

# Understanding Missional Communities

## Missional Communities

At Florida Baptist Church, we seek to live out what happens in our worship on Sunday morning. This means that we are committed to building a strong and vibrant culture that flows out of our experience of the life of God. That life is the love of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God is not an impersonal force, but a community of persons (**The Trinity**) who have loved each other for all eternity. Since we are made in the image of God, part of what it means to be human is to be created in as well as for community. Simply put, you cannot be truly human or truly yourself apart from loving relationships with other people. For this reason, we will be organizing our communities into geographically focused groups of families and individuals. Each of our *missional communities* seeks to be a place where people can experience significant, substantial, encouraging friendships. While each community is different, having its own personality, five practices will form a common thread.

### 1. We read the Bible together.

Jesus said, "Everyone then who hears these words of mine and does them will be like a wise man who built his house on the rock" ([Matthew 7: 24](#)).

### 2. We pray together.

We believe God acts differently when we pray than when we don't pray. When we pray together, not only does God hear and answer our prayers, but our relationships with one another are solidified, and we can begin to care deeply about one another.

### 3. We share together.

The first act Jesus performed with his disciples after the resurrection was to share a meal. Eating and drinking together, celebrating the joy of the resurrection life, is a huge piece of our life together as the people of God who share in the life of God. Even more, talking about what is happening in our lives, both formally and informally, is a significant way in which we are known and have the opportunity to know others more deeply.

### 4. We serve one another.

The extravagant generosity of Jesus Christ toward us compels us to be generous in our service to one another. Missional communities will serve as the front lines of care for our church. A phone call and prayer, a pot of soup, an afternoon cleaning someone's house, watching their kids, running errands – these are practical ways we live out our Christian faith.

## 5. We reach out to our neighbors together.

If our Christian faith does not translate into blessing for our neighbors and city then something is terribly wrong. We encourage our small groups to think like missionaries. Since each group is rooted in its own particular neighborhood, this will take many different forms: direct or personal evangelism, neighborhood parties, caring for those who are weak or vulnerable, and strategic partnerships with community organizations that are working to improve our community and serve “the least of these.”

### Missional Community Locations

We believe that the Triune God is sovereign over all areas of life, and this includes the particular neighborhood/area where we live. And we believe that where we actually live is important. In the book of Jeremiah God calls his people to fully engage in the places where they are situated in very specific tasks that will bless their neighbors and enrich their community ([Jeremiah 29](#)). Likewise, our Lord Jesus calls us to love our neighbors. As Jesus said, this is the greatest commandment behind the love of God. When Jesus answered the important question “Who is my neighbor?” in the parable of the Good Samaritan ([Luke 10](#)), he highlighted the characteristics of **proximity** and **time**. Because we live in an excessively busy culture, it is hard to overemphasize these characteristics in relation to practical love. Simply put: we cannot love those we do not see and spend time with. And we must see and spend time with those we live near. This reality, though, may challenge our idols of individualism, choice, and relationships based on affinity. Our neighbors may be different from us in many ways. But this scenario was anticipated by Jesus in the parable—it may even be our racial / cultural ‘enemy’ we are called to love...or, as in the parable, who humbles and teaches us by demonstrating self-giving love toward us. In light of this call toward our neighbors, we will be organizing our **missional communities** based largely on geography. Let us help you find a community nearest your home.