

Life Together - Life Groups

Life Groups happen on Sundays from 11:30-12:00 at Christ Covenant Church. Our aim in Life Groups is:
To give Biblical instruction in the context of community
for the formation of healthy gospel centered lives.

We believe Life Groups are necessary for the vision at CCC is to be realized. Our vision is to see:
A movement of the gospel that brings personal conversion and renewal, community formation, and generous lives serving others in words and deeds for cultural renewal.

Participation in Life Groups, using a seminar format, give us an opportunity to love one another in community while we grow together in Christ through biblical instruction. The leader uses a portion of the time for instruction, and the remainder of the time is spent applying the instruction in small group discussion. The biblical instruction, together with the application in discussion together, not only forms a participants thinking but their whole being in relationship with others. In these groups we're not gathering more information, but we're trusting God to build healthy relationships with himself and others for a movement of healthy gospel centered lives.

However, Life Groups not only build community within the church for life together, they will equip us for ministry together. Life Groups are part of an equipping plan for servant leaders at Christ Covenant Church. We want every member of CCC to be effective in applying the gospel to their everyday lives and in their places of influence and relationship. Therefore, participation should always leaving us asking two questions - 'How does this impact my life?' and "How does this impact my relationship with others, inside and outside the church?"

Therefore we encourage your participation in Life Groups. We have two more weeks in September for our Peacemakers seminar. In October Sammy Rhodes will begin a Life Group for young adults (college & early career age). They will be studying, *Love Walked Among Us, Learning to Love Like Jesus*. The other adult Life Group beginning in October will be entitled, *You are What you Love*. We will be learning that who and what we worship fundamentally shape our hearts. We will discover together the formative power of culture and the transformative possibilities of Christian practices. The aim of this Life Group will be to see why the church and worshiping in a local community of believers should be the hub and heart of Christian formation and discipleship. Don't miss out on these opportunities to grow in Life Together.

Property Update

The Session has appointed a small committee (Jamie & Judy Thomason, Emily Bordwine, and Jim Wilkerson), to work together with a construction / design team to develop a short and long term plan for the property at 3100 Covenant Road. This team will be meeting with several companies this week as we trust the Lord together in moving forward. This team is hopeful to have a commitment from a company and a working plan in October. Please continue to pray for this group as they help us take the next steps toward launching Christ Covenant Church at 3100 Covenant Road.

It is helpful for us to consider why property is an important aspect of our vision and mission as a church. The Session is considering the following thoughts as we put together a plan for the future of the church re-plant:

One of the best ways to love and serve our neighbors is by being a physical neighbor to them. Physical church property in communities is an effective way to be good neighbors leading them to find their life in the Triune God and his church. We want to be rooted into the fabric of the neighborhood where we re-plant the church. We want to share the space God provides to us as good stewards for the common good of others in the community. We envision a Columbia home for our congregation to worship together, have life together, mark milestones of weddings and funerals, and invite the peoples of all ages, races, and stratus of the community to

learn about Jesus. But just as importantly, we envision a place for the city—for serving the poor, for welcoming neighbors into events, hosting community events, being home to a school as long as they need a place, and more, so as to physically manifest what it looks like to be a “church not for ourselves.”

The Session encourages CCC to ask God to use this particular church and the stewardship of her property for these purposes.

Becoming a Welcoming Church

It begins with grace. Those who have received grace will give grace. Those who have been welcomed in will show hospitality. Those who were strangers and now are friends will remember loneliness and lead others into friendship. Those who had questions and now have wisdom from God will listen. Those who were hopeless and now have the hope of glory will give hope. This is what it means to become a welcoming church. We at Christ Covenant Church want to be a welcoming church.

In the upcoming weeks you will be invited by your Elders to join a Shepherding Group gathering to fellowship and think together about what it means to be a welcoming church. We hope you will gather with friends that we may see an effort at CCC in becoming a welcoming church.

In the weeks ahead you will notice the words to the front of our order of worship to be slightly altered. They will read,

To all who are weary and need rest;
To all who mourn and long for comfort;
To all who feel worthless and wonder if God even cares;
To all who are weak and fail and desire strength;
To all who sin and need a Savior —
This church opens wide her doors with a welcome from Jesus,
the mighty friend of sinners,
the ally of his enemies,
the defender of the indefensible,
the justifier of those who have no excuses left...

In a culture where people are daily abused by comparisons and criticism, we want people to experience the grace of God and know, it's going to be different. We want people to walk into grace and find hospitality. We want people to face the living God through faith in Christ letting him speak to them. We want them to find grace filled relationships where they find friends who listen and care and pray and worship. Yes, we want to have clean, safe and welcoming facilities. Yes, we want to have a good website, helpful and available information. Yes, we want to have helpful people greeting and welcoming. Yes, we want to have a sincere effort in following up visitors. But all of this will not help us be a truly welcoming church unless we receive and give grace through Jesus Christ to all who worship, live, and do ministry together with us. Please pray for and participate in becoming a welcoming church.

A Final Reflection

“The only way to dispossess the heart of an old affection is by. The expulsive power of a new one...Thus it is not enough...to hold out to the world the mirror of it won imperfections. It is not enough to come forth with a demonstration of the evanescent character of your enjoyments...to speak to the conscience ... of its follies...Rather, try every legitimate method of finding access to your hearts for the love of Him who is greater than the world.” - Thomas Chalmers, The Expulsive Power of a New Affection

*“Thou art my loveliness,
My life, my light,
Beauty alone to me.”
- George Herbert*