

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

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### **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 11:20; Genesis 25:29-34, 27:1-7, 15-38, 41 (ESV) **Title:** By Faith: Isaac

**Teacher:** Tim Rice

Hebrews 11:20 By faith Isaac invoked future blessings on Jacob and Esau.

**The Storyline** – To live without God in the center of all we do, say, desire and hope for is to live dysfunctional. So, when our parents, Adam and Eve, rebelled against God and put themselves in the center of their thinking and passions, well that was the moment dysfunction came to roost in every member of every family. Dysfunction is why Jesus came. As an artist dysfunction is Jesus' true medium. As the movie rightly states, "some artists work in clays", some in oils but Jesus and Holy Spirit work in dysfunction...it is their true medium. So, are you a mess? Well of course you are. Do you lie? Well of course you do. Do you shirk your responsibilities and blame others? Well, my friends you are the kind of folk Jesus loves loving. You are his favorite brand of folk from the just right kind of stock that Jesus is looking to bless and bless some more.

Stop. Rest. Humble. Get low. Come down off your high horse. Then Ask for Jesus' blessing. Tell Him your name and the dysfunctions of your being, doing and saying. Then listen. Listen for His love and blessing. Confidence. Strength. Power. Enjoy your grace filled heart and life. Now go and be an agent of hope by blessing all you meet. Celebrate each one. Love them. Delight in them. Like them. Listen to their stories. Then let them in on God's story of grace to their malfunctioned friend.

Themes

- Blessings
- Dysfunction
- Isaac
- Rebecca
- Esau
- Jacob
- Manipulation
- Lying
- Birthright
- Belonging
- Secure
- Humble / Confident
- Shoulder the Weight
- Agent of Blessing

## 1. Launchers: (10 min)

- How was your family dysfunctional growing up?
- How has God turned that to your blessing?

## 2. Worship: In worship we bless God cuz He has blessed us (10 min)

**Praise God for His blessings. Own His blessings. Delight in them. Let them describe you.**

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ... In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

## 3. Sermon Reflection: (10 min)

**Profiles in Dysfunction and Manipulation**

- How do the characters flaws and sins of each person in this story help us understand God's grace? Describe each one and how God's love and care for them encourages you and give you hope.

Isaac

Esau

Rebecca

Jacob

**The Beauty of Christ Our Redeemer –**

- By contrast, how did Jesus' work to heal and forgive this mess?
- How is Jesus different in how He relates to God and to his fellow man?

**How Shall we then live?**

- How does belonging to the Lord change the way we live and view the future?
- When have you felt God's blessing on your life?
- How is God making His blessing the central organizing passion of your life?

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

**YOU CAN PRAY WITH US ...**

1. Worship the LORD for His goodness and love. Praise Him, Father, Son and Holy Spirit for His graciousness, especially in His resolve to work for our blessing even when we are so self-serving and wicked.
2. How have you sought to secure yourself instead of owning your own guilt and trusting Jesus to redeem you? Confess your pride and folly to Jesus, asking Him to forgive you and make you whole – to *bless* you.
3. Give thanks to Jesus for the miracle of His work to save us from our sin. Thank Him for His obedience – for submitting joyfully (where we grumble), for giving (where we're selfish) and for shouldering the weight of our needs (where we do not want to be encumbered by anyone).
4. Who do you know that is desperate to be secured? Pray for them asking the Lord to make His Grace known to them so that they could find the blessing they've always been searching for.
5. Ask the Holy Spirit to secure you in His work of sealing you in Christ. Pray for insight into what it means to be so clothed in Christ's righteousness and to be so well supplied for all the work He's given you.

5. Mission: We are people on mission! (10 min)

Christians are people on mission to bless, to give, to serve, to love because that is what God is doing in us every moment. Our theme this week and every day after is to be a blessing to all we come in contact.

- Think of those God will put in your path this week:
  - How can you bless them? How can you give to them? Help them?

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?