

**Opening: Open Each CG Meeting reading all or some portion 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.

**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 11:1-3; Genesis 1:1-3 & 2:7 (ESV) **Title:** By Faith: Creation

**Teacher:** Tim Rice

Hebrews 11:1 Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. <sup>2</sup> For by it the people of old received their commendation. <sup>3</sup> By faith we understand that the universe was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was not made out of things that are visible. ... Genesis 1:1 In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth. <sup>2</sup> The earth was without form and void, and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the face of the waters. <sup>3</sup> And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. ... 2:7 then the LORD God formed the man of dust from the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living creature.

**The Storyline**

"Believer" is who we are. "Believing" is what we do. It is our design, and we are gloriously fashioned after our creator God. The decision each of us make is *what or who* we trust. God offers Himself to be the person in whom you trust. God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit and you are invited to believe, to love and to follow Him. It is simply the greatest invitation to the greatest relationship that leads to the greatest adventure that never ends. He commends Himself to us by His power, His goodness and His authority in both His creation and His saving work through His Son Jesus' life, death and resurrection. Our faith, believing and trusting, is the conduit by which God imputes or credits His Forgiveness, His Righteousness, His Adoption of Us as His Children, gives His Holy Spirit and His inheritance part of which includes our eternity with Him in the New Heaven and New Earth. The result of faith is love. Faith works itself out in love. Faith is "doing nothing" that leads to our "gaining everything" that makes us willing to "do anything". 100% inability. 100% Satisfaction. 100% Obedience. By faith we are given the love of God. By faith we love God. By faith we love our neighbor with the love of God. It is from one degree of glory to another. It is an eternal love, not a moment in time. It is the wedding and the marriage. It is a decision that leads to a skill as it is a choice we make forever and ever. Faith is the big deal cuz faith's object is Jesus. And Jesus is... by design the key to everything else. What a blast it is to be us!!!

**Themes:**

- Creation
- God
- God's Power
- God's Goodness
- God's Authority
- Don't have a clue?
- Believing
- Trusting
- Faith
- Jesus' Life, Death, Resurrection
- Fear not, for I have redeemed you
- I have called you by name
- You are mine

1. Launchers: Icebreakers Telling stories on ourselves (10 min)

- Who or what have you trusted because of its or their power?
- Who or what have you trusted because of its or their goodness?
- Who or what have you trusted because of their authority?

2. Worship: Ascribing or Crediting Glory. (10 min)

Read Psalm 29. Then spend some time ascribing to the Lord Glory do to Him and Him alone for His Power, His Goodness and His Authority. Give time for each person to enjoy the silence and reflection on the wonder of God in Creation and Salvation.

**29 A PSALM OF DAVID. Ascribe to the LORD Glory**

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| <sup>1</sup> Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings,<br>ascribe to the LORD glory and<br>strength.                     | and Sirion like a young wild ox.<br><sup>7</sup> The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames<br>of fire.                                |
| <sup>2</sup> Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his<br>name;<br>worship the LORD in the splendor of<br>holiness.        | <sup>8</sup> The voice of the LORD shakes the<br>wilderness;<br>the LORD shakes the wilderness of<br>Kadesh.                           |
| <sup>3</sup> The voice of the LORD is over the<br>waters;<br>the God of glory thunders,<br>the LORD, over many waters. | <sup>9</sup> The voice of the LORD makes the deer<br>give birth<br>and strips the forests bare,<br>and in his temple all cry, "Glory!" |
| <sup>4</sup> The voice of the LORD is powerful;<br>the voice of the LORD is full of<br>majesty.                        | <sup>10</sup> The LORD sits enthroned over the flood;<br>the LORD sits enthroned as king<br>forever.                                   |
| <sup>5</sup> The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars;<br>the LORD breaks the cedars of<br>Lebanon.                     | <sup>11</sup> May the LORD give strength to his<br>people!<br>May the LORD bless his people with<br>peace!                             |
| <sup>6</sup> He makes Lebanon to skip like a calf,   |  |

3. Sermon Reflection: (10 min)

Introduction: How much does God's creation grow or inform or affect your faith in God?

**What can you see?**

- What can you know about God from His creation alone?
- What does the Bible tell about His Power, His Goodness and His Authority from His creation?

**What have we done?**

- Why did you abandon God and call it freedom?
- What is the problem we face after we abandon Him?

**What has He done?**

- Do you like how Jesus has used His Power, Goodness and Authority to save us?
- How does knowing He made you, loves you and you are his comfort you?

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

YOU CAN PRAY WITH US...

1. Adoration - Worship the LORD, God Almighty as your Maker! Praise Him, Father, Son and Holy Spirit for His goodness and grace to give you life
2. Confession - How have you lived as if you are your own, rather than being His by His work of creation? Confess your pride and unbelief to Jesus, asking Him to forgive you and restore you to His good design.
3. Thanksgiving - Give thanks to Jesus for His willingness to surrender His breath and be buried in dust to save us. Thank Him for *bearing the curse of our rebellion* and offering to us *the commendation of His love and faithfulness*.
4. Supplication Others - Who do you know that doubts God's power, goodness and authority? Pray for them, asking the Lord to help them to see the folly of their unbelief and turn back to Him as their God and Savior
5. Supplication Personal - Ask the Spirit to bear in you His fruit of love and goodness. Pray for His work to restore you, empower you and give you direction to live in line with His good design.

#### 5. Mission: Invite Our Friends to Believe In God, Our Creator (10 min)

So ask a friend if you can ask them 5 questions. You can use the excuse that you have been asked by your church to take 5 friends through a religious interest survey. The key is that you can only ask questions. Clarifying questions can be helpful so please feel free. No telling. No sharing. No opinions. Just questions and their answers. Afterward if they ask for your thoughts please feel free to share them. At the end, thank them and tell them you will send them what you wrote so they can edit and send it back to you. It is great fun and so interesting.

1. Where do you think the world came from?
2. What do you believe about God?
3. What do you believe about Jesus?
4. What do you believe about life after death?
  - 4a. If you were to die tonight and stand before God what would you give as the reason He should let you into his heaven?
5. If you could ask God one thing what would it be?
  - 5a. If you could ask God for one thing what would it be?

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

Close your time together in letting each person share something they came to love about Jesus from something someone in the group shared during your time together.

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