



CELEBRATION COMMUNITY GUIDE

for January 30, 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?

This week's message focused on forgiveness within marriage. The following questions are designed for your Community to discuss forgiveness as it applies to all areas of life.

- (4) How have I seen the correlation between forgiveness and love in my marriage, relationships and interactions with others?
- (5) When have I seen someone truly move beyond forgiveness to blessing their spouse, their friends or family, or others?
- (6) Is there anyone in my past or present whom I have wronged? Have I taken steps to reconcile with this person?

PRACTICE THE WAY

At the beginning of 2022, we welcome our Communities to practice crafting a rule of life together!

"A RULE OF LIFE, VERY SIMPLY, IS AN INTENTIONAL, CONSCIOUS PLAN TO KEEP GOD AT THE CENTRE OF EVERYTHING WE DO."

- Peter Scazzero, *Emotionally Healthy Spirituality*

A rule of life is both a schedule and set of practices that help us create space for a deep, loving enjoyment of God's presence and others.

In his book *Crafting a Rule of Life*, Stephen A Macchia described the purpose of a rule of life this way:

A rule of life allows us to clarify our deepest values, our most important relationships, our most authentic hopes and dreams, our most meaningful work, our highest priorities. It allows us to live with intention and purpose in the present moment.

A rule of life is not a system of laws. It's not even a system of rigid rules, despite the name. Instead, it's a way that we can regulate our lives so we stay on the path in front of us.

Head to the "Resources" page on happychurch.ca to find our booklet on a rule of life. This week, as you craft your rule of life, focus on your marriages and relationships. What can you add to your rule of life to help them flourish?

PRAY TOGETHER

Spend time together in conversation with God.

Ask yourself before praying:

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

(2) What is God's intention for my relationships?

(3) What would it take for my marriage and my relationships to flourish?

(4) How can I ground my relationships solidly on the foundation of my faith in Jesus?

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 has God spoken to me about?

How will I be obedient to what He has spoken?

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

If you missed it, we are encouraging all Communities to craft a rule of life at the beginning of 2022. A rule of life is both a schedule and set of practices that help us create space for a deep, loving enjoyment of God's presence and others. Take time this week to review the booklet we've created for you under "Resources" at happychurch.ca. There is an easy to print template available for you to begin considering what your rule of life will look like.

