

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.

1. Launchers: Questions to “launch” us to discover ourselves and others

- When was a time that you had a plan worked out, a great and sure plan, and it completely failed?
 - Example: 10-year-old Brown getting tackled by his kid sister 18 months his junior and at a Bucs tailgate pre-game party?
 - Example: TimO, 10 years old dreaming of becoming a college basketball player, consumed with the physical disciplines my body required yet overlooking the character and godly disciplines equally essential to sustaining my soul at that same level of temptation resulting in complete failure.

2. Worship: How precious is your steadfast love, O God!

2 passages from our worship service jump out at me for us to use as our worship together. Psalm 36:7- 12 finding God wonderful and crying out to Him to save us from evil doers. Then Romans 5:1-6 that celebrates the work of God in saving us and explains the slow patient process of God who grows us in His likeness by using suffering to pour His love into our hearts through Holy Spirit. Enjoy both together by repenting and delighting, praising and worshiping, exalting and exulting.

Psalm 36:7–12 (ESV)

- 7 How precious is your steadfast love, O God!
The children of mankind take refuge in the shadow of your wings.
- 8 They feast on the abundance of your house,
and you give them drink from the river of your delights.
- 9 For with you is the fountain of life;
in your light do we see light.
- 10 Oh, continue your steadfast love to those who know you,
and your righteousness to the upright of heart!
- 11 Let not the foot of arrogance come upon me,
nor the hand of the wicked drive me away.
- 12 There the evildoers lie fallen;
they are thrust down, unable to rise.

Romans 5:1–6 (ESV)

5 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

²Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. ³Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, ⁴and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, ⁵and hope does not put us to shame, because God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

⁶For while we were still weak, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly.

3. Sermon Reflection:

Resistance –

- Where are you resisting receiving God’s love?
- Where are you resisting the conviction of Holy Spirit?
- What areas of your life are you turning to self or others rather than God and crying out to Him?
- Where have you given up on God to satisfy and are happy settling with what you can get from the stuff God has made?

Repentance – Realizing, Returning, Rejoicing

- What practice or way of thinking is Holy Spirit asking you to turn from?
- How are you enslaved to your self-importance and self-reliance?
- How is that enslavement death to your joy?
- How is repentance freedom and beauty?
- Confident flesh repentance brings self-reliance and more doings. How does Holy Spirit repentance become worship?

Rest – Relaxing in the present evil and your struggles knowing God is bringing it all to good and blessing.

- How is God's sovereign rule the great calm to your nerves?
- Jesus naps on a boat in a storm while the others were fearful for their lives. Who does Jesus know and love that gives Him that kind of quiet calm?
- A busy life but not a busy heart – Spend time rejoicing in the wonder of the life God has given you and the glory He is gaining from your cries to Him.

4. Kingdom Centered Prayer: Worship Folder

1. Worship the LORD for His waiting and patience. Praise Him, that he exalts Himself to show you mercy and grace upon grace. Honor and list the ways he has been patient with you throughout your life.
2. Confess your resistance to the goodness of God. Repent of your stubbornness, foolishness, self-will to your own wants and your own ways and how that has led to death.
3. Give thanks to the work of Jesus. In his patience and grace, he died for us, his enemies, so that one day we would look and behold Him as our sovereign and reigning King. Thank Him that only through union with Him are we brought to peace and joy.
4. Who do you know that is resisting God as their judge, lawgiver, King, and savior? Pray for them and that God would continue to destroy their idols so that they would one day have eyes of faith.
5. Ask the Holy Spirit to work in your heart to build in joyful submission. Beg Him to bring you to the conclusion that you need Him in all areas of your life all the time.

5. Mission: Beautiful Basics – The Word, Prayer and Community

Community Groups are kicking off our Sept 2021 through May 2022 ministry season and what a great call from Brown to get back to “The Beautiful Basics of The Word, Prayer and Community”.’

- Reflect on last week and list how God used The Word, Prayer, and Community to transform your heart and fuel your mission.
- Think about the week ahead. How and when do you have planned times in The Word, Prayer and Community to encourage and build you up for the work God has planned for you.

6. Jesus From Others

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?