

Discipleship Strategy

January 2012

Dear Members of Crossroads Christian Church,

Crossroads is being transformed by God into a more effective tool for His Kingdom. This process is going to require significant changes to the way we do things and how we define membership. We have determined that we need to better clarify our mission and align our discipleship strategy with it.

We need a simpler and more direct strategy for making fully developed disciples. Every member and every convert should know HOW Crossroads does discipleship. For example if you had a friend or family member accept Jesus Christ, what would you tell them to do FIRST after being baptized?

To that end, it has been decided that after Sunday, February 26th, Crossroads will no longer have traditional Sunday school. This decision was not made lightly. Back in 2006, the leadership team formed a group tasked with doing an in-depth study of small groups. It was the unanimous recommendation of that group that we transition to small groups. It is time to make that transition complete.

Beginning with the first Sunday in March we will be concentrating all our efforts on making our worship experience awesomely inspiring to believers and compelling the lost. It will begin with what we are calling "Open Connection" at 9:30am. This will be a time of open fellowship. There will be pastries and coffee. Our children's area will be open to provide fun childcare while their parents mingle and talk.

During the month of March, we will be retooling our small group structure and recruiting facilitators and/or host locations. Our intention is to launch our new groups on Easter Sunday. They will meet on a weekly basis. It will be important for every member to be a part of a small group. The curriculum will be carefully selected to challenge each of us to be transformed more like Christ.

Joining a small group will be the NEXT step in our discipleship strategy. When someone comes to Christ, they will be encouraged to commit to a small group. The group curriculum will help them grow in their spiritual walk. The relationships they develop will encourage them to remain strong.

One of the main objectives of each group will be to challenge members to serve. This is the NEXT step in our strategy. We want everyone to be involved in ministry. Our ministry teams are the critical element at this point in the process. It is through serving that we begin to find our purpose in the body of Christ.

The FINAL step in our discipleship strategy will be to develop a greater personal sense of God's Great Commission. Each of us is called to making disciples in our own way. Our intention is to facilitate members being involved in a variety of mission opportunities locally, nationally, and cross-culturally. This will hopefully sensitize their hearts for the lost and lead them to guide others to Jesus Christ.

There are many details yet to be worked out. However, we wanted to keep everyone informed as these changes develop. As always, your input is greatly appreciated, as is your prayers.

The leadership Team

Ron Holladay, Fred Townsend, Troy Yeoman, Dave Nance, Michael Duff

FAQS

Why is it necessary to discontinue Sunday school to do small groups?

There are several reasons:

- 1. We need to focus our resources on those programs that will produce the best long term results. Sunday school requires time, teachers, materials, curriculum, and proper classroom space. We need to focus these resources on making our worship service and the supporting children's programming the BEST they can be.*
- 2. We need to simplify our approach to discipling for those who come to Christ in our congregation. By offering the choice between Sunday school AND small group, we lessen our effectiveness in grounding individuals in the faith and building the necessary relationships with others in the church.*
- 3. Our facility is NOT designed so that Sunday school can be a long term success. Sunday school grows through dividing existing classes or creating new classes. Without the necessary classrooms, we would spend more time trying to transition between Sunday school and worship.*

Why are small groups better than Sunday school classes?

In one sense, Sunday school classes are small groups. With the proper facilities, they can be a great discipling tool. However, they cannot provide the same benefits of a small group. Small groups are designed to build relationships and develop trust among the individual members of the group. This happens over time, and requires confidentiality.

By their very nature, Sunday school classes are open and anyone can attend at any time. When a new person attends the class, the trust level of the group drops to zero. Classes also require a classroom to meet. When those who come have children, there must be teachers, classes, and classrooms for them as well. Small groups only require and willing host home and facilitator in order to grow.

How will our children learn the Bible without having Sunday school?

A few years ago, the leadership decided to invest heavily in our children's ministry by purchasing the Kidmo program for children's worship. Special K, Little K, and Kidmo are high energy, Biblically sound, DVD driven curriculums. The program employs several methods in order for the children to learn, apply, and live the Scriptures. Through both large and small groups, the children memorize the Bible and then discuss it with the family during the week.

Sunday school is when I get to fellowship with others, when will I get to talk with others in the congregation?

When we end Sunday school, we will be adding a new feature to Sunday morning called, "Open Connection". Starting at 9:30am, we will be having an open fellowship time in foyer. There will be activities for the children so parents can drop them off and enjoy an opportunity to fellowship. This will be a time to visit with friends and get to know our guests as well.

How important will it be to participate in the small groups?

While we cannot force anyone to participate, it will be one of the expectations our congregation will have for ALL members. Our vision is to integrate everything we do in the future around active participation in worship, small group, and ministry teams. We want every member to be a fully developed disciple of Jesus and we believe this is best strategy for Crossroads to do that.

Will we ever have Bible classes again?

Yes, absolutely! In the future, we will still have classes, but they will be "opt in" classes that members will need to sign up for. For example, we will continue to offer Financial Peace class. Opt in classes will follow a schedule and will be fully supported with childcare. We will utilize our building and resources to best extent possible.