

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.

Warm Up (OPTIONAL) - 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.

The Storyline – There is no other.... and ain't it grand!!!

God is and there is no other. God is and everything, everywhere at all times and all in the cosmos points to him. How great is that! God is the "it" and all that is reveals Him. He starts it. He ends it. He controls it. He invented it. He energizes and sustains it. All that ever will be owes itself to Him. The beginning – Him. The now – Him. The end – Him. He is one stop shopping at its finest. All is from Him. All is through Him. All is to Him. Every moment announces Him. Every moment points to Him. Every moment celebrates Him. Every, everything is designed to move us to adore and worship Him. All of was, all of is, and all of what will be sings, shouts, and echoes Him. He is the party, the dancing, the joy, the memories, the beauty, the wonder, the anticipation, and the delivery of every good and perfect gift.... He is God and there is no other... and ain't it grand!!!

Every look and every desire away for Him or for anyone or anything else is less. All else disappoints. Yet we give ourselves in whole and part to that which is not Him. Yet He is never more rapturous than when He puts His love and faithfulness on display in His Son's death for our punishment and life for our acceptance. God's greatness that melts our whoring hearts and weds us to Himself is more wonder-filled and pact with glory than all of His other doings combined. His otherness peaks in His acceptance and embrace of us as we turn from running after others to the one who is like no other. He is God and there is no other who loves, forgives, and accepts the unfaithful into His very family.... and ain't it grand!!!

Themes

- No other
- Uniqueness
- Exclusive
- FOMO
- Source
- Ruler
- Healer
- Authority
- Idols

1. Launchers: Engaging hearts, both ours and others

- How comfortable are with exclusive claims?

2. Worship God for His uniqueness and exclusivity.

God is worth getting excited about. God is for us. God is in us. Shout for joy for who He is and what He is like. Think of the benefits you gain from His character and uniqueness. He is Holy, Holy, Holy.

Isaiah 44:6–9 (ESV)

Besides Me There Is No God

- ⁶ Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel
and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts:
“I am the first and I am the last;
besides me there is no god.
⁷ Who is like me? Let him proclaim it.
Let him declare and set it before me,
since I appointed an ancient people.

Let them declare what is to come, and what
will happen.

- ⁸ Fear not, nor be afraid; have I not told you
from of old and declared it? And you are
my witnesses!
Is there a God besides me? There is no
Rock; I know not any.”

The Folly of Idolatry

- ⁹ All who fashion idols are nothing, and the things they delight in do not profit. Their witnesses
neither see nor know, that they may be put to shame.

Isaiah 45:17–23 (ESV)

- ¹⁷ But Israel is saved by the LORD
with everlasting salvation;
you shall not be put to shame or
confounded
to all eternity.
- ¹⁸ For thus says the LORD,
who created the heavens
(he is God!),
who formed the earth and made it
(he established it;
he did not create it empty,
he formed it to be inhabited!);
“I am the LORD, and there is no other.
¹⁹ I did not speak in secret,
in a land of darkness;
I did not say to the offspring of Jacob,
‘Seek me in vain.’
I the LORD speak the truth;
I declare what is right.
- ²⁰ “Assemble yourselves and come;
draw near together,

you survivors of the nations!
They have no knowledge
who carry about their wooden idols,
and keep on praying to a god
that cannot save.
²¹ Declare and present your case;
let them take counsel together!
Who told this long ago?
Who declared it of old?
Was it not I, the LORD?
And there is no other god besides me,
a righteous God and a Savior;
there is none besides me.

- ²² “Turn to me and be saved,
all the ends of the earth!
For I am God, and there is no other.
²³ By myself I have sworn;
from my mouth has gone out in
righteousness
a word that shall not return:
‘To me every knee shall bow,
every tongue shall swear allegiance.’

3. Sermon Reflection:

THERE IS NO OTHER

Why does it matter if God has exclusive authority?

Read Isaiah 44:6-9 and 45:17-23. Which of the 7 expressions of God's uniqueness from the passage strikes your heart? Why?

AND WE ASK, "REALLY??"

What does it say about us and what we think of Him and His character when we question or doubt the LORD?

What does our demand to have say about the object or event we desire and our view of God?

What does FOMO say about your love of the world and the things in it?

What does it say about your abiding in God's presence and value?

BUT JESUS STILL SAVES

What are the unique claims of Jesus?

Do you need that kind of a savior, one who lived the life you should have and died the death you deserved?

Are you exclusive with Jesus? Is He your one and only?

Do you, right now, want to live for Him and do you right now want to die for Him?

4. Kingdom Centered Prayer:

YOU CAN PRAY WITH US...

1. Worship the LORD for His exclusive authority as our source, ruler and healer. Praise Him, Father, Son and Holy Spirit that He is the Only Creator, King and Savior

2. How have you lived questioning whether what God has said or done is enough instead of trusting Him? Confess to Jesus the foolishness and offensiveness of your search for "another," asking Him to forgive you and heal you.

3. Give thanks to Jesus for not just doing what no one else can do (forgiving and healing us) but for His *willingness* to do what no one else could even consider – suffering agony to save His enemies! Thank Him for the wonder of His saving love.

4. Who do you know that is gripped by the fear of missing out (FOMO)? Pray for them, asking the Lord to make Himself known to them, and to open their eyes to the beauty of His love and grace.

5. Ask the Spirit to bear in you His fruit of love and peace. Pray for such a profound sense of satisfaction in His sufficiency and love that you would grow to be genuinely and deeply content – and therefore grateful in Christ.

5. Mission: Let your light so shine ***This Week's Challenge: Good works double check.***

Friends

- Check in with your friends and ask if they think you are exclusive with Jesus.
- Ask them to tell you your testimony.
- Does your life preach your need and love for Jesus?
- Does your life preach your love of stuff and what this world offers?

Enemies/Competitors/Rivals

- Check in with your enemies and ask if they think you are exclusive with Jesus.
- Ask them to tell you your testimony.
- Does your life preach your need and love for Jesus?
- Does your life preach your love of stuff and what this world offers?

6. Jesus From Others

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