

# TCC Community Guide

"Life Together" PART 1, for the week of September 26, 2022

Topic: The call to and practice of Community

*Before working through this Guide, ensure everyone has listened to the teachings from September 11, 18, and 25.*

*As your group transitions into a time of being present to God and one another, allow space for transition through quiet and reading of Scripture. Have everyone take a prayerful posture, read the passage provided, allow for 30-60s of silence, and commit the time together to the Lord in prayer. Tonight's reflective reading: Psalm 1*

## Content Overview:

*Read aloud together, Acts 2:42-47*

This passage portrays a beautiful picture of the early church in community. Over the past few Sundays, Pastor Adam has been teaching the following ideas about community:

- God created us with the need to be in community (Genesis 2:18)
- When Jesus calls us to follow Him, He is implicitly calling us to participate in a community of His design
- Individualism, idealism, and intimidation present significant barriers to practicing community.
- We share a common identity with other Christians. We are family (chosen race), God's representatives (priests), living distinct from the world (holy nation), and Christ's bride (a people for his own possession) (1 Peter 2:9,10)
- Community is a context in which we may experience profound growth. As we choose to commit ourselves to a community of faith, we expose ourselves to a context where we can be kept accountable for our journey toward Christ-likeness, and we grow.
- Galatians 6:1-2 provides instruction about keeping one another accountable to the way of Jesus using the metaphor of burden bearing. As we bear one another's burdens, we do so with a desire for restoration, a posture of gentleness, mutual submission and approaching it as if the one you were helping was you.

## Discussion Questions:

1. What has resonated with you most from these messages and Acts 2:42-47?
2. Of the barriers to community (individualism, idealism, and intimidation), which do you sense in yourself the most?
3. Have you ever considered community as a practice, and how might this change how you approach it?
4. In what ways do you see the Acts 2 picture of community embodying the identity statements of 1 Peter 2:9,10?
5. How have you experienced accountability in the context of a community? What have you experienced as barriers to experiencing the accountability made available by community?

**End in Prayer:** Invite the group to additional sharing. What are people celebrating these days, what would they like prayer for? If this is your first meeting, ask what their prayer is for the group in the months ahead. Take time to hear prayer requests or testimonies of praise from the group. Give all of these back to the Lord in prayer. Also ensure you pray out of the scripture and discussion from the time together.



# TCC Community Guide

"Life Together" PART 2, for the week of October 2, 2022

Topic: A Community of Generations.

*Before working through this Guide, ensure everyone has listened to the teachings from October 2, 2022.*

*As your group transitions into a time of being present to God and one another, allow space for transition through quiet and reading of Scripture. Have everyone take a prayerful posture, read the passage provided, allow for 30-60s of silence, and commit the time together to the Lord in prayer. Tonight's reflective reading: Psalm 145*

## Content Overview:

*Read aloud together, Matthew 18:1-6, and Matthew 19:13-15*

These passages give us a glimpse into Jesus' heart for children as well as the heart he longs for his disciples to have towards children. As Jenna taught on these, she highlighted the following:

- Childhood is not irrelevant or simply something to "get through" in order to reach maturity. Rather, it is an extended season ordained by God and should be valued. Childhood is both intentional and necessary part of our discipleship process
- Jenna described, what she called, "separate space solutions" as a good and necessary aspect of our church structures but cautioned about how they can subtly deform our understanding of discipleship.
- Jesus teaches us that children are the example of the humility that the Kingdom of Heaven requires and that children are not only acceptable in our community, but that they have status in the Kingdom. This idea would have been shocking to the culture of Jesus' day as children were without status or power and were on the margins of social and religious life.
- Paul's mentorship to Timothy (1Tim4) sets the example that age is not the qualifier for ministry engagement. Paul believed and affirmed Timothy's gifts, and his leadership ability despite his age. Our mission as the church is still before us and the youth and the children of our church will be the ones who will carry on the work.
- As we interact across generations we need celebrate one another, and be willing to be vulnerable with one another: "Care more about being interested than being interesting".

## Discussion Questions:

1. What resonated with you from the scripture and message?
2. When you were a child, what did you say you wanted to be when you grew up? Did you spend seasons of your life wishing you were older?
3. In what ways do you think the "separate space solutions" have devolved our understanding of discipleship?
4. Jesus' teaching on how children have status in His kingdom would have been shocking to His hearers who rejected the idea of children being able to participate in religious life, in what ways have you witnessed our culture or church like Jesus' 1st century audience?
5. Who have been mentors in your life that encouraged you? What was it about their presence in your life that was meaningful?
6. In what ways do you, or could you be more intentional about engaging across generations within our church community?

**End in Prayer:** Invite the group to additional sharing. What are people celebrating these days, what would they like prayer for? If this is your first meeting, ask what their prayer is for the group in the months ahead. Take time to hear prayer requests or testimonies of praise from the group. Give all of these back to the Lord in prayer. Also ensure you pray out of the scripture and discussion from the time together.



# TCC Community Guide

"Life Together" PART 3, for the week of October 9, 2022

Topic: A Community of Vulnerability.

*Before working through this Guide, ensure everyone has listened to the teaching from October 8, 2022.*

*As your group transitions into a time of being present to God and one another, allow space for transition through quiet and reading of Scripture. Have everyone take a prayerful posture, read the passage provided, allow for 30-60s of silence, and commit the time together to the Lord in prayer. Tonight's reflective reading: Ephesians 1:3-14*

## Content Overview:

*Read aloud together, Matthew 18:15-20, and 2 Timothy 3:10-17*

These passages give us a glimpse into relational dynamics. Matthew 18 speaks to the process that should be engaged in when someone is offended, and 2 Timothy 3 gives us a glimpse into the vulnerability between Paul and Timothy. Pastor Quinn spoke on the importance of being vulnerable in the context of our Christian community and highlighted the following:

- To be vulnerable is to be actively a part of a community in which you share your life with others
- Vulnerability is something that we need to honour and protect
- Jesus teaches in Matthew 18:15-17 that we must move towards reconciliation in relationships when one has been offended.
- Quinn highlighted the relationship between Paul and Timothy as an example of vulnerability. Paul had so shared his life with Timothy that he was able to say that Timothy knew all about him, 2 Timothy 3:10-17
- To foster vulnerability in relationships, we need to be intentional and give the time required to build into and encourage one another. Quinn pointed to the table as a place where vulnerability can begin to take place and encouraged us to consider how we can more intentionally enter into meaningful relationships with one another.

## Discussion Questions:

1. What resonated with you from the scripture and message?
2. How do you process Matthew 18:15-17? How is Jesus' message of correcting and reconciling contrasted to other methods you've heard or seen in dealing with offences in relationships?
3. What do you think of Paul's model of vulnerability to Timothy and his expression of "You know all about my..." is there someone in your life, other than a spouse, whom you could say knows all about you in similar ways?
4. Quinn shared the following quote from Andy Crouch: "The vulnerability that leads to flourishing requires risk, which is the possibility of loss—the chance that when we act, we will lose something we value. Risk, like life, is always about probabilities, never about certainties. To risk is to open ourselves up to the chance that something will go wrong, that something will be taken from us—without knowing for sure whether that loss will come to pass or not." What stands out to you from this quote?
5. Share a story of a time when vulnerability took place around a table or during an extended time together. What were some of the fruit of those experiences, good or bad?
6. What do these reflections on vulnerability mean for this group? (Those you're reading this community guide with)

**End in Prayer:** Invite the group to additional sharing. What are people celebrating these days? What would they like prayer for? Take time to hear prayer requests or testimonies of praise from the group. Give all of these back to the Lord in prayer. Also, ensure you pray out of the scripture and discussion from the time together.



# TCC Community Guide

"Life Together" PART 4, for the week of October 16, 2022

Topic: A Community of Forgiveness.

*Before working through this Guide, ensure everyone has listened to the teaching from October 16, 2022.*

*As your group transitions into a time of being present to God and one another, allow space for transition through quiet and reading of Scripture. Have everyone take a prayerful posture, read the passage provided, allow for 30-60s of silence, and commit the time together to the Lord in prayer. Tonight's reflective reading: Psalm 103:1-12*

## Content Overview:

*Read aloud together, Matthew 18:21-35*

Chapter 18, in the Gospel of Matthew, addresses several themes surrounding relational dynamics; the final theme is that of forgiveness. Jesus teaches that we have been forgiven an incalculable debt, that we, too must forgive, and that a refusal to forgive directly affects our relationship to God. Jesus calls us to be like our Father God, who forgives "from the heart." Pastor Adam expanded on the importance of forgiveness, teaching the following:

- Forgiveness is not forgetting, a feeling, saying something is not a sin, or an act that is one and done.
- Forgiveness is surrendering to the justice and mercy of God. He shared this quote from Bethany Allen, "*Forgiveness is the space where we declare by faith that God knows better, and in fact, not only that he knows better, but that he knows best. If we allow God to handle justice in a way that we never could, we will experience freedom and life in ways we never could.*"
- Forgiveness is a practice and an act of obedience. We must choose to forgive, even when it is not our preference.
- Forgiveness is an avenue to healing.
- We rightly practice forgiveness in the context of community
- We rightly ask the Holy Spirit to reveal who we need to forgive and recognize that this will involve forgiving people for incidents from our past and present.

## Discussion Questions:

1. What resonated with you from the scripture and message?
2. How do you process Matthew 18:15-17? How is Jesus' message of forgiveness and reconciling contrasted to other methods you've heard or seen in dealing with offences in relationships?
3. Do you have any hesitations about offering forgiveness to others? What would it take to move beyond those and engage in this practice?
4. How have you experienced forgiveness in your life? Share a story of a time forgiveness made a difference in your life.
5. In what ways does unforgiveness affect our relationship with God? How may the practice of forgiveness help us deepen our relationship with our heavenly father?
6. As a group, read the "Forgiveness Prayer" template. Would you add anything to these? What resonates with you from them? Will you commit to taking time to engage in the practice of forgiveness this next week?

**End in Prayer:** Invite the group to additional sharing. What are people celebrating these days? What would they like prayer for? Take time to hear prayer requests or testimonies of praise from the group. Give all of these back to the Lord in prayer. Also, ensure you pray out of the scripture and discussion from the time together.



# Forgiveness Prayer Template

Forgiveness is a practice commanded by Jesus. He taught us that we are to forgive as we have been forgiven (Matt.6 & 18). As we forgive, we not only act in obedience to Jesus, but we begin to move towards personal healing, healing in our relationships, as well as bring right order to our relationship with God. We should then be actively working to forgive any time we feel offence or hurt from others, be this offence or hurt from present day situations, or offence and hurt from our pasts.

Below is a suggested framework for you to use to use as you seek to forgive others. In addition, there is a prayer of repentance to pray as we consider the ways unforgiveness has led to our own sinful behaviour. Use these in a personal time of quiet, or in the company of some close friends.

*Before you begin, take time in quiet. Still your heart before the Lord and allow yourself to become more aware of the Holy Spirit's presence with you. Allow yourself to remember your hurt, and the one who has offended/hurt you, and then pray the following:*

**Forgiving others:** Father, thank-You for Your promise to forgive me my sins as I forgive those who have sinned against me (Matt. 6:12). Lord Jesus, thank-You for dying that I might be forgiven (2 Cor. 5:21).

Father, I choose to forgive (name the person) for (say what they did or failed to do...) and the consequences this has had over my life. When that happened I felt: (speak out how you felt). I choose to release (name the person) into the freedom of my forgiveness and from my judgment, releasing him (or her) from my judgement and demands and putting him (or her) into Your Just and Merciful hands.

In Jesus' Name. Amen

**Repent of sinful behaviour:** Father, I come to You, through Jesus to confess and repent of: (ungodly reaction to hurt) Thank You God that as I repent my sins are as far as the east is from the west, so far have You removed my transgressions from me. Ps. 103:12/1 John 1:9

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## Passages on forgiveness

*Ephesians 4:32 Be kind to one another, tender hearted forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.*

*Matthew 6:14,15 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.*

*Mark 11:25-26 Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours. And whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone, so that your Father also who is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses.*

*Colossians 3:13 Put on then, as God's chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. And above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony.*

*Proverbs 17:9 Whoever covers an offense seeks love, but he who repeats a matter separates close friends.*

*Ephesians 4:26-27 Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil.*



# TCC Community Guide

"Life Together" PART 5, for the week of October 23, 2022

Topic: A Community of Contribution.

*Before working through this Guide, ensure everyone has listened to the teaching from October 23, 2022.*

*As your group transitions into a time of being present to God and one another, allow space for transition through quiet and reading of Scripture. Have everyone take a prayerful posture, read the passage provided, allow for 30-60s of silence, and commit the time together to the Lord in prayer. Tonight's reflective reading: Matthew 6:25-34*

## Content Overview:

*Read aloud together, 1 Corinthians 12:14-27.*

Chapter 12 of 1 Corinthians uses the metaphor of a body to describe the church. Using this metaphor Paul highlights how each follower of Jesus has a role to play in the successful function of the whole. Paul also teaches on spiritual gifts, highlighting that we've all been given a gift and are to use those gifts to benefit the whole of the body. Pastor Steve expanded on this passage, teaching the following:

- God has given each of us a gift. His gift is a resource to us as we navigate life and seek to flourish in community. The giving of these gifts is evidence of God's love for us.
- We discover our gifts as we serve and allow others to speak into our lives.
- Our God-given gifts are meant to be used to benefit the whole of the community, and everyone of us has a part to play, no matter how "big" or "small" that part may seem.
- We can contribute in our church community by engaging with our spiritual gifts, giving of our finances and other resources (tithing), and serving in areas of need.

## Discussion Questions:

1. What resonated with you from the scripture and message?
2. What is the best gift you've received from another, how were you able to share it with other people?
3. Steve shared the following Fredrick Buechner quote: "Your vocation [area of contribution] in life is where your greatest joy meets the world's greatest need." Where do you find your greatest joys touching on the world's greatest needs?
4. Do you ever get the sense that somebody ought to do something about [*fill in the blank*]? What might keep you from being that somebody?
5. Share a time when you experienced the blessing of serving in the context of community. How have you served in the past, how are you serving presently, how do you hope to serve in the future?

**Group Prayer:** Invite the group to additional sharing. What are people celebrating these days? What would they like prayer for? Take time to hear prayer requests or testimonies of praise from the group. Give all of these back to the Lord in prayer. Also, ensure you pray out of the scripture and discussion from the time together.

**Closing Benediction:** Following the prayer, have someone read this poem by Teresa of Avila, over the group.

*"Christ has no body but yours, No hands, no feet on earth but yours, Yours are the eyes with which he looks Compassion on this world, Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good, Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world. Yours are the hands, yours are the feet, Yours are the eyes, you are his body. Christ has no body now but yours, No hands, no feet on earth but yours, Yours are the eyes with which he looks compassion on this world. Christ has no body now on earth but yours."*



# TCC Community Guide

"Life Together" PART 6, for the week of October 30, 2022

Topic: A Community of Love.

*Before working through this Guide, ensure everyone has listened to the teaching from October 30, 2022.*

*As your group transitions into a time of being present to God and one another, allow space for transition through quiet and reading of Scripture. Have everyone take a prayerful posture, allow for 30-60s of silence, read the passage provided and then commit the time together to the Lord in prayer. Tonight's reflective reading: Romans 8:31-39*

## Content Overview:

*Read aloud together, 1 Corinthians 13.*

Chapter 13 of 1 Corinthians offers a descriptor of Christian love in contrast to practices which seek to promote the self. Paul outlines the characteristics of love and emphasizes that love alone is lasting making it priority in our spiritual pursuits. Pastor Adam expanded on this passage, teaching the following:

- We must align ourselves with Jesus' vision that we would be known above all other traits, for our love
- Defining love can be tricky in our culture. Love is easily caught up in the self, and confused with acceptance or tolerance
- We must receive our definition, and applications of love from the Bible
- Love in the Bible is a feeling of deep affection rooted in commitment and expressed in self-sacrificing service. Adam used Scot McKnight's framework of love being a commitment to be with, for, and unto another.
- It is important to understand that Christian love is directional, we are loved towards Christlikeness by God and should love one another with the same goal
- The love described in 1 Corinthians 13 is exemplified for us by Jesus
- We move towards greater maturity as a community of love as we (1) recognize and receive the love of God, (2) make love the measure of our spiritual maturity, (3) Make Jesus our teacher and exemplar of Love.

## Discussion Questions:

1. What resonated with you from the scripture and message?
2. How do you think a co-worker, class-mate, or someone you ran into at a coffee shop define the word love?
3. What are your greatest obstacles in living out the Biblical definition of love? (Struggle to prioritize a pursuit of love over other pursuits, really not liking someone, unforgiveness, etc.)
4. What is the most striking thing to you about Jesus' exemplified or taught love? How might you live that out in your life?
5. What has been your experience of love within Christian community? What are the biggest obstacles you perceive in TCC living into this vision of maturing as a community of love?

**End in Prayer:** Invite the group to additional sharing. What are people celebrating these days? What would they like prayer for? Take time to hear prayer requests or testimonies of praise from the group. Give all of these back to the Lord in prayer. Also, ensure you pray out of the scripture and discussion from the time together.



# TCC Community Guide

"Life Together" PART 7, for the week of November 6, 2022

Topic: A Community of the Word

*Before working through this Guide, ensure everyone has listened to the teaching from November 6, 2022.*

*As your group transitions into a time of being present to God and one another, allow space for transition through quiet and reading of Scripture. Have everyone take a prayerful posture, allow for 30-60s of silence, read the passage provided and then commit the time together to the Lord in prayer. Tonight's reflective reading: Psalm 19*

## **Content Overview:**

*Read aloud together, 2 Timothy 3:16-4:5*

In this section of scripture, Paul reminds Timothy about the significance of the word of God. He teaches on the profitability of scripture and urges Timothy to preach the word, and to be mindful of how the word will be resisted. Pastor Adam expanded on this in the following ways:

- The Bible is one of the ways God has revealed himself to humanity. It is a gift to us that God did not create and then abandon humanity, but has revealed himself to humanity through his Son and the scriptures.
- Paul's outline of scriptures' profitability follows a progression. The teaching of the word leads to receiving its rebuke, then followed by giving correction produces training in righteousness. Over time all of this leads to our maturity.
- We submit ourselves to the word of God as we seek to align ourselves with God's word. The word is like a level, showing us what may be out of alignment in our own lives. Submission to the word comes as we bring ourselves back into level with the word.
- The word is central to the identity, practices, ministry and mission of the church. The church should be a community where the Bible is clearly taught and willingly learned.
- We will grow in maturity as a community of the word as we orient and subject our lives to the Word, approach the Word as students, and approach the Word trusting it to be true.
- Questions and doubts can help lead us to maturity as we work through their difficulty towards truth.
- We should be mindful of how much competing content we expose ourselves to in relation to the word

## **Discussion Questions:**

1. What resonated with you from the scripture and message?
2. What has your experience of Bible reading been in your life? How has it changed over the years?
3. Can you share an example of a time God's word provided a clear and decisive behaviour or thought change in your life?
4. What challenges do you face in trying to grow in your love for the word?
5. How have you journeyed through doubt in the past? How has community contributed to that journey?

**End in Prayer:** Invite the group to additional sharing. What are people celebrating these days? What would they like prayer for? Take time to hear prayer requests or testimonies of praise from the group. Give all of these back to the Lord in prayer. Also, ensure you pray out of the scripture and discussion from the time together.





# TCC Community Guide

"Life Together" PART 8, for the week of November 13, 2022

Topic: A Community of Faith

*Before working through this Guide, ensure everyone has listened to the teaching from November 6, 2022.*

*As your group transitions into a time of being present to God and one another, allow space for transition through quiet and reading of Scripture. Have everyone take a prayerful posture, allow for 30-60s of silence, read the passage provided and then commit the time together to the Lord in prayer. Tonight's reflective reading: Hebrews 12:1,2*

## Content Overview:

*Choose three readers, and have each read aloud: Mark 6:1-6, Hebrews 11:1-6, and James 2:17-18*

*Each of these passages speak to the importance of faith. Daunavan Buyer expanded on these, making these observations:*

- God's power & His Word invite us to a life of faith that involves believing God for the impossible and radically following Jesus.
- Daunavan highlighted that faith is not about believing enough but about acting according to that belief. This means that faith looks like both taking steps of trust into unknown outcomes as well as daily obedience.
- Daunavan described a life of faith as seeing one's whole life, all relationships, experiences, and decisions through a scriptural lens, and living according to scripture, no matter how challenging.
- Daunavan shared this C.S Lewis quote about faith from Mere Christianity, "Faith, in the sense in which I am here using the word, is the art of holding on to things your reason has once accepted, in spite of your changing moods."
- We live a life of faith through worship, remembering, waiting, posturing ourselves for truth, prayer and maintaining a heart of humility.
- Unbelief is evident when we live as if we know better than God.
- Daunavan used the story of Joseph as an example of radical faith. He highlighted that Joseph's faith was exemplified as he maintained integrity and faithfulness despite changing circumstances.
- Daunavan asked us, "What is your step of faith today?"

## Discussion Questions:

1. What resonated with you from the scripture and message?
2. Daunavan shared his testimony and how it encouraged his faith and spoke to the power of faith in action. Have you had experiences which have inspired your faith? Please share them with the group.
3. Of Daunavan's applications of living faith (the practices of worship, remembering, waiting, posturing ourselves for truth, prayer and seeking to have a heart of humility), which resonated with you most, which are most challenging, and which do you need to work on?
4. In Mark 6, Jesus points to a connection between unbelief and His ability to act. How does this passage resonate with you? In what areas of your life do you struggle with unbelief?
5. What would be a step of faith for you today? What is keeping you from taking it?

**End in Prayer:** Invite the group to additional sharing. What are people celebrating these days? What would they like prayer for? Take time to hear prayer requests or testimonies of praise from the group. Give all of these back to the Lord in prayer. Also, ensure you pray out of the scripture and discussion from the time together.



# TCC Community Guide

"Life Together" PART 9, for the week of November 20, 2022

Topic: A Community of Light

*Before working through this Guide, ensure everyone has listened to the teachings from November 20.*

*As your group transitions into a time of being present to God and one another, allow space for transition through quiet and reading of Scripture. Have everyone take a prayerful posture, read the passage provided, allow for 30-60s of silence, and commit the time together to the Lord in prayer. Tonight's reflective reading: Psalm 43*

## Content Overview:

*Read aloud together, Ephesians 2:19-22*

This passage, among others, communicates that the church, in biblical theology, is the present "temple" of God. Pastor Adam elaborated on this metaphor in the following ways:

- God called the nation of Israel to shine the light and goodness of God to the world (Ex.19). God resourced them with His word (instruction and teaching) as well as His presence in order for them to do this. The Israelites' continual disobedience led to their expulsion from the land and loss of the temple.
- John 1 eludes to Jesus being the "tabernacle." In this, the presence of God was no longer bound to a building, but was rather in a person.
- With the sending of the Holy Spirit, followers of Jesus are now, like Jesus, carriers of the presence of God.
- As the OT temple was a tangible presence of God on earth, so now the Church is a tangible presence of God on earth.
- Individually we carry and represent the light of the presence of God wherever we go. This has relational, ethical (1 Cor. 6:19-20), and missional (John 7) implications.
- As a Church community, we are a light to one another. We embody Christ to one another 1 Cor.12:27.
- As a Church community, we are a light to the world.
- Maturing as a community of light requires we abide with Christ, pay attention to see and hear opportunities to bring help and support to others, identify areas of need in your community and respond to them, and to do good in Jesus' name.

## Discussion Questions:

1. What resonated with you from the scripture and message?
2. How would you put, in your own words, the importance of the church as the temple of God?
3. In what ways does reflecting on how the Holy Spirit abides in you motivate you in your relationship with God, your behaviours, and mission? How may you be a light to others?
4. How have you experienced Christian community as one of light in your own life? How have you witnessed Christian community as one of light outside of the church?
5. What is a need in your school, workplace, or community that you come across regularly? How might you respond to that need?

**End in Prayer:** Invite the group to additional sharing. What are people celebrating these days? What would they like prayer for? Take time to hear prayer requests or testimonies of praise from the group. Give all of these back to the Lord in prayer. Also, ensure you pray out of the scripture and discussion from the time together.



# TCC Community Guide

"Life Together" PART 10, for the week of November 27, 2022

Topic: A Community of Hope (Advent)

*Before working through this Guide, ensure everyone has listened to the teachings from November 27.*

*As your group transitions into a time of being present to God and one another, allow space for transition through quiet and reading of Scripture. Have everyone take a prayerful posture, read the passage provided, allow for 30-60s of silence, and commit the time together to the Lord in prayer. Tonight's reflective reading: Psalm 40:1-12*

## Content Overview:

*Read aloud together, Isaiah 9*

This passage records a prophecy to Judah during a dark time in their history. Knowing of the exile of Israel to Assyria (1K.17), Isaiah also prophesied about the coming exile of Judah. In the midst of all of this, he delivers a word of hope that would be not just for his audience but for all people of all time. Pastor Adam commented on this theme in the following ways:

- Adam defined Hope in the following ways: Hope is the expectation of coming good based on the character and nature of God and that it is living in the reality that God gets the last word. He contrasted Christian hope to the personality traits of optimism and pessimism.
- Adam stressed that we can hope because Jesus has come (as God said he would), we can hope because Jesus did rise again from the dead (as he said he would), we can hope because his Holy Spirit has been at work in communities throughout history (as Jesus said it would), bringing light to darkness—we can hope that he will come again as he said he would.
- Living with the bold hope of the present experience of the Holy Spirit and the coming return of Jesus should be a defining mark of our community.
- Advent invites us to immerse our hearts in hope-filled anticipation of our coming Saviour.
- To be a community of hope, we need to immerse ourselves in the story of God, persevere in times that seem hopeless, and encourage one another to hope.
- Adam shared the following Tim Mackie Quote: "Hoping in God is allowing him the freedom and creativity to fulfil His promises in his way."
- We need to share the hope we have with the world, especially as we consider that, biblically speaking, those who do not know God do not actually have hope. How will they know if they are not told?

## Discussion Questions:

1. What resonated with you from the scripture and message?
2. Would you describe yourself as a pessimist or an optimist? How would defining yourself as a person of hope change your outlook on unfavourable situations?
3. In what ways do you find yourself living out of other stories? How does this lead you away from Christian hope?
4. Share a story of a time hope led you to persevere in difficulty.
5. Who is someone you can share the hope of Jesus with?

**End in Prayer:** Invite the group to additional sharing. What are people celebrating these days? What would they like prayer for? Take time to pray for friends or family who does not know the hope of Jesus. Pray for opportunities for them to hear, boldness to share, and that the Holy Spirit may lead them to Jesus.



# TCC Community Guide

"Life Together" PART 11, for the week of December 4, 2022

Topic: A Community of Peace (Advent)

*Before working through this Guide, ensure everyone has listened to the teaching from December 4.*

*As your group transitions into a time of being present to God and one another, allow space for transition through quiet and reading of Scripture. Have everyone take a prayerful posture, read the passage provided, allow for 30-60s of silence, and commit the time together to the Lord in prayer. Tonight's reflective reading: Numbers 6:22-26*

## Content Overview:

*Read aloud together, John 14:15-31*

During this season of Advent, we reflect on the significance of Jesus having come by reflecting on the themes of hope, peace, joy and love. This past message Pastor Norb taught the following on the theme of peace:

- Norb highlighted that we often define peace as being the absence of war or conflict but that the biblical definition focuses not on absence of something but on the presence of someone.
- Peace, in the Bible, is about something complex becoming complete or whole. Word pictures include the completion of a brick wall, a perfect stone, a person's well-being, or the resolve of a complex issue. To make peace is to bring restoration or completeness.
- Jesus is God's manifestation of peace. He has given us peace by His Spirit (Jn. 14), and has brought peace between us and God by His work on the cross (Ro. 5:1). Relationship, once broken by sin, between humanity and God can now be restored to wholeness.
- We experience peace as we:
  1. Come to Jesus (to experience the peace of God, we must come to the one who manifests that peace)
  2. Are filled with the Holy Spirit (a fruit of the spirit is peace)
  3. Engage in spiritual practices (contrasted to other habits that may rob our peace like spending time on social media)
  4. Protect the Unity of the community (Eph. 4:3, "Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace")
  5. Pursue Peace (seek reconciliation in relationships Ro. 12:18. Peacekeepers are generally passive. Peacemakers are proactive)
  6. Let our light shine (as followers of Jesus we are called to step into broken places and do what we can to bring peace)

## Discussion Questions:

1. What resonated with you from the scripture and message?
2. Having listened to the message, how would you define peace in your own words? How would you illustrate peace in order to explain it to someone else?
3. What do you find typically robs you of peace? (Social media, TV, relational conflict, stress at work, etc.)
4. Share a time you experienced peace being restored (personally, relationships, etc.)
5. In what area of your life do you need to experience the peace of Christ?

**End in Prayer:** Invite the group to additional sharing. What are people celebrating these days? What would they like prayer for? Take time to pray for friends or family who does not know the hope of Jesus.



# TCC Community Guide

"Life Together" PART 12, for the week of December 11, 2022

Topic: A Community of Love Pt.2 (Advent)

*Before working through this Guide, ensure everyone has listened to the teaching from December 11.*

*As your group transitions into a time of being present to God and one another, allow space for transition through quiet and reading of Scripture. Have everyone take a prayerful posture, read the passage provided, allow for 30-60s of silence, and commit the time together to the Lord in prayer. Tonight's reflective reading: Psalm 23*

## Content Overview:

*Read aloud together, 1 John 4:7-21*

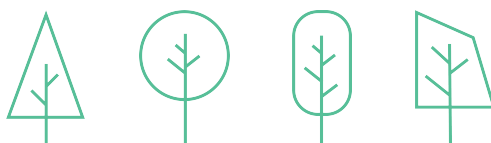
During this season of Advent, we reflect on the significance of Jesus having come by reflecting on the themes of hope, peace, joy and love. This past message, Pastor Norb taught the following on the theme of Love from 1 John 4:

- Norb spoke to the profound truth that God's love "came down" at Christmas through the birth of Jesus. He highlighted a line from Carolyn Arends' song, "Come and See": "Great love of God in the cry of a babe".
- Norb unpacked God's love coming in Jesus by looking at 1 John 4, touching on how God showed His love by sending His only Son and allowing Jesus to die for us. In these, Norb identified that Christmas isn't a stand alone event.
- To answer the question, "How do we mature as a community of Love" Norb invited us to two considerations:
  1. Come and see. This is an invitation to personally experience and receive God's gift of love. This is significant as we recognize that our love for others expresses God's love.
  2. Be Present: Recognize that God's gift was ultimately His presence with us first in the person of Jesus and still now though His Holy Spirit. We extend love to others as we intentionally choose to be present to them.
    - The greatest present we can give another person is your presence
    - Practice hospitality as a way to be present with others. Norb encouraged us to consider those in our lives who find themselves on the margins of social circles and choose to be present to them.
- Norb concluded inviting us to imagine our community, knowing and experiencing the love of God, going out and loving the people in our world. This extension of love is really at the heart of Christmas.

## Discussion Questions:

1. What resonated with you from the scripture and message?
2. How would you answer the question, "How do you know someone loves you?" and in what way do you see that expression of love mirrored in how God has demonstrated His love towards us?
3. Share your testimony of coming to understand the love of God. How do you cultivate an experience of God's love in your life?
4. How does Eugene Peterson's paraphrase of John 1, "The word became flesh and blood, and moved into the neighbourhood," resonate with you? How would you explain its significance to others, and how does it inspire you in spreading the love of Christ to others?
5. Who is someone that you usually wouldn't have in your home? How might you extend God's love to them?

**End in Prayer:** Invite the group to additional sharing. What are people celebrating these days? What would they like prayer for? Take time to pray for friends or family who does not know the hope of Jesus.



# TCC Community Guide

"Life Together" PART 13, for the week of December 18, 2022

Topic: A Community of Joy (Advent)

*Before working through this Guide, ensure everyone has listened to the teaching from December 18.*

*As your group transitions into a time of being present to God and one another, allow space for transition through quiet and reading of Scripture. Have everyone take a prayerful posture, read the passage provided, allow for 30-60s of silence, and commit the time together to the Lord in prayer. Tonight's reflective reading: Psalm 126*

## Content Overview:

*Read aloud together, Luke 2:1-21*

During this season of Advent, we reflect on the significance of Jesus having come by reflecting on the themes of hope, peace, joy and love. This past message, Pastor Adam taught the following on the theme of Joy from Luke 2 and John 15:

- Scripture teaches us that God has joy, and that He has created the conditions in which we experience joy. We rightly experience joy as we delight in what God has given.
- Scripture also teaches that apart from God, our joy is not lasting. When Adam and Eve rebelled against God, they took their delight into their own hands. Delight apart from God is constantly fleeting and never satisfied.
- Scripture tells the story of humanity longing for joy. The Israelites in exile desired to be back in Jerusalem (Psalm 137), Isaiah prophesied that this is what would happen (Isaiah 35:10).
- Scriptures story of joy reaches a climax in Luke 2:10-11 when the Angels announced the birth of Jesus being, "Good news, great (mega) joy."
- Not only did Jesus' birth bring joy, but His life and ministry also brings joy. In John 15, Jesus taught His disciples that our faithfulness to Him is to result in joy.
- Our joy springs up from what God has done and in what we anticipate him to do
- We mature in joy as we receive joy and as we share joy with others.

## Discussion Questions:

1. What resonated with you from the scripture and message?
2. What brings you joy, delight or happiness? What about this is fleeting? What about it do you recognize as rooted in God's good gifts?
3. In what ways do you experience joy in being obedient to Jesus?
4. Do you agree that prayer brings joy? What practices do you engage in to cultivate a deeper joy in Jesus?
5. How might you spread joy in your home, workplace, school or community?

**End in Prayer:** Invite the group to additional sharing. What are people celebrating these days? What would they like prayer for? Take time to pray for friends or family who does not know the hope of Jesus.

