

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 11:29; Exodus 14:5-6, 10, 13-31 (ESV) **Title:** By Faith: The People

Teacher: Tim Rice

Hebrews 11:29. By faith the people crossed the Red Sea as on dry land, but the Egyptians, when they attempted to do the same, were drowned.

The Storyline – Overwhelmable, The Brilliance of God in creating us weak!

Overwhelmable is a key quality of our creation that leads to deep spiritual realities. I can't. God can and does. I don't know. God knows all things. I am weak. God is all powerful. This weakness, fatigue, limits, and frailty lead to wonder, joy, security, delight, humility, blessing, intimacy and union with Him. In our becoming aware of our dependence is where we discover everything else. God overwhelms us with circumstances and additions so that we would come to know His saving greatness and love. If we were self-sustaining and self-existent, we would never cry to Him, love Him, need Him or desire Him.

External Trauma creates Internal Renewal.

So, the Red Sea rendezvous is the perfect way to tell the story of our slavery, weakness and dependence that discovers unto us God's power, love, wisdom, and ingenuity. The Israelites are led to the land where the Egyptian Gods are most powerful and cornered by the Red Sea, death and chaos, and the greatest fighting force known to mankind trained to kill with revenge and death on their minds. What to do? Feel your fears and weaknesses. Cry out to God. Then shut up and watch Him work. Be Still. Be silent. See Him fight for you. See him get between you and your enemies. Submit to His strategy. Follow His lead. Rejoice in His deliverance. Rejoice in your weakness. Praise God for His control of all things and leading you into overwhelming circumstances so that you can know His forgiveness, His righteousness and His adoption of you as His child. Ask Holy Spirit to reveal where you are in crisis avoidance and missing out on being weak and needy. Confess your sins of self-dependence and love of YOUR doings that keep you from being desperate for him.

A crisis of faith is when what is required of you exceeds your resources so that you have to cry out for help outside yourself. Enjoy your overwhelming circumstances that leads to perpetual delight in our God who works to save us, His people.

Themes

- Deliverance
- Need
- Weakness
- Red Sea
- Cloud by day
- Fire by night
- Death
- Be silent
- Shepherd
- Submit
- Trust God not faith
- Fear, Despair
- Overwhelmed
- Saved
- God's Work

1. Launchers: (10 min)

- How do most people act under pressure when they are overwhelmed?

2. Worship: No Longer a Slave to Fear – I am They (10 min)

Remember the wonder of God's goodness and power as listen to this song from Sunday's worship service. The Israelites soon forgot His works. Let us make it a practice in our hearts and homes to remember, always remember, His great love for us and powerful acts to redeem us.

No Longer A Slave To Fear

<https://open.spotify.com/track/0T8lmseEmDPO88UTfildVr?si=ee9d41562cef4159>

Ooh, ooh
Ooh, ooh

You unravel me
With a melody
You surround me with a song
Of deliverance
From my enemies
'Til all my fears are gone

I'm no longer a slave to fear
I am a child of God
I'm no longer a slave to fear
I am a child of God

From my mother's womb
You have chosen me
Love has called my name
I've been born again
Into Your family
Your blood flows through my veins

I'm no longer a slave to fear
I am a child of God
I'm no longer a slave to fear

I am a child of God

I'm no longer a slave to fear
I am a child of God
I'm no longer a slave to fear
I am a child of God

I am surrounded

By the arms of the Father
I am surrounded
By songs of deliverance

We've been be liberated
From our bondage

We're the sons and the daughters
Let us sing our freedom

Ooh, ooh
Ooh, ooh

Ooh, ooh
Ooh, ooh

You split the sea
So I could walk right through it
My fears are drowned in perfect love
You rescued me
So I could stand and say
I am a child of God
You split the sea
So I could walk right through it
My fears are drowned in perfect love
You rescued me
So I could stand and say
I am a child of God
I am a child of God
Yes, I am a child of God

3. Sermon Reflection: (10 min)

PRIDE, UNBELIEF & BLINDNESS

What were the Israelites facing? And how did they feel?

Answer: An *overpowering threat* is one we see that we cannot defend or defeat in our own power

- *Have you ever been persuaded of any bondage (sin, death or judgment)?*
- How does our world fail to solve this problem *internally or externally*, addictions and the cycles of oppression?

GOD'S WORK TO SAVE

What is at the center of our hope?

Answer - The LORD works, with all of His mighty power and resources, to save His people to the uttermost.

- What has God done to save you?
- What oppression and bondage has God delivered you from?
- What more does He need to do to prove to you that the salvation He offers is trustworthy and best?

FAITH & UNLIKELY OBEDIENCE

Why do we need to be still? And what does God have to persuade us to believe?

Answer - *God works the way He does because He has to persuade us that we're helpless; we need to cease striving and trust **HIM** to work*

Reflections: Read each of the following asking Holy Spirit to help us repent and believe. Preach these truths to our hearts till we believe them. Repent of our Self-Will, Self-Righteousness, and Self-Doings.

- Trusting His work vs. what threatens us, we enter into what looks like death, but in reality, it is actually the doorway to life and freedom...
- Knowing what we cannot know, and having power we do not have, God leads us into what we would never choose – *all to save our lives*
- *We repent of our efforts, and we trust Him to do what we absolutely cannot do*

4. Kingdom Centered Prayer: (10 min)

YOU CAN PRAY WITH US...

1. Worship the LORD for His grace to save us as His people! Praise Him, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, that He is loving, wise and all-powerful in His work on our behalf.
2. How have you lived self-reliant, as if God cannot be trusted? Confess your pride and unbelief to Jesus, asking Him to forgive you and secure you in *His* power to save *vs. your impotence before your guilt and deadness*.
3. Give thanks to Jesus for His unrivaled work to come to our rescue, standing between us and what would destroy us. Thank Him that in His holiness, that He would fight for us by His love, wisdom and power.
4. Who do you know that questions Jesus' relevance? Pray for them, asking the Lord to convince them of just how overwhelmed they should be because of their guilt and spiritual deadness.
5. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you to quit seeking to define yourself by your own efforts, and to trust Jesus' work on your behalf. Pray that the Spirit would bear in your heart His fruit of love, joy and peace.

5. Mission: We are on Mission. Christ's Mission. (10 min)

It is not our mission that we ask Him to help us with It is His mission that He directs and empowers. So it is now our mission because we are His and all that is His is now ours. Read the following poem. Lay down YOUR doings and join Him in His Doings. We have a rule in our house: preparing for the party has to be just as fun as the party itself. We wanted no grumpy, guilty party planners or preparers.

When Jesus, from His lofty throne, stooped to do and die
Everything was fully done / Hearken to His cry
Till to Jesus' work you cling by a simple faith,
"Doing" is a deadly thing – doing ends in death
Cast your deadly "doings" down / Down at Jesus' feet
Stand in Him, in Him alone, gloriously complete

- Think of your chores this week. List some of them.
- How can you lay down your doings in your strength and tap into His power, greatness and humility?
- How can you do them in the energy of God making sure there is joy in your heart and that he gets all the glory?

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?