

unanswered prayer

CELEBRATION COMMUNITY GUIDE

for February 6, 2022

Part of the mission of our church is to awaken people to Christ and His message and equip them to practice their faith in real life. One way we do this at Celebration is through Communities.

Church is more than a one-hour gathering on a Sunday morning. Church is also a community gathering around a table, doing life together the other six days of the week.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Celebration Communities are an opportunity for our church family to live in a deep web of relationships. We eat together, pray for one another, and practice the way of Jesus in Brantford and the surrounding areas.

As you read through this week's guide, remain centered around these purposes:

Love God

Learn the ways of Jesus

Live with purpose

The following guide is meant to help direct your time together. These are best practices and *not* a rigid set of instructions to follow.

GUIDED COMMUNITY DISCUSSION

Gather as a group in a comfortable setting. Your Celebration Community leader will lead a brief time of prayer at the beginning, asking the Holy Spirit to lead and guide your time together. Take time to be silent before you begin. It's important to declutter our minds so that we may focus on one another and God's presence. Pray the ancient prayer: 'Come, Holy Spirit'.

Work through this week's guided questions:

(1) What brought me joy this week?

(2) Where did I notice God's presence?

(3) Was there anything God revealed to me?

(4) What happens to my prayer life when I become overwhelmed or upset? Do I act or respond to God differently?

(5) Are there any barriers or obstacles I face when sharing honestly and openly with others? Have I been vulnerable in seasons of pain and disappointment?

(6) Do I think it's possible for everyone to find purpose in -- or in spite of - their pain?

PRACTICE THE WAY

At the beginning of our series, we're encouraging our Communities to have an open and honest conversation about the difficulties of pain and unanswered prayer. Have your group answer this question together:

Am I currently in or do I identify as having gone through a season of unanswered prayer?

We simply want you to pray for one another this week. To make this easy for you, we'd like to remind each group of the following:

- (1) If someone shares something with the group, do not attempt to "fix" them or their situation. Avoid giving a spiritual pep talk.
- (2) Resist the temptation to pray that God would take them out of this season. Instead, pray that God would lead them through it.
- (3) Emphasize and speak truth over them.
- (4) Hold them up before God in prayer.

Make sure your conversation remains private. Do not share stories or experiences others in your Community have shared.

PRAY TOGETHER

Spend time together in conversation with God.

Ask yourself before praying:

(1) What has God revealed me to me this week?

(2) Where is God inviting me to meet Him in my pain, this week?

(3) What story might God not be done writing in my life?

Your leader will begin praying for individuals in the group. Take turns praying for each member. If everyone in your group is comfortable with laying hands on each other, feel free to do so.

If this is your first time in a Celebration Community, and you don't feel comfortable sharing something or praying out loud, feel free to be silent. Your Community is an opportunity and space where you can grow. You're welcome and safe here.

THE WEEK AHEAD

As you live out the rest of your week, consider what has been shared during your time together.

Ask yourself:

Who has God placed in my life to pray for and encourage?

What can I ask my Community to keep me accountable for next time we meet?

Also, we're inviting our Communities to participate in Fasting and Prayer Wednesdays throughout the months of February and March.

We recommend people start simple if they've never done this before by fasting from sunrise to noon. If you practiced fasting before, feel free to try fasting from sunrise to sunset (with a late dinner) or a 24-hour fast when you're ready. Each time you feel hungry, let this prompt you towards prayer. Use this time you would normally eat to listen to and speak with God.

We will have prayer opportunities on-site each Wednesday. Please check social media or the app regularly for details as the time and place may change from week-to-week.

