

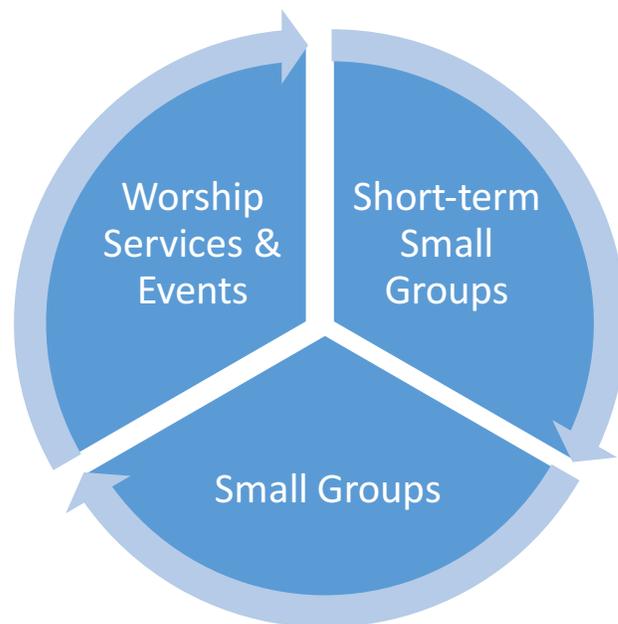
SMALL GROUPS PASTOR REPORT

Embracing a lifestyle where we are known and know others deeply

Community means simply having a meaningful relationship with another person. We were created to relate with one another, to learn together, to have fun, and to walk alongside one another in life. Even more than that, however, a person in thriving community has other people in his/her life where openness, authenticity and vulnerability exists. When we have developed these deep relationships, we enter into the most difficult and intimate aspects of our lives. That kind of community will help us and those around us take steps to know and become like Jesus.

How does LSCC lead and support community?

There is no one way to live in deep relationship with one another. It is not a formula. However, we do believe that a small group is the most common and strategic environment to build community. Here is our strategy:



1. **Worship services & events:** We regularly teach about some aspect of community during our worship services: what brings us closer to community, what drives us away, and how to experience more authentic and significant community. At LSCC,

we host events to experience more of worship, community, or serve. It is our desire that one-time events will lead people closer to finding continuing community within a small group of people meeting regularly together.

2. **Short-term groups and classes:** You may hear us refer to on-ramps. What we mean by an on-ramp is that we create short-term experiences for people to get to know one another. It is getting a taste of what we mean by small group. Many people meet future small group members through these short-term groups and classes.
3. **Small groups:** A small group is a great place to experience community. The reasons are many. Small groups meet regularly and gather for the specific purpose of growing in relationship with God and with others. It is a place where intentionality, openness, authenticity, and vulnerability can develop. Keep in mind, a small group may meet, even for years, yet not experience this level of community. It is up to the group to pursue community and spiritual transformation for themselves and for the group members.

A Look Back: 2016 - 2017

As the current Small Groups Pastor, my journey started at LSCC in January. My wife, Brenda, and two children, Hannah & Gavin, made the 500 mile trip south from Wisconsin. Coming into the ministry year mid-stream was a great time for me. It gave me the opportunity to see small groups in full swing and to learn about the existing structure and meet people (leaders, coaches and advisory team). It's clear to see the work Tim Luke did to build a vibrant culture. During the spring, I've also had the privilege of establishing relationships with the LSCC pastors and staff. We have a church of great people! Here are (some) highlights of the past year.

Small groups: Over 600 people participated in nearly 50 small groups

- a. **Short-term groups:** women's groups, men's groups and co-ed groups met based on a specific study topic or interest.
- b. **Topic-related small groups:** During the year we offered the following topic-related small groups/classes related to the Sunday message series: Financial Peace University, Conquer Series, Love & Respect marriage group, Book of John class.

- c. **On-going groups:** Most of these groups meet in homes throughout our community and spill into neighboring communities. We do have a few on-going groups that meet at the church.

Sunday messages - Practically every message Cory or others delivered over the past year offered next steps to take in our personal relationships with God and with people. Specifically in the spring, Cory led us through a series called *Home: Where Stories Are Made*, in which we considered many dynamics in family relationships.

LSCC Care Ministry - Served our church family in a variety of ways: pastoral counseling, hospital visits, funerals and grief ministry, care for the terminally ill, elderly and inmates. We also served White Ridge Nursing Home and hosted Evergreens serving our senior adults each month. We've assisted many families in financial crisis through our Care Fund and continue to pray for needs in the LSCC family. LSCC Care Ministry is led by Jack Anderson, Care Pastor.

Community for LSCC Kids and LSCC Students – Our Family Team has been praying, planning, and implementing strategies to build community into the lives of our kids and students. Check out their section to learn more about how community developed with these younger generations.

A Look Ahead – 2017-2018

Fall emphasis: 'Taking Steps Together'. How does a step turn into a behavior, an attitude or a belief? During the fall, the small group leadership team will be discussing this topic with our small group leaders. Following is a look at the upcoming small groups calendar.

Small Groups Plan

Connect U: Fall - September 10 & 17 Spring - January 14 & 21

Connect U is the best time to join a small group. Men, women, couples, and mixed groups will be available. Check the website for both short-term and on-going small groups.

Small Group Leader gatherings:

1. Leader Kickoff: Was held Aug. 14 & 15, 2017
2. Fall Semester Leader Nights: Monday, September 25 & Sunday
3. Spring Kickoff Leader Nights: Mid-December, 2017
4. Spring Semester Leader Nights: January, April, 2018 (Dates TBD)

5. Leader Appreciation Night: May, 2018 (Date TBD)

Short-term small groups:

Here is a sample of a few groups offered this fall. To sign up for these groups or for a full listing, check www.lscckc.org. Click 'Groups' under the 'Community' tab.

1. Followers Made – men's & women's groups starting mid to late September, 2017
2. Financial Peace University – Wednesday Nights starting Sept. 20, 2017
3. Invitation to a Journey – early morning men's group starting Sept. 19, 2017
4. Young Couples' Group – The Stouts are hosting a short-term group for adults in their 20s to develop community and grow in their faith. Contact Cory Stout to join, cory.stout@lscckc.org
5. Rescue Academy – see next section; Wednesday nights starting Sept. 13, 2017

Developing Care Ministry:

In addition to ongoing ministries, Jack Anderson, LSCC Care Pastor, will facilitate a course called 'Rescue Academy' meeting on Wednesdays. Group members will learn how to best help others facing a crisis or life issues that hold them back. In November, we'll offer a short-term Grief Class for those living with grief and the loss of a loved one. Next spring, we'll be offering further training on how to care for wounded people. Jack will also be working with current LSCC Small Group leaders to help provide care to our family.

The Next Generation:

As a staff, we are discussing and planning ways to reach those 18-30 years old inviting them to participate and to even influence our planning so we can be a church that appeal to their peers.

As we seek to take intentional steps in these and other areas, God will develop new and deepen existing community causing us to take intentional steps together to know and become like Jesus.

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