



Center for Student Development

Regent University

wth
growth

Growing in Community

Corné J. Bekker



Community and Growth

"Our membership in the church is a corollary of our faith in Christ. We can no more be a Christian and have nothing to do with the church than we can be a person and not be in a family. It is part of the fabric of redemption."

- Eugene Peterson



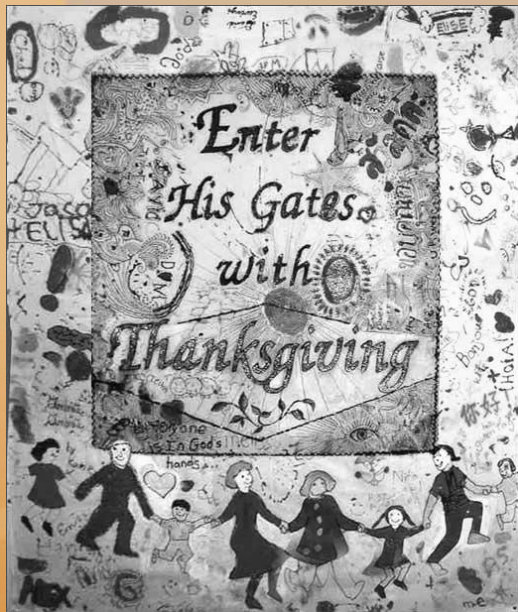
Community and Growth

“They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”

- Acts 2:42 (NIV)



Workshop Outline



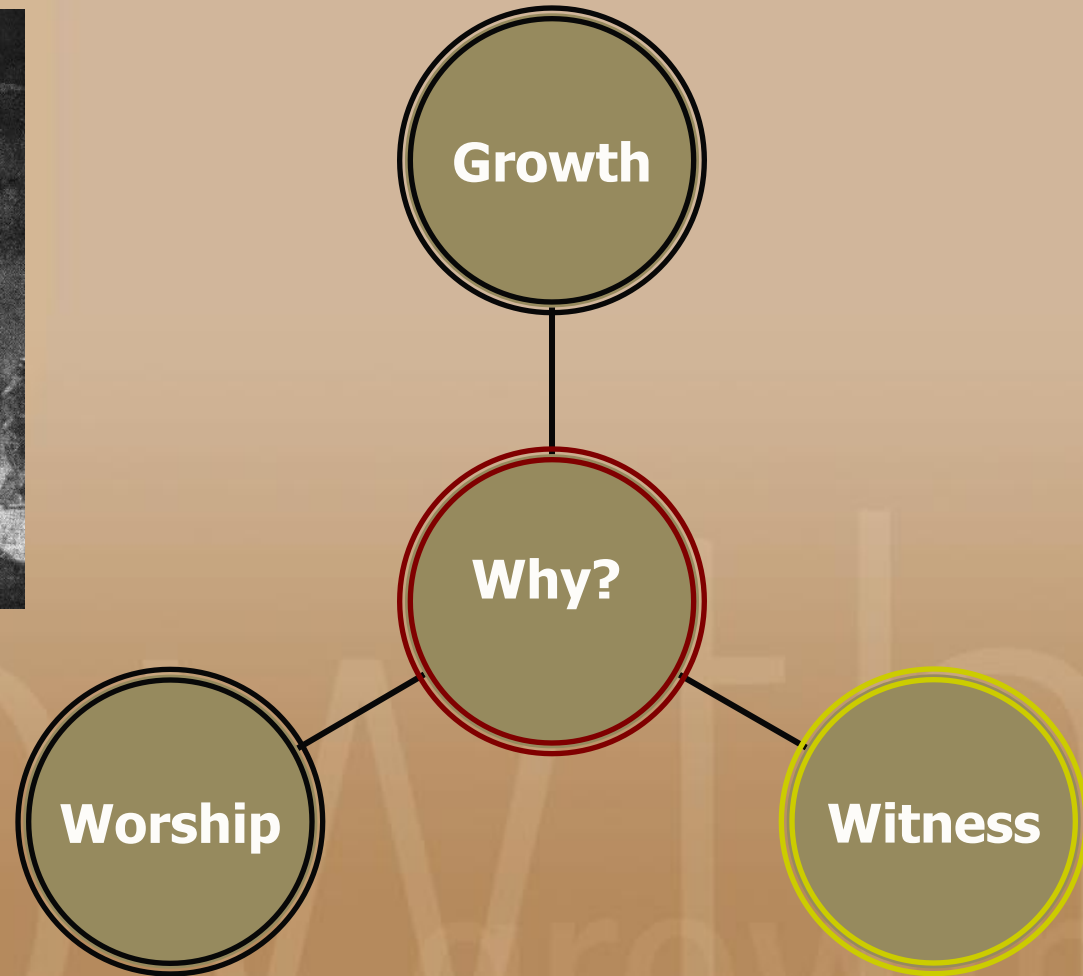
Why Community?

Nature of Community

Intentional Community

Discipline of Hospitality

Why Community?



Community: Context for Growth

“And we,
who with unveiled faces
all reflect the Lord's glory,
are being transformed
into His likeness with
ever-increasing glory,
which comes from the Lord,
who is the Spirit.”

- 2 Corinthians 3:18 (NIV)



Community: Context for Growth

"The soul that is alone...
is like the burning coal
that is alone.

It will grow colder
rather than hotter."

- John of the Cross



A close-up photograph of a communion wafer and a small amount of red wine in a glass, set against a warm, golden background.

Community: Evangelical Witness



“By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”

- John 13:35 (NIV)



Community: Evangelical Witness

“We must live in community because the spirit of joy and love gives us such an urge to reach out to others that we wish to be united with them for all time.”

-Eberhard Arnold



Community: Worship



“I rejoiced
With those
who said to me,
Let us go

to the house of the LORD.”

- Psalm 122:1 (NIV)

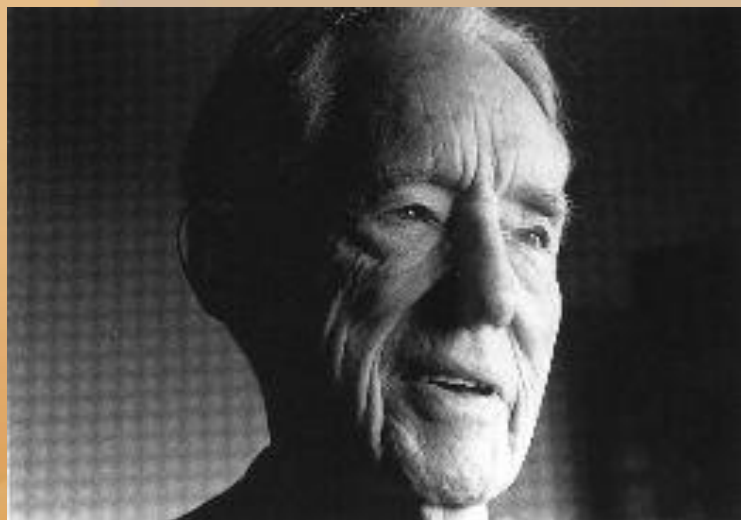


Community: Worship

“There are two things we cannot do alone.

One is to be married and the other is to be a Christian.”

- Paul Tournier



The Nature of Community

The Church is a Gathered Community where:

- Jesus is Lord. Jesus is the head of this, His body (*compare Ephesians 5:22-32 and Revelation 1:10-20*).
- The Fullness of God is found (*see Ephesians 1:22-23*).
- Every member can find their God-given place and destiny (*compare Ephesians 4:11-13*).
- We can grow, develop and mature (*see Ephesians 4:16*).
- Where the forgiveness of God flows (*compare 1 John 1:6-7*).



The Nature of Community

"The discipline of community makes us persons; that is, people who are sounding through to each other a truth, beauty, and a love which is greater, fuller, and richer than we ourselves can grasp. In true community we are windows constantly offering each other new views on the mystery of God's presence in our lives."

– Henri J. Nouwen



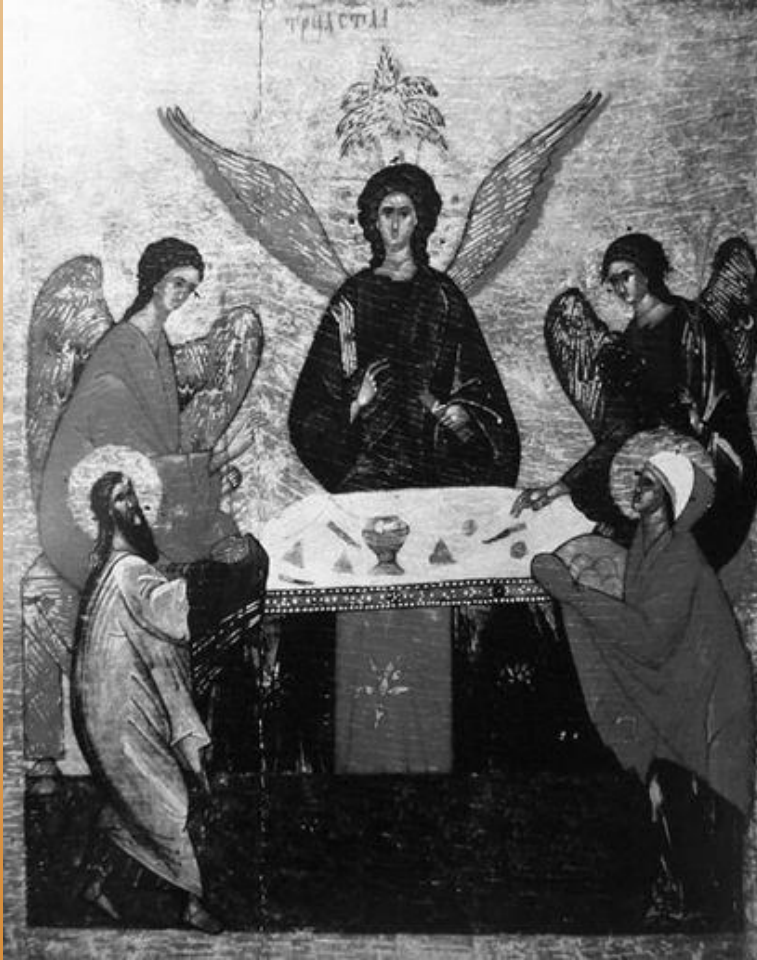


Discipline of Hospitality

Community is
where we
convert our
“hostis” into
“hospes”



Discipline of Hospitality

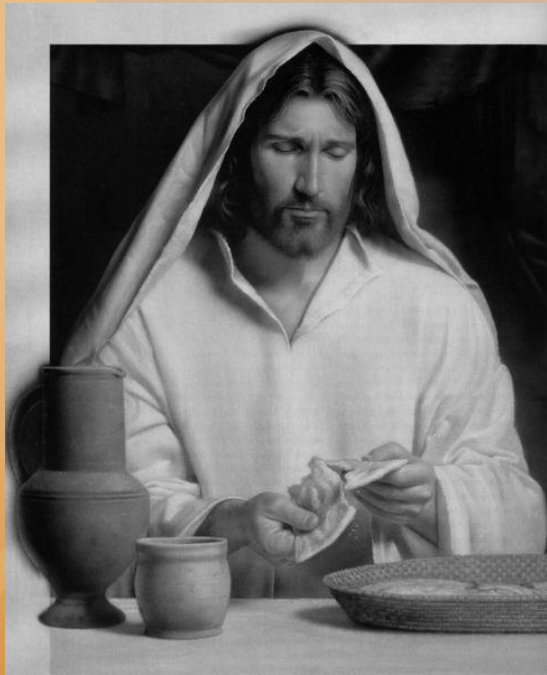


The Discipline
of Hospitality

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The Freedom
of the Guest

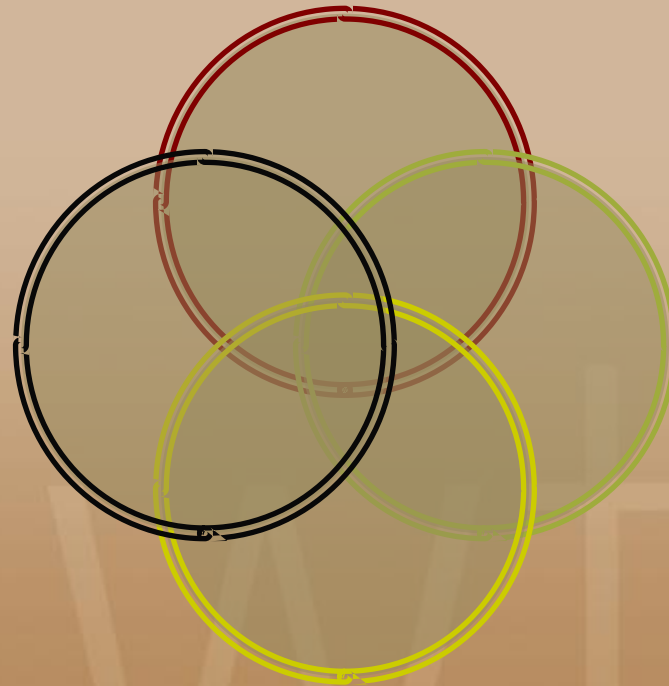
Stepping into Hospitality



Sincerity/Confession

Humility

Celebration



Submission

Hospitality: Sincerity/Confession

“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.”

- James 5:16 (NIV)



Hospitality: Sincerity/Confession

'Some of us tend to do away with things that are slightly damaged. Instead of repairing them we say: 'Well, I don't have time to fix it, I might as well throw it in the garbage can and buy a new one.' Often we also treat people this way. We say: 'Well, he has a problem with drinking; well, she is quite depressed; well, they have mismanaged their business...we'd better not take the risk of working with them.' When we dismiss people out of hand because of their apparent woundedness, we stunt their lives by ignoring their gifts, which are often buried in their wounds. We all are bruised reeds, whether our bruises are visible or not. The compassionate life is the life in which we believe that strength is hidden in weakness and that true community is a fellowship of the weak.'

- Henri Nouwen



Hospitality: Celebration

“They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer.”

- Acts 2:42 (NIV)



Hospitality: Celebration

'God, my efforts to make myself happy have yielded much unhappiness.

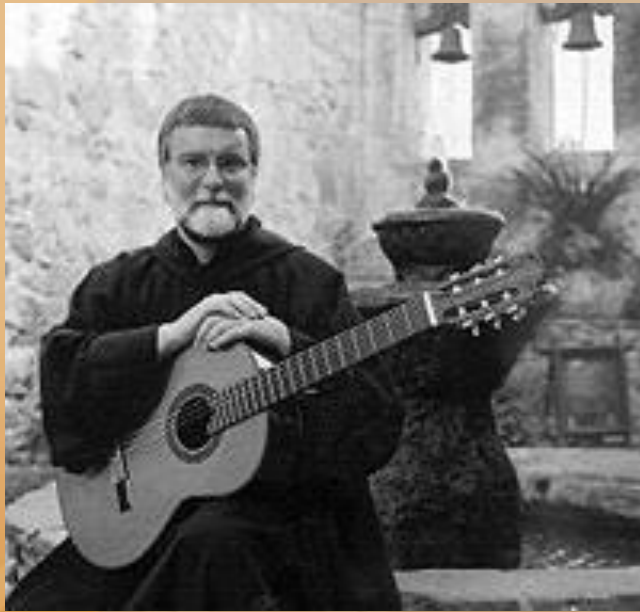
My anxiety about tomorrow steal the pleasure from today.

And my anger towards my neighbor strangles my heart.

Please release me from preoccupation with myself and my troubles,


and begin filling me with indescribable joy."

- John Michael Talbot





Hospitality: Submission



“Submit to one another
out of reverence
for Christ.”
- Ephesians 5:21 (NIV)

Hospitality: Submission

“Where there is God’s love and wisdom, there is no room for fear, or for ignorance. Where there is patience and humility, there is no anger, nor even irritation. Where there is joy in being poor in spirit, there is no secret covetousness toward others, nor greed that leads to hateful actions.

Where there is peace, sown in times of meditation, there is no worry, nor dissipation of true spiritual zeal. Where there is awe and deep respect for the Lord to guard the house, the enemy cannot get inside, or gain so much as a foothold. Where there is mercy in discerning the faults of another, there is neither allowance for destructive excesses, nor an un-giving hard-heartedness toward those who fail.”

- Francis of Assisi



Hospitality: Humility



“For where you have envy and selfish ambition, there you find disorder And every evil practice.”

- James 3:16 (NIV)

Hospitality: Humility

“Pride makes us hate our equals because they are our equals, our inferiors from the fear that they may equal us; our superiors because they are above us.”

- John Vianney



Intentional Community



- See Community as a privilege
- Seek Community
- Practice voluntary vulnerability
- Practice confession
- Tame the Tongue
- Renounce competitiveness
- Cultivate humility
- Seek the good of others
- Submit to others

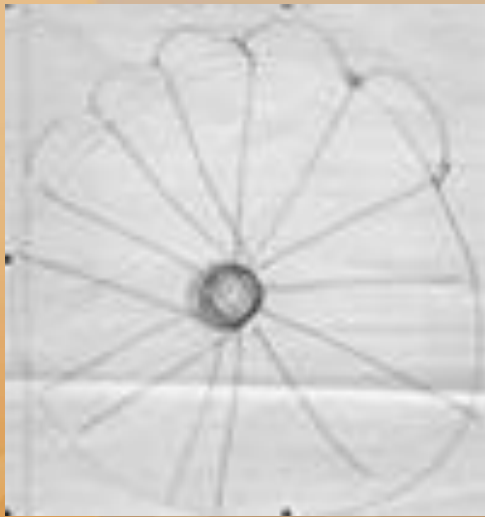
Henri Nouwen on Community



“Community is like a large mosaic. Each little piece seems so insignificant. One piece is bright red, another cold blue or dull green, another warm purple, another sharp yellow, another shining gold. Some look precious, others ordinary. Some look valuable, others worthless. Some look gaudy, others delicate. As individuals stones, we can do little with them except compare them and judge their beauty and value.”

Henri Nouwen on Community

“When, however, all these little stones are brought together in one big mosaic portraying the face of Christ, who would ever question the importance of any one of them? If one of them, even the least spectacular one, is missing, the face is incomplete. Together in the one mosaic, each little stone is indispensable and makes a unique contribution to the glory of God. That’s community, a fellowship of little people who together make God visible in the world.”



The Quest to Create Community



“A person who loves community tends to destroy it. But a person who loves people creates community wherever he goes.”

— Dietrich Bonhoeffer

Community and the Other Disciplines

“One who wants fellowship without solitude plunges into the void of words and feelings, and one who seeks solitude without fellowship perishes in the abyss of vanity, self-infatuation, and despair.

Let him who cannot be alone beware of community. Let him who is not in community beware of being alone.”

- Dietrich Bonhoeffer



Final Words



“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves.

Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.”
- Philippians 2:3-4 (NIV)




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your feedback...

Please click here to fill out a brief survey:

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=34BQX3mayeWDP3IZCVbONg_3d_3d

Habits of the Heart #6 – Body of Christ

Please give us your [feedback](#).