

COMMUNITIES/SMALL GROUPS - STARTUP NOTES AND DISCUSSION QUESTION

OCTOBER 6, 2019

Welcome to another Sunday set aside to allow Communities and or small groups to meet (**Note:** We used to call the small groups “Community Care Groups”, but that created some confusion and so they are merely referred to as “small groups”). It is entirely up to each Community what will happen, but it is hoped that opportunities given will be used and that energies will go to fulfill all four purposes of Communities: fellowship, pastoral care, discipleship and mission. Prior to the beginning of Advent there are but 5 designated Sundays left for Communities and small groups to meet, including today (October 6), October 20, November 3, 17 and December 1.

For **October** please look at number III below – “A mindset on missions and a question.”

In **November** the materials for the small groups will be based on the general themes being addressed in the sermons: this fall – prayer, based on The Lord’s Prayer. While the sermons provide some background 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. Without a worked out guide on the theme of prayer at this point, the sermon listening guides can be used as a way to get at the theme. Such guides are found at the Information Centre. Leading a group will take some work and creativity on the part of the group leaders...

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

- I. **Beginning Your Time Together (please refer to the material prepared for September 22, 2019 for suggestions as to how you might want to begin your time together.)**
- II. **Some questions/matters to think about and discuss together as you meet as a Community. (Please refer to the material prepared for September 22, 2019 for the kinds of questions that you perhaps ought to be asking as you involve yourself in your Community. Take a question per meeting time either in your small group or when you gather for a larger Community event. Even if you are eating you can write the question on a paper and put it on the table to allow for discussion.)**
- III. **Discussion Guide: A Mindset on Missions and a question.**

This past season youth went on SERVE, 5 people went to Montreal, a number have gone on Disaster Response Services trips, a group from Community 2 went to visit Manitoulin Island and the ministries of Daystar. The question that arises always is, how do we capture the joy we experience on a mission trip for everyday living? Because on a short mission trip we are kind and loving, flexible, sacrificial and selfless. We pray more. We study God’s word differently. We are constantly aware of the needs of those around us whether they be physical, spiritual or emotional. We are ready to get involved and serve. Why is it so often that such is our approach to a mission trip, but once we get home things are different? So how do we keep it going when we get home?

Think Communities. When we understand that for God His mission is to redeem the world, then as Christians our calling is to join the Lord in that mission. When Jesus walked this earth he engaged with people and established relationships. How did he establish relationships? He started by being hospitable. At the essence mission is as simple as that – being hospitable and inviting people into a relationship and let the Spirit do the rest. The question that the Mission Strategy Team has been asking is not how do we **make** people do mission, rather it is how do we **let** people do mission? Where is God already at work in our neighbourhoods?

We are presently divided into 12 geographic regions and the area around the where the church building is located is about to change rather dramatically as roads will be widened and as apartment buildings and senior's dwellings and stores are in the plans for building. What will the response of CCRC be to those changes? How do we respond to the changes about to come? Where does your imagination take you? Whose responsibility is it to be involved locally when many of us do not live near the church building?

In order to get at an answer to these questions each Community, either as a broader gathering or in small groups is asked to spend some time thinking about and exploring the following question based on our mission statement: *"Growing in relationship with God, each other and our community."*

Key Question: If God were to fulfill our church's mission statement, what would that look like? What indicators would we use to know that our statement is being fulfilled?

What are the indicators of a transformed neighbourhood, city or region? List them. What would a neighbourhood, city or region look like that has been transformed by Jesus Christ and his kingdom values?

Here are some ideas that might give us a sense of what might be possible but these need developments and more specifics:

1. Christians joining forces to seek the spiritual wellbeing of the KW area.
2. Christians working for beautiful cities, pedestrian centered cities, people centered cities, good ecological practices
3. Christians working for a decline in violence against vulnerable populations
4. Christians using their gifts in neighbourhood associations, local politics, affordable housing, peaceful communities.

Note: The idea is that for the next three weeks (September 22, Oct. 6 and 20) the Communities or small groups spend time brain-storming, dreaming, pondering on the question raised and that the answers or thoughts be written down and submitted to the elders to add to the information to be discussed at the November 23 full council meeting which will address the future of CCRC.

IV. Prayer: As you begin a new season take the opportunity to spend some time in prayer about your CCRC Community as well as the geographic area in which you find yourselves. Pray that the Lord would open doors of service not only in the CCRC Community, but also in the broader community around you. People of all ages can be involved in circle prayer after you perhaps spend some time talking about the kinds of matters that can be prayed for. This can be done early in your gathering or at the end of your time together. You will need to plan some time if members of the group are going to be involved in prayer. Waiting until the very end often cuts prayer time short because it encroaches upon eating time or departure time.

“Growing in Relationship with God, each other and our community”

If our church’s mission statement were fulfilled:

What would that look like and how would we know?

Please list your ideas for each of the community purposes	What does fulfilling our mission look like?	By what measures would we know it was fulfilled?
<u>Fellowship:</u> With God, Each Other And Our Community		
<u>Pastoral Care:</u> With God, Each Other And Our Community		
<u>Discipleship:</u> With God, Each Other And Our Community		
<u>Mission:</u> With God, Each Other And Our Community		

Use additional sheets if necessary. Please label them clearly.