desire.
 - Believers can also meet together 30 minutes before the meal happens to pray for the evening. The mission would be specific

Pursuing Family for Triage: a rare exception to format above

Because of certain emergency circumstances some individuals and couples might need a something more than a community group can provide. Although we will counsel community as a means of grace and growth their might be a brief season where a break from community group is helpful for faith. These individuals or couples might take a break from group for a brief time (no more than 3-6 months) and they are committed to return to the format described above. All exceptions must be run by the sphere pastor for counsel, care, and approval.

General Invest Care Structure for Community Group Leaders

January	Retreat season
February	Invest Night- Training (Last Wednesday of the month)
March	Sphere Groups (meet with them either couple on couple or as a group within these two months)
April	Sphere Groups
May	Invest Night- Training
June	Sphere Group
July	Covenant renewal-
August	Sphere Groups
September	Invest Night- Training
October	Sphere Groups
November	Sphere Groups
December	Retreat season- Leader's Retreat

Notes for Elders/Sphere Care Leaders regarding Sphere Care

Sphere Care Priorities

1. Comm group leaders
2. Triage cases (those in without group care)
3. Members of concern

Sphere Care Meeting Goals

1. Family Check (marriage and parenting)
2. Greatest Group Concern

* *Paid Childcare by the church for these; Usually over a meal

Healthy group template questions

- How long do you meet?
- What does your 2 hours look like?
- When do you do fellowships?
- What do you do for Bible study?
- What do you do for childcare?
- What do you do for accountability?
- How do you raise up leaders?
- How do you eat together?