

# Wintersburg Missional Communities

## *Fellowship Evangelism*

*Be wise in the way you act toward outsiders; make the most of every opportunity. Let your conversation be always full of grace, seasoned with salt, so that you may know how to answer everyone. – Colossians 4:5-6*

A Missional Community is a small group of believers intentionally and regularly meeting with one or more non-believers in a comfortable setting in order to get to know each other on a deeper level. Through these gatherings, the believers in this group demonstrate God's love to their friends in hopes that they will eventually become motivated to seek a relationship with Jesus of their own.

This is different than a small group, where everyone is generally a believer and studies the Bible together. A Missional Community usually meets at places outside of church, such as at coffee houses, at someone's home, or while doing recreational activities, providing a low bar of entry to explore a journey toward becoming a believer in Christ.

### **GOALS**

The basic goal of a Missional Community is to spend quality time with a mix of believers and non-believers. The hope is to have personal, meaningful conversations to enable non-believers to become motivated to ask questions about faith in Christ. In addition, the believers in the group will benefit by growing in their faith and become more active in evangelizing.

Spending time with a friend will likely strengthen the relationship between the two. However, if they were to regularly meet and begin to share personal issues, a deeper relationship will begin to develop; a relationship that builds comfort and trust. In the same way, the members in a Missional Community would also grow closer as time goes on, and that the believers in the group can share how their faith encourages hope in difficult circumstances.

Eventually, discussions about God and religion can be introduced, and if the seekers in the group are willing, a simple Bible study can evolve. The Ultimate goal is not to get the people to come to church, but for them to know Jesus.

### **HOW DOES A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY GROUP GET STARTED?**

Think about the people you encounter in your daily life. Are some non-believers? If so, pray if God is leading you to meet with them on a regular basis.

Missional Communities are unique in that they are not church initiated. You will have to start your own group, hopefully with the help of other Christians. You may already be in a group that's like a Missional Community, but you just don't realize it. If God calls you

to start a group, suggest to your friends to start meeting regularly (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, etc).

These groups can be interest-related (sports, hobbies, entertainment), status-related (singles, seniors, mothers with infants) or regional-related (neighbors, school helpers).

## **STRATEGIES AND TIPS**

Try some of these in your initial meetings. Some may take time to evolve.

- Before you meet in your group, pray for wisdom and guidance.
- Meet at a place that is not at church or at a religious setting.
- Sharing a meal or having coffee together is a safe meeting place. Best conversations happen around the dinner table.
- Remember, you are the Christian, so you need to conduct yourself in a way that is glorifying to God.
- While conversations should be natural, take the opportunity to be the first to share areas of your personal life (work, family, etc).
- Try to ask questions that are more personal. Be careful and be sensitive that some people may take time to get to a deeper level.
- Schedule regular meetings rather than “playing it by ear.” If a meeting is canceled, schedule a replacement meeting.
- Let it be known that you go to church and you are a Christian.
- Eventually meet each other’s families, further progressing to a point where you share a meal with each other’s families.
- Pray for the meal (“I hope you don’t mind, but in my family, we say grace before eating. Do you mind if I pray for our meal?”)
- If someone shares a struggle or a hurt, offer to pray for them, whether it is in person or later.
- If the person is curious about Christianity, be prepared to share the basics of the gospel or invite them to church outings or church service.
- Eventually start a beginner’s Bible study if everyone feels comfortable.
- Don’t be discouraged if things go slowly. There is no time-table or curriculum.

## **EXAMPLES OF A MISSIONAL COMMUNITY**

### **Volunteers**

Two or three couples with older kids decide that they want to try creating a missional community. They look for an opportunity to serve/volunteer one Saturday a month. (It could be putting in a couple of hours at a food bank, serving Olive Crest, serving the homeless, etc.) They begin to ask friends, co-workers, or neighbors if they would like to join them in a “Give Back Saturday.” As friends join them, they connect with the other couples in the group. Sometimes they might suggest going out for lunch or coffee after they volunteer to get more time to connect.

The believers in the group meet in pairs or small groups on Sunday morning during Sunday School time to work on their own spiritual growth.

As the group gets to know one another better, once a month one of the couples hosts a dinner in their home. The believers pray that God will help deepen their conversations and friendships through the time over dinner and after. Once the group seems to feel more comfortable, they invite people to stay to take part in an Alpha Bible study on the person of Jesus.

### **SEYO Group**

Two or three couples whose young kids are on the same SEYO team decide to form a missional community. In order to spend time with families on the team that don't know the Lord, they invite those families to join them at a park after SEYO practice to eat lunch, let the kids play together, and hang out. (Families can bring lunch or pick something up on the way to the park.)

The believers on the team meet together on Sunday mornings during the Sunday School hour to focus on their own spiritual growth.

After they have gotten to know those families better through SEYO and park hangouts, once a month they host a potluck dinner in one of their homes and invite the other families to join them. They pray that the conversation over dinner and after could become more significant... that people can share how they are "really" doing, hopes/fears for themselves and their kids, etc. As the families become more comfortable, the hosting families let the group know that they are going to have a time of reading one of Jesus' parables and discussing it after dessert, for about 30 minutes. They make it clear that everyone is welcome to stay for that time, but it's also fine if people want to leave before that time.

For the parable time, someone prints out a parable of Jesus on regular paper and hands one out to everyone. One person reads the parable aloud, and then asks the group maybe four simple questions like:

1. What stands out to you in the parable?
2. What questions do you have after reading this parable?
3. Is there anything you don't like about the parable?
4. Do you think there is anything in this parable that you would want to apply to your life?

The group uses the same 4 questions with whatever parable they use, so people know what to expect each time.

### **Contact**

Wintersburg Church would love to support your efforts in creating and sustaining a Missional Community. If you would like talk to someone regarding any aspect of this

ministry, please email [MC@Wintersburg.org](mailto:MC@Wintersburg.org). Please let us know how you are doing so we can pray for you and give you encouragement, advice, and support.

*We are a family seeking to glorify God by becoming like Christ, declaring and demonstrating His love to others, restoring hope to family, neighbors and communities.*  
– Wintersburg Church's Mission Statement