

## **Opening: Open Each Community Group Meeting by Reading the Community Grp Summary**

### **What is a Community Group at Trinity Presbyterian Church?**

Community Groups are basic Christian communities. Believing that getting to know Jesus and falling in love with him are activities best carried out in a community context, Community Groups provide that context. They are gatherings of 6 to 12 people meeting in homes and apartments throughout the city during the week. In Community Groups, people come to know God and to experience His presence, community is developed and fostered, and people are nurtured, equipped and released for God's work in the world. They provide an opportunity for intimacy, mutual support, practical love and service, learning about the Christian faith, prayer, and sharing of what we see God doing in our midst.

### **What is the Purpose of Community Groups?**

A place to meet and experience Jesus Christ in our midst through mutual ministry  
A place for fellowship and friendship  
A place where gifts are exercised  
A place to discover Christianity

### **What happens during a Community Group Meeting?**

Worship – Experiencing the Worth of God and freely giving ourselves to Him  
Sharing – Learning to tell the story of our journey with God  
Sermon Application – Reflecting together on what God has given us from His Word during Corporate Worship  
Prayer – Talking with God  
Mission – Having experienced God’s love, we now go to love our neighbor with the love we have from God

### **How do they fit in at Trinity as a whole?**

Community Groups are the *primary place for pastoral care at Trinity*. Churches do one of two things: They either practice systematic care and encouragement of the congregation or systematic neglect of the congregation. Our network of community groups is the means through which we seek to practice the former. While some congregations may have small groups, our congregation is small groups. Our network of Community groups serves as the nervous system of our church. In them, the gospel is used to motivate people towards a richer relationship with God. In them, the gospel is used as a balm to apply to the wounds we incur in this broken world. In them, the gospel is used to call and motivate people into the service of God’s kingdom: In response to God’s grace, people are urged to develop lives of moral beauty, integrity and other-centeredness and to discover and use their gifts to carry out ministry both within the congregation and to the world.

### **The Context of Change: The Worshiping Community**

Worshiping God enables us to see the beauty of God and the beauty of godliness. When we worship, we find that our love for God deepens and the hold that other things have on us loosen. When we worship, we find that it changes what we want: we want God and we want to please him more than we want and desire other things. Regularly worshipping God with the larger church, in small groups and on a daily basis as an individual is indispensable if our lives are to change.

### **Growth by Multiplying New Groups**

Trinity’s primary vision is that by multiplying groups we are able to increase our capability as a church to care for people. When people are not involved in significant Christian relationships, like Community Groups, it greatly inhibits Christian maturity. Currently many of our friends at Trinity fall outside this kind of caring and encouraging community. For this reason, we consider it imperative to develop new leaders and expand the number of groups. We are not concerned with multiplying groups as an end in itself. We want to increase the number of groups because we want to provide quality personal care and community life for those who are part of our network of friends. As long as we have too few groups, Trinity, Lakeland and Polk County will fail to be as effective as we might be. If we are going to be successful at multiplying groups, then we will need to cast a vision that will make people enthusiastic and committed to these things. If this vision casting is neglected, the resistance to multiplying groups will prove too strong to overcome.

**This Week's CG Mtg Element: Worship in Small Groups - Fellowship Group Manual, Redeemer**

**Worship in Small Groups**

Worship is central to our calling as human beings. We were built to delight in God's beauty and glory and to celebrate his deeds. We are summoned to praise and magnify God by focusing on his nature and actions. In worship we "ascribe to him the worth of which he is worthy." Until we are a worshipping people, we are spiritual paupers. Worship brings joy to God and pleases him. It also brings health to our souls and substance and weight to our lives.

In worship God gathers his people to himself as the center: 'The LORD Reigns'. Worship is meeting God at the center so that our lives are centered in God and not lived eccentrically. We worship so that we live in response to and from this center, the living God. Failure to worship consigns us to a life of spasms and jerks, at the mercy of every advertisement, every seduction, every siren. Without worship we live manipulated and manipulating lives. We move either in frightened panic or deluded lethargy as we are, in turn, alarmed by spectres and soothed by placebos. If there is no center, there is no circumference. People who do not worship are swept into a vast restlessness, epidemic in the world, with no steady direction and no sustaining purpose. —Eugene Peterson

**THE IMPORTANCE OF WORSHIP IN SMALL GROUPS**

Worship is often neglected in small groups. People argue that they don't have enough time in their tight group schedules to fit it in. They are concerned that various styles of worship would be incompatible. They are concerned that they will not have the emotional energy that worship requires. They are afraid it will make visitors uncomfortable or embarrassed. Or perhaps they themselves feel embarrassed or overly self-conscious. Some, equating worship with singing, refrain because they can't carry a tune in a bucket. However, none of these are sufficient reasons to overlook worship

Remember, small groups are above all Christian communities in which God participates as the primary host. They are places where God is at the center and in which we deal with him and one another. Worship is, therefore, vitally important. The presence of worship may mean the difference between a group which is superficial and insignificant in its effect on people's lives and a group of depth which makes a real difference to those who attend.

Like other elements of the group meeting, be sure to carefully plan the worship activities. Unless people have confidence that you know where you are leading them, they will be anxious and reluctant to enter into worship. Stifling or legislating spontaneity isn't the idea. You merely want to assist the group by proving helpful worship formats.

This is an ideal aspect of group life in which to allow other members to help share the load - assigning differing people the task of leading the group in worship from week to week. If you do this, you will still want them to tell you what they are planning to do so as to help them think through the best way to lead the group in worship and to avoid having them try something that would be met with opposition by the rest of the group.

**Warm Up** - Read Sermon Passage and Corporate Worship Themes

We read the sermon passage, storyline and themes to warm our hearts and minds to remember what God has spoken to us in our time together Sunday morning.

**Proclamation of God’s Word**

**Text:** Hebrews 12:18-28 (ESV)

**Title:** Family Values of God’s People: Worship **Teacher:** Tim Rice

18 For you have not come to what may be touched, a blazing fire and darkness and gloom and a tempest  
19 and the sound of a trumpet and a voice whose words made the hearers beg that no further messages be spoken to them. 20 For they could not endure the order that was given, “If even a beast touches the mountain, it shall be stoned.” 21 Indeed, so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, “I tremble with fear.”  
22 But you have come to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable angels in festal gathering, 23 and to the assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven, and to God, the judge of all, and to the spirits of the righteous made perfect, 24 and to Jesus, the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel. 25 See that you do not refuse him who is speaking. For if they did not escape when they refused him who warned them on earth, much less will we escape if we reject him who warns from heaven. 26 At that time his voice shook the earth, but now he has promised, “Yet once more I will shake not only the earth but also the heavens.” 27 This phrase, “Yet once more,” indicates the removal of things that are shaken—that is, things that have been made—in order that the things that cannot be shaken may remain. 28 Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe.

**The Storyline**

The storyline is God, who is Holy, Holy, Holy, reconciling to Himself a people who disdain and disregard Him. God solves our problem in such an ingenious way that our only right response is to WORSHIP HIM, all the time and everywhere. God is so generous in his saving work that He not only gives salvation but gives us what is due only to Jesus. Those who come to Jesus receive an embrace rather than wrath, a new identity as a child of God rather than continuing as His enemy and a future of eternal love rather than eternal punishment. Worship is the only true response to God’s power and His beauty. His power aids us as our greatest threat and problem that must be resolved while His beauty woos us to crawl up into his lap of love enjoying all of life safe in His arms. In our brokenness, we turn from worshipping God to worship what He has made. It is simply idolatry on our part. So as idolaters we cry out to Jesus to save us, to come to us, to live in us, to change us, to give us this embrace, this new identity, this future! Are you tired? Come to Jesus. Are you weary? Come to Jesus. Are you confused? Come to Jesus. Hopeless? Come to Jesus. Are you dead inside? Come to receive The Unspeakable Gift of An Unshakable Life.

**Themes:**

- Worship
- Idolatry
- Disdain, disregard, devalue
- Wonder, Awe, Beauty
- Jesus’ Work of Saving Us
- Reverence – humility, the low place
- Awe – Joy, Greatness, Power

## 1. Get Acquainted: Icebreaker (10 min)

- What were some of your family’s values growing up?
  - TimO’s example: Thanksgiving, personal benefit from circumstances
- In a few words describe how each member of your family contributed to the family values?
  - TimO’s Examples:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Dad – Zeal</li><li>▪ Mom – Humility</li><li>▪ Lucia – Storytelling</li><li>▪ Rick – Integrity</li><li>▪ Vencie – Evangelism</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Gretchen – Spiritual Disciplines</li><li>▪ Chrystl – Obedience to God</li><li>▪ Ted - Friendship</li></ul>
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## 2. Worship: God’s Power and His Love (10 min)

Read all the questions and answers from The Heidelberg Catechism then go back and read each question and answer stopping after each one giving time for folks to worship God for both His power, His love and anything else that moves them to wonder at Him.

### **Question 26. What do you believe when you say, “I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth”?**

That the eternal Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who of nothing made heaven and earth, with all that is in them; who likewise upholds and governs the same by his eternal counsel and providence is for the sake of Christ his Son, my God and my Father; on whom I rely so entirely, that I have no doubt, but he will provide me with all things necessary for soul and body and further, that he will make whatever evils he sends upon me, in this valley of tears turn out to my advantage; for he is able to do it, being Almighty God, and willing, being a faithful Father.

### **Question 27. What do you understand by the providence of God?**

Providence is the almighty and everywhere present power of God; whereby, as it were by his hand, he upholds and governs heaven, earth, and all creatures; so that herbs and grass, rain and drought, fruitful and barren years, meat and drink, health and sickness, riches and poverty, yea, and all things come, not by chance, but by his fatherly hand.

### **Question 28. How does the knowledge of God’s creation and providence help us?**

We may be patient in adversity; thankful in prosperity; and that in all things, which may hereafter befall us, we place our firm trust in our faithful God and Father, that nothing shall separate us from his love; since all creatures are so in his hand, that without his will they can neither move or be moved.

### 3. Sermon Reflection: Family Values of God’s People: Worship (10 min)

#### **Consuming Fire, Immeasurable Treasure:**

- How has knowing God to be a *consuming fire*, been a blessing to your walk with Jesus?
- How has the knowledge of God as one of greatest value and worth added to your love and delight in Him?

#### **Atonement of Christ: How can God not be threatening?**

- In verses 22-24 there are a list of 9 “you have come to \_\_\_\_\_” examples. Which one delights your heart and moves you to wonder and worship? Explain.

#### **An Unshakable Life – The Gift of God for Us in Jesus**

- Worship God for His Gift in Jesus of:
  - Unshakable Joy – Share how you are experiencing this new reality.
  - Unshakable Identity – Share how this has changed your life and relationships
  - Unshakable Future – Share how your hope of eternity gives you peace

### 4. Kingdom Centered Prayer: (10 min)

YOU CAN PRAY WITH US...

1. Worship the LORD in the splendor of His holiness for His absolute authority – who can withstand His power in His righteous judgment? Praise Him, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, that no one is higher than He is.
2. How have you doubted that God is a consuming fire, more committed to the things of this world than to Him? Confess your spiritual adultery to Jesus, asking Him to forgive you and work into you His holy character.
3. Give thanks to Jesus for the miracle of His work to save His people. Thank Him for all He has done to atone for your guilt and to clothe you in His very righteousness so that you coming to Him you can come before the Father without dread.
4. Who do you know that is more tied into this world than they are tied into Jesus? Pray for them, asking the Lord to open their eyes to their spiritual peril, and to give you words and grace to love them and warn them.
5. Ask the Holy Spirit to secure you in Christ – in what He has provided for all who trust Him – an unshakeable joy, an unshakeable identity, and an unshakeable future. Pray for a grateful spirit, reverence and endurance.

### 5. Mission: Worship All The Time and Everywhere (10 min)

- Think through the coming week, when are your times of greatest worship and awe?
- What time of day or what chores or relationships have become worship-less to you? Confess your need for God to change your heart. Ask your friends to pray this week specifically for God to renew your heart and give you a fresh, joy and love to do His will.

### 6. Jesus From Others (10 min)

- What do you love more about Jesus from what someone shared during our CG tonight?