

# COMMUNITY CARE GROUP GUIDE

FEBRUARY 11, 2018

**Welcome** to the time set aside for Communities and Community Care Groups! This is the third of 9 Sunday opportunities to meet this winter and spring leading to the final date on May 6. Communities and Community Care Groups are, of course, encouraged not only to meet on the designated dates but to be creative and use any opportunity to fulfill the four purposes of Communities: fellowship, pastoral care, discipleship and mission. These 4 purposes were explored in an exercise now completed by all but 2 Communities. The results and subsequent questions are intended to provide fodder for further Community discussions.

(Community 13 is meeting today whereas Community 4 is meeting on February 25.)

\*\*\*There are **three options** for discussion presented in this material, preceded by some creative “connecting” questions for people to get comfortable with one another. Of course you are also welcome to go back to any material from previous weeks. The material is on the church website under the “Communities” tab. **Note:** At the end of the material you will find two new *suggestions* for possible Community activities. Other suggestions can be found on previous CCG guides.

**Option 1** includes the results of and feedback for the Community Exercise, now sent to Communities 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11 and 14. The pastoral elder and deacon of the Communities mentioned have material in their possession.

**Option 2** is applicable only to some Communities since it involves a discussion about elder/deacon succession, although succession is always an important conversation. The Nomination Committee is looking for nominees this month. Please take some time to talk about who is gifted, able and suited to fill the soon-to-be vacated offices and forward those names to Gwen Hamming (pastoral elder) or Raymond Mostert (deacon).

**Option 3** includes questions about the current sermon series on the Gospel of Mark. Questions cover both the message from February 4 and from today, February 11.

**Leaders** are asked to go through these materials ahead of time and use them to prepare a discussion for the meeting times. Feel free to pick from all the available options.

*(Note: At the moment it is not possible to have the latest sermons online)*

## **Beginning Your Time Together**

Spend some time with one or two of the “connecting exercises” (good for all ages). Here are some suggestions:

- Talk about your week. What did you do and what did you experience?
- Did you notice anything about the area of the city you live that was unusual? What sorts of conversations have you had with your neighbours recently?
- What book have you read lately and why would you or would you not recommend it?
- What movie did you see lately and what do you remember?
- What are the youth or children watching?

- Any sci-fi lovers in the group? Ask them what is it about sci-fi that captures their attention?

**Prayer:** Whichever of the options you choose to discuss as a community, ask God to bless your conversation and grow you as a Community through it.

**Option 1** - If your Community leaders have received feedback on and questions about the Community exercise, you may wish to work through them (one section at a time) over the next number of Community gatherings. Please spend some time talking about the exercise and the questions it raised.

**Prayer:** As you think about your Community, take the opportunity to spend some time in prayer for your Community – the CCRC members and also your neighbours. Pray that the Lord would bind you together as a small “congregation”. Pray that the Lord would open doors of service in the broader community around you. Include people of all ages in your prayer time. Such prayer can be done early in your gathering or at the end of your time together. You will need to plan some time if a number of members of the group are going to be involved in prayer. Waiting until the very end of the meeting often cuts prayer time short because it encroaches upon eating time or departure time.

**Option 2 - Elder/Deacon Nominations:** If you have an elder or deacon who is ending their term of service this June, have a conversation about leadership. What is your community looking for in a leader? Have your elder and deacon talk about their service over their term. What are the joys and challenges of serving in this way? How have they been blessed? How have they grown in their faith? Who is gifted and suited to take over the position this summer? Have your group leader take note of the nominees and pass the information on to your elder or deacon.

**FYI:** The following pastoral elders and deacons are retiring this June:

**Community 2:** Deacon: Craig Hockaday

**Community 8:** Elder: Shannon Cook

**Community 9:** Deacon: Aaron DeRaadt

**Community 13:** Elder: Adom Postma; Deacon: Annette Nusselder

**Community 14:** Elder: Larry Lutgendorff

The following Administrative Elders are also retiring: Ian Berkhuisen, Jerry Postma

The following Youth Elder is retiring: Elaine Adema

**Prayer:** As you think about leadership in your Community, pray that the Lord would provide new elders and deacons. Give thanks for those who are serving and spend some time in prayer for the entire church leadership.

### **Option 3 - Reflections on the Gospel of Mark**

**Scripture Reading:** Ezekiel 34:11-16; Mark 6:30-34 (This was the February 4 service in which the Cadets participated - led by Pastor Amanda)

1. If you have a boy or a counselor involved with the local Cadet Club ask them to share something of what the ministry is all about and ask them to share what Cadets means to them. Perhaps you have Cadet Alumni in your Community Care Group. What do they remember about Cadets and the mark it made on them? Share stories...

2. **Consider: *The Goal of Cadeting:*** Luke 2:52 states that “Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.” The goal of the Calvinist Cadet Corps, based upon that verse, is to help boys to grow spiritually in all areas of life (devotional, mental, physical, and social) by providing Christian men with a uniquely designed structure, program, and materials so that they can mentor boys effectively. (From the Calvinist Cadet Website) Mentoring is an important part of the Cadet program. How could our Communities, perhaps, provide the same sort of opportunities for youth and others?
3. The message was about shepherds and sheep. What images come to mind when you think of shepherds and sheep? Does anyone in the room have any first-hand experience with sheep or with shepherds? If so, ask them to tell the story.
4. What is the connection between the passage from Ezekiel 34 and Mark 6?
5. What is the difference between a bad shepherd and a good shepherd? List them.
6. What does all this talk about shepherds and sheep have to do with us at CCRC?
7. What does this story in Mark tell us about Jesus?
8. Now that we know more about who Jesus is, how does that inform your answer to the question, what is the gospel? If someone were to ask you what the “good news” is that we are called upon to “believe”, what would you say?
9. **Reflect:** Some of you may have joined Pastor Amanda following the service this morning as she addressed the matter of children at the Lord’s Table as adopted by this church back in 2012. If some people in your group attended that presentation, what sorts of questions did it bring up in their minds? Knowing the stance of CCRC on “an age and ability appropriate profession of faith” what will parents in the room do with the information?

**Scripture Reading:** Mark 8:27-9:13 (February 11 sermon – Pastor John preaching)

1. If you have children from grade 4, 5, or 6 in your group ask them what they talked about in their sermon discussion this week. What sorts of topics and questions were raised? What do they understand by “transfiguration”?
2. There are a number of stories in this section of Scripture: Peter’s Confession of Christ, Jesus predicting his death, the teaching on the “Way of the Cross”, and the transfiguration. What is striking about these stories? What do they say about the cost of discipleship?
3. **Bible Study - compare:** Mark 9:2-7; Luke 9:28-36; Matt 17:1-8; 2 Peter 1:17-18. What are some of the differences between all of these retellings of the Transfiguration? What are the similarities?
4. In the story of the transfiguration we meet Moses and Elijah. What is the significance of these two names? What do you know about either men?
5. In the Transfiguration, Jesus is revealed in glory. Why do you think Jesus reveals himself in this way to Peter, James, and John? Do you have “transfiguration stories” in your life (moments when God revealed himself in a special way)? What was God doing in your life at the time?
6. Moses and Elijah appear with Jesus on the mountain, representing the Law and the Prophets (the two major sections of the Old Testament). What value do you find in the Old Testament? How has reading and meditating on the Old Testament helped you grow in faith?
7. The Transfiguration marks a major turning point in the Gospel of Mark. Jesus moves from his ministry of power in Galilee to his ministry of suffering in Jerusalem. Think about major turning points in your own life. When did you realize that things had changed? Was there a major moment like the transfiguration?
8. As Jesus moves from Galilee to Jerusalem, we move from Epiphany to Lent. Our focus in worship will shift from Jesus’ power to Jesus’ suffering. What does the Bible have to say about suffering

in our lives? Think about a time when you experienced suffering (maybe it's something you're going through right now). How did your faith help you make sense of the suffering in your own life? What comfort did it bring you to know that the Son of God also suffered in his life?

9. What does this section of the Gospel of Mark tell us about Jesus?
10. Now that we know more about who Jesus is, how does that inform your answer to the question, what is the gospel? If someone were to ask you what the "good news" is that we are called upon to "believe", what would you say?

**Prayer:** For your closing prayer time, it's always a good idea to go around the circle and let everyone who is willing share what is on their hearts. Be sure to include children as well. Let everyone who wants to pray have a chance to pray. If you want, you may close your time together by singing a song or reciting the Lord's Prayer together.

### **New "Community" Activity/Service Suggestions:**

1. This past week the Waterloo Record had an opinion piece entitled: "Give churches a new mission". You can find the article here: <https://www.therecord.com/opinion-story/8120971-give-churches-a-new-mission/?s=e> The coming of the ION to the Waterloo Region has done much to increase the number of developments along the line, but it is having a negative effect on low-income and cost effective housing. What is or ought to be the response of the church to such matters? Perhaps there is something that your Community can do to affect change in the whole matter of ensuring that housing is available for people of all income levels. Now is the time for the church to speak and to advocate on behalf of those who need housing.
2. On Wednesday January 25, Rev. Dr. Darren Roorda signed an [interfaith statement](https://network.crcna.org/ministry-canada/crc-canadian-ministries-director-signs-statement-canada-summer-jobs-program) regarding the new controversial requirements of the Canada Summer Jobs Program grant. The statement calls on Prime Minister Trudeau and the Government of Canada to amend the Canada Summer Jobs guidelines and application process so that it does not compel agreement or belief, and allows religious organizations to stay true to their communal identity and beliefs. <https://network.crcna.org/ministry-canada/crc-canadian-ministries-director-signs-statement-canada-summer-jobs-program> While the deadline for the Canada Summer Jobs grant has already passed, nonetheless, from time to time we are faced with such government decisions and positions. Are there perhaps ways in which your Community can study, explore and then find a way to respond to such matters, when applicable? In other words, is this perhaps the type of project or issue that might become a Community matter calling people to action and involvement?

**Note** - For other suggestions see: Community Care Group Guide: January 28, 2018