

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 - 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 11:22; Genesis 50:15-25 (ESV) **Title:** By Faith: Joseph

Teacher: Tim Rice

Hebrews 11:22 By faith Joseph, at the end of his life, made mention of the exodus of the Israelites and gave directions concerning his bones. ... Genesis 50:15 When Joseph's brothers saw that their father was dead, they said, "It may be that Joseph will hate us and pay us back for all the evil that we did to him." ¹⁶ So they sent a message to Joseph, saying, "Your father gave this command before he died: ¹⁷ 'Say to Joseph, "Please forgive the transgression of your brothers and their sin, because they did evil to you.'" And now, please forgive the transgression of the servants of the God of your father." Joseph wept when they spoke to him. ¹⁸ His brothers also came and fell down before him and said, "Behold, we are your servants." ¹⁹ But Joseph said to them, "Do not fear, for am I in the place of God? ²⁰ As for you, you meant evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring it about that many people should be kept alive, as they are today. ²¹ So do not fear; I will provide for you and your little ones." Thus, he comforted them and spoke kindly to them. ²² So Joseph remained in Egypt, he and his father's house. Joseph lived 110 years. ²³ And Joseph saw Ephraim's children of the third generation. The children also of Machir the son of Manasseh were counted as Joseph's own. ²⁴ And Joseph said to his brothers, "I am about to die, but God will visit you and bring you up out of this land to the land that he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." ²⁵ Then Joseph made the sons of Israel swear, saying, "God will surely visit you, and you shall carry up my bones from here."

The Storyline – By faith Joseph: Evils Intentions Submit to God's Goodness Who knew? God.

How many folks in heaven were once enemies of God? Answer: all of them. How many of the folks in heaven are now children of God? Answer: all of them. So, the greatest victory over an enemy is not to destroy them but to make them your friend, even family member. Who knew? God is the greatest peacemaker ever! His love reconciles to a level of relationship not previously experienced or even imagined. God's goodness is so great that Evil submits to God's goodness to such a degree and so completely that it accomplishes what it never intended, worship of the very God it was trying to destroy. Who knew? Evil acts. Good results. Who knew? Evil intends. Good abounds. Who knew? Evil plots and executes. God steers to cause redemption. Who knew? Evil destroys. God restores. Who knew? God. My Mom used to say after me speaking too highly of evil's power, "Timothy Oliver if good and evil are in a room you never have to worry about the outcome. Good always wins."

Who knew? God. He always wins. Everything is working for HIS GLORY and OUR GOOD.

Themes

- Evil
- Good
- Intentions
- Joseph
- Brothers
- Bitterness
- Goodness
- Power
- Mercy
- Trust
- Healing
- I love you
- I was wrong
- Confession - Saying same
- Provide - See ahead

1. Launchers: (10 min)

- How does your awareness of evil cause you to live in fear?
- How much more would you enjoy God if you knew that God was turning to your blessing both the good and evil in the world?
- After realizing God turns evil to our good, how would that change your life?

2. Worship: Paul's Pattern of Confession to Calling to Worship (10 min)

Friends, Paul is accused of being the “foremost sinner” and his disciple Timothy has heard the stories. **So Paul not only agrees with accusation, says the same, but explains how God has turned his sinning to good by making Paul a “display of His perfect patience” which then leads Paul to worship. Paul’s reflection on God making Him an example for all who would believe creates worship in Paul’s heart.** Spend some time reflecting on **your confessions of sin, the display you are of God’s redemption and let that lead you to worship, wonder and awe in God Himself.**

1 Timothy 1:15-17 **15** The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost. **16** But I received mercy for this reason, that in me, as the foremost, Jesus Christ might display his perfect patience as an example to those who were to believe in him for eternal life. **17** To the King of the ages, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

Confession – say same

Conversion – God turns evil to good

Worship – Paul is in awe of God

3. Sermon Reflection: (10 min)

Introduction:

- Who in your life is reaping a harvest of bitterness, cynicism and discouragement because of their inability to find God at work in the evil they have suffered?

What is it to confess? To Confess – to say the same

- There is a skill to confession, the ability to communicate your awareness of the wrong you have done and the details of the consequences.
 - Who is in your life that you can go to and say, “I WAS WRONG” and in detail what the consequences of that evil choice has done to others?

Trusting God’s Goodness Overpowers/Steers Evil to Bring Redemption & Restoration

- Tell the story of Joseph’s brothers attempt to rid themselves of Joseph and how God turned that into their salvation.
- Tell the story of Evil’s impact on your life that God has used for your good and the good of others.

Sharing God’s Mercy – Providing for our Enemies

- If to provide means to see ahead, how can you provide for your enemies so that they will know God is good?

4. Kingdom Centered Prayer: (10 min)

YOU CAN PRAY WITH US...

1. Worship the LORD for His Almighty power, wisdom and love. Praise Him, Father, Son and Holy Spirit that His rule is not undone by even the most wicked intentions.
2. How have you lived like Joseph's brothers, scheming and manipulative toward those you've hurt? Confess your guilt to Jesus, asking Him to forgive you and free you from your slavery to all you've done wrong.
3. Give thanks to Jesus, that as the Ultimate Offended One, He provides for us, the offenders. Thank Him for acting by His wisdom, power and love to use even our hatred of Him to redeem us.
4. Who has hurt you most deeply? Pray for the Spirit's help to "not be in God's place" but rather to trust the Lord to deal with them and work for your healing and for their blessing.
5. Ask the Holy Spirit to bear in you His fruit of love, joy and peace. Pray for His power to change you from living in self-protective ways in order to truly love, forgive and even to bless those who have hurt you.

5. Mission: Our Genius God – Evil's Intent God Turns to Our Good (10 min)

Think of Evil's work in our world today, in your life, and in our history. If God could only work with good to make and do good, well the Bible tells us, that he would have nothing to work with because evil is all around us and in us. God's goodness is so powerful that He bends to our good and benefit the workings of evil intended to do us harm.

- What evil in the world is God using to bring about good?
- What evil desire or dream in your heart is He turning to your good?
- What tool or person have you used or done evil with that God has turned that circumstance or relationship to good?
- What difficult relationship that you thought was evil has God turned to your good?

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?