

COMMUNITY

OUR COMMUNITIES

Earlier, we talked about our structure for ministry describing it as Cell/Celebration. In this session, we will explore the idea of Cell (our small group ministry). To understand why we have small groups, we must understand the concept of community. If our identity answers the “who” question, and our calling answers the “what” question, then for us, community answers the “how” question. Community is the context in which we live out our identity and calling.

A BIBLICAL MODEL:

Live as ONE – Live by the WORD – Live as SENT

In John 17, Jesus prays for His disciples, and for those disciples that would come after them. His prayer reflects His vision for how He wants us to live and continue His mission. He prays that we would be ONE, that we would be sanctified by the WORD, and that we would live with an awareness of being SENT into the world.

Live as ONE

...that they may be ONE, even as we are ONE.

John 17:11 (emphasis added)

Living as ONE is to profoundly connect with others. It’s more than just making friends. It is a diverse spiritual family living life alongside each other, reflecting a divinely intimate relationship embodied by God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

This “oneness” is reflected over 30 times in the New Testament where the phrases “one another” or “each other” are used to encourage believers how they are to relate. Here are a few examples:

- Be at peace with one another (Mark 9:50b).
- Love one another (John 13:34).
- Instruct one another (Rom 15:14).
- Serve one another (Gal 5:13).
- Admonish one another (Col 3:16).
- Build each other up (1 Thess 4:18).
- Carry each other’s burdens (Gal 6:2).

Live by the WORD

Sanctify them in the truth, Your WORD is truth.

John 17:17 (ESV – emphasis added)

Living by the Word is to commit one's whole self to worship and devotion to Jesus through the whole truth of His written Word. It is the beginning and end point of defining who we are and what we are called to be. From the earliest days of the Church, the Word of God has been central. Whenever believers have gathered all over the world throughout the years, they have looked to the Bible for direction, instruction, comfort, hope, wisdom, and peace. Whether we are gathering for celebration or meeting with one, two, or a handful of other believers, the Word should be of central priority and importance.

Live as SENT

As you SENT me into the world, I have SENT them into the world.

John 17:18 (emphasis added)

Mosaic's vision for every community of believers is that they would live with a people and place in mind to which God has called them.. Jesus said that He did not take us *out* of the world, but that He left us here *in* the world to live as those sent by Him. We are to bring the Good News of who He is and what He has done to those who so desperately need to hear it. In the first words of Matthew 28:19 (The Great Commission), Jesus tells us that we are to be *going into* the world. This means we are to live with a sense of purpose and intentionality as those who have been sent by Jesus to carry out His mission.

How Do Our Communities Gather?

Based on the Biblical example, the most common expression of a disciple making community in Mosaic is a small group. We have gathered in small groups from our beginning because we believe small groups give us the best opportunity to experience and live in a community in which disciples are being made. Our disciple making communities vary in appearance, but they all express both a rhythm and a people/place vision. The two types of groups we have in Mosaic Community fall into these categories:

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- **Discover Mosaic** – a community that discovers who the Mosaic Family is, considers membership, and gets to experience living as ONE-WORD-SENT together in the process.
- **Community Group** – disciple-making communities that encourage and equip each other to live as ONE-WORD-SENT where they live, work, and play with a disciple-making mission.