

Crossroads PCA Care Groups: Policies and Procedures

Saturday, June 24, 2004

Introduction

Crossroads PCA Session recognizes the need for a structured policy regarding Bible study and fellowship in homes referred to as 'Care Groups'. At Crossroads, Care Groups meet in homes with the purpose of structured Bible or Christian life studies and fellowship. It is the purpose of this document to provide policy and guidelines for the formation and operation of Crossroads Care Groups.

Vision

Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on towards love and good deeds. Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching. Hebrews 10:23-25

1. Bible Study

- To equip one another through the study and understanding of God's Word.
- Apply God's Word to our everyday lives.
 - Acts 17:11 Now the Bereans were of more noble character than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true.
 - Psalm 1:2-3 But his delight is in the law of the LORD, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers.

2. Leadership Development

- To raise up leaders for the Lord's work
- To help parents develop as spiritual leaders in their families.
 - 2 Timothy 2:2 And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others.

3. Fellowship and Prayer

- To provide an opportunity for true Christian fellowship.
- To pray for each other and to meet each others needs.
 - Acts 2:46-47 Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and

sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

- 1 Thessalonians 3:12 May the Lord make your love increase and overflow for each other and for everyone else, just as ours does for you.
- 1 John 3:18 Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth.
- Romans 12:15 Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.

4. Encouragement of one another

- To encourage one another in our Christian walk.
- To assist those who are hurting.
- To keep our focus on the Lord.
 - Romans 15:1-2 We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:9-11 For God did not appoint us to suffer wrath but to receive salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ. He died for us so that, whether we are awake or asleep, we may live together with him. Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.
 - 1 Samuel 23:16 And Saul's son Jonathan went to David at Horesh and helped him to find strength in God.
 - Isaiah 35:4 say to those with fearful hearts, "Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, he will come with vengeance; with divine retribution he will come to save you."

5. Accountability

- To hold each other accountable before the Lord.
- To carry one another's burdens.
 - Proverbs 27:17 As iron sharpens iron, so one man sharpens another.
 - Galatians 6:1-2 Brothers, if someone is caught in a sin, you who are spiritual should restore him gently. But watch yourself, or you also may be tempted. Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ.

6. Discipleship & Evangelism

- To disciple one another.
- To help fulfill the great commission through discipleship and evangelism.
 - Matthew 28:18-20 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the

Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."

7. To Multiply

- To multiply the ministry so that more and more may benefit.

Policy

1. Care Groups are a Bible study fellowship ministry under the leadership of the Session and will be cared for by the Session or its committee. The Session will approve the formation and conduct of all Crossroads Care Groups. The church officers should be examples to those under their care in the Lord by being involved in a Care Group. Elders and Deacons are encouraged to recommend participation in Care Groups as a stated ministry of the church.

2. Leadership. The leaders will be men who are members of the church and are in good standing with the congregation of the church. This membership requirement may be waived by the session. The leaders of Care Groups are responsible to the Session for the lessons and teaching of the Care Groups. The leaders are encouraged to train up other men to teach and lead the Care Group as the Lord allows.

3. Teaching. The teaching and lessons shall follow the vision of the Care Groups as stated in this document following the biblical precepts as understood in the Westminster Confession of Faith. The basic foundation of these doctrines is summed up in:

The Five Sola's of the Reformation. Salvation is accomplished by the almighty power of the Triune God. The Father chose a people, the Son died for them, the Holy Spirit makes Christ's death effective by bringing the elect to faith and repentance, thereby causing them to willingly obey the gospel. The entire process (election, redemption, regeneration) is the work of God and is by grace alone. Thus God, not man, determines who will be the recipients of the gift of salvation.

a. Sola Scriptura

The Bible (OT and NT) is the ultimate authority for true Christians.

Psalm 119; Hebrews 4:12; 2 Timothy 3:16

b. Sola Deo Gloria

In everything, glory should be given to God. As the first words in the Westminster Shorter Catechism assert: *What is the chief end of man?* Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever.

Romans 11:36; 1 Corinthians 10:31; Ephesians 3:21; 1 Peter 4:11; Revelation 1:6; Revelation 7:12

c. Sola Christo

We are saved in Christ alone.

Ephesians 2:13; Colossians 1:13-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 1 John 2:2

d. Sola Gratia

We are saved by grace alone, not works.

Ephesians 1:3-8, Ephesians 2:8-9

e. Sola Fide

We are saved through faith alone in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 3:6-11; Ephesians 2:8-9

4. Service

a. It will also be the responsibility of the Care Group leader to encourage the members of the Care Groups to serve by hosting, providing snacks, teaching as needed and leading prayers. It is recognized that the service of hosting and leading is often difficult for one household and it is encouraged that different households serve in these two Care Group areas.

b. When possible, Care Group members will also serve each other by meeting one-another's' needs outside the bounds of the Care Group meeting. In cases where households cannot meet their own needs, Care Groups should work to meet those needs. Example of this sort of service could include praying for and encouraging each other during difficult times, providing meals during illnesses, providing rides when another's car is being repaired, helping with minor repairs in areas where God has provided appropriate skills, hosting a baby shower for a new mother, etc. In cases where the need is too great for the Care Group to manage, the need should be submitted to the Diaconate's Mercy Ministry.

5. Communication

a. Care Group leaders will update the Care Group overseer monthly on attendance, lessons and any concerns.

b. Regular Care Group meetings that have to be canceled or changed should be posted on the church web site and email sent to the Session member leading the ministry.

c. Care Group leaders will ensure each participant understands the importance of maintaining confidentiality of prayer requests and other personal matters within the group.

**Psalm 133:1 Behold, how good and how pleasant it is
for brethren to dwell together in unity!**