

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 11:27-28; Exodus 12:1-3, 5, 12-13, 21-23, 28-31 (ESV)

Title: By Faith: Moses - Part 2

Teacher: Tim Rice

The Storyline – Future Hope

Christians are people whose lives and activities are energized by future hope. Future hope is our confidence, our comfort, our concern, our blessing, our dreams, our security, our plan, our gain, our humility, our inheritance, our knowing, our believing, our doing, our story, our message, our beginning and ending. Our future hope is Jesus and all he brings.

My Dad had a lot of flaws but one of his best attributes was his zeal for life fueled by future hope. He was great at taking any set of circumstances and finding future benefit and he was equally skilled at doing that for himself or for others.

- “TimO, that will make baskets (basketball reference) next winter.” He would yell that at me anytime I was doing any manual labor.
- “If you don’t want to sweat in the spring and summer, you don’t have worry about sweating in the fall and winter.” Talking about off season training.
- “Boys, I love perseverance and endurance as qualities but I don’t know why they are in such great abundance in “IDIOTS”. They will just out last you.” Warning about a future hope that we would be better equipped to love others than he had been.
- Starting when I was 12 years old, he would close every prayer with these words, “Thank you for loving us and saving us.” Present recognition of a future reality.

So, God is the source of our future hope. God is just in his striking us with a death blow for the sins we have committed. God is gracious to ask Jesus to come and make atonement for us. Jesus is kind to offer himself as our substitute. Holy Spirit is present to convince and convict us of our sin and its misery, enlighten us in the knowledge of Christ, renew our will, persuade and enable us to embrace Christ freely offered in the Gospel! Hallelujah! Heaven came down and filled our souls. Now we live to serve and bless others as if they were Jesus Himself.

Themes

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|-------------------|--------------|
| • Judgment | • I am |
| • Hope | • The Way |
| • Future | • The Truth |
| • Blood | • The Life |
| • All have sinned | • Passover |
| • Everyone | • Lentel |
| • Universal | • Destroyer |
| • One and Only | • Translated |

1. Launchers: Shaped by Future Hopes (10 min)

- What do you want your friends, families and enemies think of you at your funeral?
- What do you want God to think about you at your funeral?

2. Worship: Come you who are blessed of my Father... Inherit ...(10 min)

Worship God for all those who have given you a cup of water, welcomed you, clothed you, gave you food and drink. They gave as unto the Lord. Rejoice that all we do is noticed and noted by our Father in Heaven. To Him be glory forever and ever. Worship God for those you are able to serve.... as unto the Lord.

Matthew 25:31–46 (ESV)

³¹ “When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. ³² Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ And he will place the sheep on his right, but the goats on the left. ³⁴ Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶ I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ ³⁷ Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? ³⁸ And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? ³⁹ And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’ ⁴⁰ And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’ ⁴¹ “Then he will say to those on his left, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ ⁴⁴ Then they also will answer, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?’ ⁴⁵ Then he will answer them, saying, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ ⁴⁶ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

3. Sermon Reflection: (10 min)

Hebrews 11:27-28; Exodus 12:1-3, 5, 12-13, 21-23, 28-31 (Moses, Pt. 2)

Intro: All we do is shaped by some future hope.

- What is your future hope for this week? Month? Summer? Year? Decade?

ULTIMATE CONFLICT

- Why do we believe the threat of judgment is just and universal?
- How does that truth bless your life? Your relationship w Christians? Non-Christians?

TRUE FORGIVENESS

- How is *God's gift of atonement* humbling even as it is comforting?

PRESENT HOPE

- How does God's power and grace lead us to live in faith?
- How does eternal hope change your doings this week? This Year? This lifetime?

4. Kingdom Centered Prayer: (10 min)

YOU CAN PRAY WITH US...

1. Worship the LORD for His grace and mercy in the midst of His justice. Praise Him, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, that He is willing to provide a way of redemption when
2. How have you lived as if God will do nothing more in the future? Confess your pride and unbelief to Jesus, asking Him to forgive you and to change your heart to cherish Him as you should.
3. Give thanks to Jesus for His work to strike the gods (and darkness) of this world to redeem His people. Thank Him for *delivering you* from the dominion of evil and *translating you into His kingdom of love and forgiveness*.
4. Who do you know that lives with no real defense against evil? Pray for them, asking the Lord to make Himself known to them and to set them free in Christ.
5. Ask the Holy Spirit to bear in you His fruit of love and joy, especially because of the hope given to us in Jesus. Pray for a greater confidence in all that Jesus has promised because of all that He has already done.

5. Mission: As you did to the least of these... you did to ME (10 min)

Hope in the betterment of those experiencing least-ness or lacking in their life. Think of those you will come in contact this week. Hope for them. Dream for them. Dream with them. Then Jesus them. Do with them what Jesus does. Go to our Father and drink, eat, cry, hurt, complain, dance, sing, and fill your souls together. Invite them to come with you to the fountain of living water. Give them to Jesus!

Who is thirsty?

Who lacks skills?

Who is hungry?

Who is difficult?

Who needs \$?

Who needs love?

Who is heart sick?

Who needs your time?

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?