

COMMUNITIES/SMALL GROUPS

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

MARCH 8, 2020

Welcome to another Sunday set aside to allow Communities and or small groups to meet. The remaining dates, in this season, set aside for Communities or small groups to meet are: today; March 22; April 5, 19 and May 3.

There are a number of different approaches that you can take whether you meet in a small group or as a Community joining together for a meal or some other event. Below you will find some suggestions as to what to talk about or what sorts of exercises you can do. If needed, please refer to the material prepared for September 22, 2019 for other suggestions as to how you might want to begin your time together. (ccrc.on.ca/communities) If you are a leader take the time to go through the options and pick which ones you deem appropriate for the setting you find yourself in.

- I. **Beginning Your Time Together:** Do a circle check-in. What has been happening in the lives of those in the room? What news items struck them these past couple of weeks? What are people busy with? What are people worried about? Where have people seen God at work?
- II. **A question or matter to think about when you meet as a Community or Small Group.** Is your **elder** or **deacon** one of those office bearers – “responsibility bearers”- who is coming to the end of his or her term? Talk about that together and begin to think about who could become the new elder or deacon in your Community. Who has the gifts of leadership? Who would you (as a group) nominate for office? Spend some time in prayer over this matter. Please submit any names to the Nominations Committee (Henry VanderHoef, chair).
- III. **Are there some things you can do when you gather for a meal together besides just eating? Maybe an exercise between the main course and the dessert? Previous guides have some suggestions. Here are some new questions or matters for general discussion:**
 - a. **CCRC** is going to experience some **major transitions** with the retirement of Pastor Carel and the acceptance of a call to Rosewood CRC in Bellflower, California by Pastor John. Pastor Carel is preaching farewell on May 31 and Pastor John is preaching farewell on June 21. The Administrative Council is working hard on job descriptions and a search team to seek to fill the vacancies created by the departing pastors. What are people thinking about all of this change and upheaval? Share your thoughts with each other. Pray together about the upcoming transition.
 - b. It would be an understatement to say that the **Coronavirus** has made an impact on the world, and now even moved into Waterloo Region. What impact is it making on the lives of those in the room? What are people thinking and saying about the Coronavirus? Is there something that we should be doing or thinking about as a congregation? (Please pass along any thoughts or suggestions to the elder or deacon in your Community.) Pray together for those affected, for those on the front lines, and for our leaders who are called upon to make decisions about how to keep the population well.

IV. Discussion Guide (for those desiring to talk about the sermon series)

While the sermons provide some back ground information and help to inform the conversation, one does not necessarily have to listen to the sermons in order to participate in the small groups.

(Note: sermons can be accessed online at ccrc.on.ca/sermons)

1. Today is the second Sunday in Lent. What do you know about Lent? What is it all about?
2. Some people give up something for Lent. What about those in the room? What are they giving up? Why? What is the purpose of giving something up for Lent?
3. **Scripture Reading:** Matthew 3:13-4:11 – What struck you about this passage?
4. Describe the 3 temptations of Jesus. How are they different from one another? How did Jesus answer each temptation?
5. Who is the Devil that we meet in Matthew 3? Is he for real? *Satan*. What images does that word conjure up for you? An evil creature with horns, a tail, and a pitchfork? A cute kid in a red cape, ringing your doorbell on Halloween?
6. What are some things we know about the devil from Scripture? The Devil's position as captain of the demonic forces is unmistakable. Scripture refers to him as "the evil one" (Matt. 13:19), "the ruler of this world" (John 12:31), "the god of this age" (2 Cor. 4:4), and "the prince of the power of the air" (Eph. 2:2). We witness him spearheading attacks on God's people (Job 1:6; 1 Chron. 21:1; Zech. 3:1), with "power" (Acts 26:18) to "bind" (Luke 13:16) and "oppress" (Acts 10:38). (Some other verses to read might be: Genesis 3:14; Ezekiel 28:13-17; John 8:44; John 10:10). Talk about Satan...Is he still at it? How great is his power?
7. Pastor Amanda talked about the "wilderness" as a place of struggle and conflict, a place of exile and isolation. Have you experienced "wilderness" in your life? What lies did you fall for? How did you make it through? Are you willing to share what that was like?
8. How are we tempted? What is the antidote to temptation?
9. **Scripture Reading:** 1 Corinthians 1:18-31
10. Paul tells the Corinthian Christians: "you think you see the world as it is, you think you see the way the world works - but what you see is a false picture. Let me show you how things really are." What are the two competing perspectives on life as found in this portion of Scripture?
11. Are those same two competing perspectives part of our world as well? If so, how? Where do you see them? Give examples.
12. Pastor Brian Bork asked students, "Are you valued here (at university) for who you are, or are you valued for what you do, what you can accomplish?" How would you answer that question in your context?
13. What does your answer to #11 say about you? What does your answer say about our society? In other words, what are the implications of your answer to #11?
14. Think of the Lord's Supper table. What message does communion send? How might it be different from the prevailing perspectives (see #9, #11)?
15. Paul preaches Christ *crucified*. So what? What are the implications of the crucifixion for us today?

- V. **Prayer:** As you close out your time together, thank the Lord for teaching us what it means to be one of His children and offer a prayer for further understanding and transformation.