

Covenant Community Training | 21 September 2014

Missional Communities: Up - In - Out

Missional Community: An extended spiritual family of disciples who pattern their lives after the life of Jesus, seeking to love God (UP), love one another (IN) and love those who don't know Jesus (OUT).

We want Missional Communities to be Spiritual Families that:

- Equip people to experience Intimacy with God in group life and in personal life (UP)
- Are committed to their spiritual family not just in the formal group times, but as a way of life (IN)
- Experience growth as others who don't know Jesus come to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ and become disciples themselves (OUT)

Our Model for Missional Communities:

Jesus and his commands:

- UP: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength." Luke 10:27a
- IN: "Love your neighbor as yourself." Luke 20:27b
- OUT: "Go and make disciples of all people groups." Matthew 28:18

The Early Church:

"And they devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. And all who believed were together and had all things in common. And they were selling their possessions and belongings and distributing the proceeds to all, as any had need. And day by day, attending the temple together and breaking bread in their homes, they received their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to their number day by day those who were being saved." Acts 2:42-47

- UP: devoted to the apostle's teaching, breaking of bread, prayer (vs 42) signs and wonders happening (vs 43), praising God (vs 47)
- IN: Devoted to the fellowship (vs 42), every day in the temple courts and homes together (vs 46), whenever there was a need, radical sharing (vs 45)
- OUT: and the Lord added to their number daily, those who were being saved (vs 47)

Monthly Rhythms

Most Community Groups have a once a week meeting that looks pretty similar week to week. We want to foster new kind of culture in the Missional Communities in which they function more like a spiritual family in life and mission together. Families do not just have one type of meeting that they do at one particular time. Families meet and gather and play and eat and do stuff in all different ways in all different places and times. Some of it is scheduled and some of it isn't. The same goes for these MCs. For them to be healthy, there will have to be a balance of both organized and organic activities, both structured and spontaneous times. Therefore **we encourage each MC to establish *monthly rhythm* rather than identical weekly meetings**. We recommend an MC has about 3-4 scheduled meetings a month, but also leave plenty of space for more organic activity to happen. For example, a monthly rhythm might look something like this:

- Week 1: UP emphasis. Meal, Worship together with Bible Study and Discussion.
- Week 2: OUT emphasis. Relational fun, service together, something out in the neighborhood. Involve people of peace.
- Week 3: IN emphasis. Meal, Sharing, Small Group and Large Group Prayer.
- Week 4: No MC meeting, meeting of leaders for training and support.

Because every spiritual family will be different and have a different mission and purpose, there are many factors that are highly contextual for each group, such as:

- when you meet
- where you meet
- with whom you meet
- what you do when you meet

But these contextual factors can be guided by the Up-In-Out rhythm.

UP ideas

- Eat together
- Worship Together with just voices or with simple instruments
- Bible study and discussion
- Corporate prayer
- Having communion together

IN ideas

- Eat together
 - Socializing, having fun, playing
 - Storytelling and testimonies about God's work
 - *Lectio Divina*, each person share what they are hearing.
 - Individuals share about Scripture passages that have spoken to them
 - Small group sharing and prayer
 - Prayer for healing, anxiety, or other needs
 - Strategizing and planning together
-

OUT ideas:

Remember: this is entirely contextual based on how the MC discerns the mission, the people of peace, and who God may be calling you to! Each group will consider and pray how God may be calling you to a particular part of the neighborhood, to a particular network of relationships or to particular people. The "Out" events will very much be determined by that mission.

- Cookout or block party
- Open meal in the home
- Bowling
- Karaoke bar
- Day trip to the mountains or VA beach
- Serve together with CHAT, BSF or one of our local non profits
- Monthly visit to nursing or convalescent home
- Basketball court
- Throw a kick ball, four square or whiffle ball tourney
- Attend a community event together
- First Friday art walk
- Board game night or spades tournament
- Go all out together for teacher appreciation day
- Pool, park or picnic lunches
- Fix up an elderly person's home together
- Set up a "Free Prayer" booth
- Fishing or canoeing on the James

What might the monthly rhythms look like for your Missional Community?

UP	IN	OUT