

Cross Roads Community Groups

We hear about and celebrate God during Sunday morning worship while seated in *rows*. But we meet a much more personal version of God in the *circles* of small groups. God changes from a nice-to-have into a need-to-have—as small group members get involved in one another's lives.

At Cross Roads, we've noticed five things that seem to be a common thread in most people's story of faith:

- **Practical Teaching** (exposure to the Bible and relevant preaching)
- **Providential Relationships** (people who seem placed in our path by God)
- **Private Disciplines** (daily routines like prayer and quiet time)
- **Personal Ministry** (serving others)
- **Pivotal Circumstances** (major life events — good or bad)

Looking at this list reveals why small groups are so necessary; all of the things God uses to grow our faith are experienced or encouraged in the context of a small group. *God uses other people to grow us. And he uses us to grow other people.*

The stimulating discussions, laughter, and heart-felt prayer for each other during scheduled meetings are just one part of how this miracle happens. It is also what occurs between meetings as we walk with each other through life's unscheduled ups and downs.

Five habits characterize small groups that God can use to transform us into disciples of Jesus:

Care - Encouraging and believing in the good in each other.

Safety - An environment that convinces us we can come as we are

Authenticity - Members who regularly accept the risk of being vulnerable

Growth - Urging each other to confess and repent of sin, step out in obedience, and use our gifts

Help - Rolling up our sleeves and offering practical help, as well as accepting it

We know small groups are a critical component of building the community God desires Cross Roads to be. Wouldn't you like more community in your life? If so, turn the page to learn more!

What do Community Groups look like at Cross Roads?

Our groups are usually made up of between 8 and 12 members. We offer groups that include

- Men only
- Women only
- Both men and women that can include singles, one spouse, and/or married couples

Group Leadership

Each group is led by a Community Group leader or leadership couple who is responsible for providing their group with vision, direction and support. Our group leaders are encouraged and trained to be personally growing in their:

- intimacy with God
- connectedness with group members
- influence in the community

Group Schedule

Generally, groups meet two to three times per month in the home of a group member or leader. Meetings usually are 90 to 120 minutes in length, with time for socializing, study, and prayer. Most of our Community Groups spend the first 4 to 5 meetings going through a curriculum like Community: Starting Well in Your Small Group. This “trial period” allows members to ease into their commitment and begin getting to know each other.

Group Life Cycle

After completing their introductory study, members hopefully commit to continue as a group for 18- to 24-months. We have found that groups gain the most momentum when members have the chance to really get to know one other; therefore, our groups usually do not add new members during their two years together.

Rather, we encourage a model of multiplication; after two years, groups are encouraged to divide into two or three new groups, with each adding new members. One of the critical aspects of this model is that we urge every group leader to identify at least one apprentice with whom they will intentionally share the responsibility of leadership, endeavoring through this experience to replace themselves.

If you are ready to Show Up, Join In, and Be Real as part of a Cross Roads Community Group, as either a member or a leader, please contact Doug Shirk at (717) 342-8079 or via email at alsdes@aol.com.