

encounterchurch

Circles and Rows Part 2 - “The Case for Community”

Pastor Reece Bowling

“Christianity is not a purely intellectual, internal faith. It can only be lived in community.” **Phillip Yancey**

Things Jesus and the apostles told us to do together

- Love one another
- Encourage one another
- Teach one another
- Be kind, tenderhearted and forgiving of each other
- Pray for one another
- Honor one another
- Serve one another
- Help each other with our challenges
- Confess our sins one to another

Community is, was, and always will be part of God’s design for the church.

Acts 2:46-47 They worshiped together at the Temple each day, met in homes for the Lord’s Supper, and shared their meals with great joy and generosity— all the while praising God and enjoying the goodwill of all the people. And each day the Lord added to their fellowship those who were being saved.

At the Temple, we worship together. In homes, we share life together. Worship services are platforms for divine encounters. Small groups are the platform for something powerful as well: authentic community.

What does community look like?

Why are small groups important?

“You can’t build community by way of programming, but you can use a program to create a pathway through which community can happen.” **Ed Stetzer**

Why everyone?

“I find that a lot of Christian discipleship deals with what you need to know, not who you need to be with. That is sad, because if we get the relationships right, the information will follow. If we connect people in real gospel community, they will learn. But the opposite is not always true.” **Ed Stetzer**

Why now?

“Community matters enough to be prioritized. It needs to be more than an afterthought but needs to be part of our focus.” **Ed Stetzer**

What will they look like?

“We must be ready to allow ourselves to be interrupted by God. God will be constantly crossing our paths and canceling our plans by sending us people with claims and petitions.” **Dietrich Bonhoeffer**

“The more genuine and the deeper our community becomes, the more will everything else between us recede, the more clearly and purely will Jesus Christ and his work become the one and only thing that is vital between us.”

Dietrich Bonhoeffer