

What Should Happen When We Gather Together?

by Nathan Creitz

What are we doing when we gather together? There are all sorts of people who want to know the answer to that question:

- Non-Christians who are wondering if there's anything to following Jesus.
- Ex-Christians who are leaving the church because their time with other Christians seemed like a waste.
- Christians who are sitting in seats looking at the back of people's heads wondering if there's more to the Christian life.
- Pastors who are scratching their heads wondering what happened to all the people.

I'm sure there are others demanding answers and I understand where each of these groups are coming from. There are also other questions that we should be asking: How often should we get together? Where should we meet together? How long should we be meeting together? Who should lead our times together? Should anyone be leading anything?

The operative word in all of these questions is "should". (You thought it was going to be "together" didn't you?) We all know something is wrong. We all know there's something missing. But what is it? What is it that should *be*? Doesn't the Bible talk about Christian fellowship, brotherly love, you know, all those "one anothers"? We are missing the mark in our interdependence and interconnectedness with one another and something *should* be done about it.

So, what should Christians be doing when we get together?

We should be Loving one another

If there is someone in my church fellowship that I am refusing to talk to then I've got a big problem. It doesn't matter what he or she did, if I know there is a wedge between the two of us then I am being disobedient to God if I'm not attempting to reconcile with them.

If something comes between me and my wife I don't give her the silent treatment indefinitely...we work it out. There are too many people who refuse to worship with other Christians because they've got a problem with someone else in the body. That is a big problem.

Colossians 3:14 says, "Above all, put on love – the perfect bond of unity." The "above all" refers to the short list of things we should be putting on as Christians: hearts of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, patience, forgiveness, etc. Those are the sorts of things we express to one another *because* of our love. Love wraps all those other gifts into a beautiful package that can be given away daily to our church family.

We should be Praying for one another

Praying for one another sounds easy doesn't it? I think most Christians know that when we get together somebody needs to pray. I'm not too fond of being asked to pray simply because of the fact that I'm ordained. Like I have some special connection with God that no one else has.

We have to stop spending all of our prayer time praying for those twice removed from us. God's desire is that we pray for His kingdom and glory. That's priority one! Praise him, exalt him, ask him to use you to advance his kingdom, etc. A close second to

that is praying for one another. Open up! Share what God is doing in your life. What spiritual challenges are you facing? Where are you being tempted?

Praying for those twice removed from us is safe because it doesn't expose our inner turmoil. We might actually have to admit that we don't have everything together. That's hard, but we aren't truly praying for one another if we're only praying through a laundry list of people and problems who aren't sitting in the room at the moment. Be an adult and share!

We should be Caring for one another

To care for one another means we have to know one another on a deep enough level to know each other's needs. We should always be asking this question: *What needs am I uniquely positioned by God to meet today?*

Maybe you are meant to meet the needs of your spouse or children, your neighbor, your friend, your pastor, or your student. Maybe you have the ability to meet a financial need. Maybe you have the blessing of time that you can give to someone. Maybe you are able to listen, teach, advise, encourage, give joy, build, share, volunteer, sing, cook, repair, hold a hand, or provide a shoulder.

A gathering church should be a mobilizing church. When we learn how to meet each other's needs, it's often that God will open up doors for us to meet the needs in our community. Find a need. Meet a need.

We should be Trusting one another

My friend Mark recently gave me a point to ponder. He asked, "Have you ever thought about how Jesus got the disciples to trust one another?" We had been talking about how at least two of the disciples had political views of hatred towards the Romans and then there was Matthew who had sold out his fellow Jews to work for the Romans – collecting taxes no less.

Unfortunately, we don't have a whole lot of glimpses at the interpersonal relationships of the disciples other than the arguments they got into and the times Jesus had to correct their foolishness. Sounds a lot like us doesn't it? Regardless of our political or cultural or generational outlook, we need to learn how to trust one another. It takes time, vulnerability, and effort, but it's worth everything we put into it.

We should be Challenging one another

Another sentence from Colossians 3 says: "Let the Word of Christ dwell richly among you, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom..." (v. 15) I also love Hebrews 10:24-25, which says, "Let us be concerned about one another in order to promote love and good works, not staying away from our meetings, as some habitually do, but encouraging each other..."

So, our meetings are characterized by encouragement, concern for one another, prompting each other to love and good works, and consistency according to the writer of Hebrews. The first verse from Paul to the Christians in Colossae says we are to teach and admonish one another, which is how the "Word of Christ" becomes richly indwelt among us. This includes a sermon that a pastor might give to everyone but it also includes a timely word, rebuke, encouragement, or advice between two or three friends.

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Life group prayer and praise

- We would very much appreciate your continued prayers as **Janine** follows God's direction in her ministry to Thailand and Cambodia, She is leaving with a team today and they will be there for the next 2 weeks. They will be working with orphans and those just rescued out of human trafficking. Pray specifically for safety, open eyes and hearts, Godly guidance and discernment, increased passion for oppressed peoples and the ability of each team member to be a light in a dark place. We appreciate you so much. **Chris Frizell**
- **Jodee DeFever** is home now after her surgery, everything went fine. She is able to get up and walk a little, Please continue prayers for her as she recovers
- Pray for one of my students & family traveling to Tehran for a month to visit family ~**Janet Duvarado**
- I will be moving to Salem, Oregon the end of July, Please pray for a safe and smooth move. ~ **Romola Edwards**
- **Michael Hall** has received word from his Dr. that he has Prostate Cancer. The prognosis is very good that it is operable and/or treatable with Radiation. Decisions need to be made and prayer is desperately needed to make the right decision. Please support Michael and **Marcia and the kids** as they go thru this very trying time, put them on your prayer list and let them know they are not alone.
- **Pamela Dehnhoff** asks that we pray for **middle son** to find

work and a place to live that is safe and their **youngest son and daughter-in-law** to find Jesus.

- **Brooklyn McCormick** needs prayer for her active juvenile arthritis, that her new medication would successfully treat the swelling and pain.
- Please pray for me & my situation with my neighbors father, things are bad with his abusive behavior and language and I'm afraid. Also pray that my externship will finish in the next 2 wks, I still need 80 hrs. And pray for **Nina** who graduates 5th grade and begins a new journey in middle school ~**Darcy Stanyo**
- Please continue to pray for my mother-in-law, **Ramona Anderson**, who has been diagnosed with mantle cell lymphoma.. ~ **Ann Anderson**
- **Kathy Chapman's** mother-in-law **Jeanne** has lung cancer. She will be having radiation therapy starting this week. Pray that it takes care of the cancer and that it doesn't burn her and that she has no ill effects. Also pray for **Jeanne's** husband, **Mel Marcoux** for healing for his heart, he has 2 blocked arteries. The Dr's are going to wait a few months before trying to clear them due to radiation burns from the previous stents that were put in.
- **John and Linda Royer** need a ride to/from Ross Point .
- Please pray for my niece, **Karen**, she needs strength and guidance.~ **Carolyn Kelly**

Congregational Meeting:
June 27th, 2010
9:00 am - Worship Center

Adult attendance: 237

Children: 9 am: 22 + 9 10:30 am 47 + 14

Youth Small Group: 7 + 2 Middle School: 15 + 4

PRAY FOR OUR MILITARY

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jonathan Michaels Estrella— son of Sharon Boswell. • Jason Bjazevich—Megan Owenby's husband— Army Special Forces— Stationed in N. Carolina. • Joel Ellis—son of John & Midge —Serving in Iraq. • Scott Harpell—son of Brian & Lynne— Stationed at Fort Carson, CO. • Aaron Weston—nephew of Ken and Kathy— Stationed in San Diego. • Eric Schmidt — son of Gene and Pat Schmidt — Camp Fallujah, Iraq. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Benjamin Lagonia—dear friend of the Naylor family—stationed in Manitoba. • David Coyle—son of Karen Mark—residing in Seattle, member of the National Guard. • Adam Flynn—a young Marine safely home and out of military. • Brett Love—grandson of Wilma—Army National Guard—Serving at home. • Robin Swartz - Serving in the military - currently home in Everett. • Christian Chmielewski—nephew of JoAnn Couturie' - in the Marines. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ENS Andrew E. Timpner (fiancé to Christin Suthard) on deployment with USS Momsen. • Devin Abbitt—nephew of Paul Abbitt - Marine, stateside. • Duane Neyens—brother to Kathy Chapman—on US soil, in El Paso, TX then CA. • Philip Ankney-LCPL Afghanistan Cousin of Mary-Ann Peterson. • Jeffrey Lillard—son of Barbara Lillard — Srg. In Army, Stationed in Afghanistan. • Aaron Chmielewski—joined the Marines. Nephew of JoAnn Couturie |
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Check out our FBC website @ www.fbc-everett.org

Life Group Happenings

all in the family

by **florence miller**

Congratulations to **Bennett and Kelsey Johnson** on their marriage on June 26th. Bennett is the son of **Ross and Jane Johnson** (and for really old timers, Jane is the daughter of **Lloyd and Betty McKee**)

Did you notice the shiner **Jeanne Gilman** was sporting? She is one of the Friday Night Ministry hard workers. As she was carrying a large armful of food from the freezer, she tripped on a mat and fell forward onto a counter corner. She was most fortunate that the results were mostly the huge facial bruises and some wrenched muscles. Her fall went unnoticed and she quickly went back to work because that particular Friday they had only three workers. That is hardly adequate when cooking and serving more than 100 guests. So the word is out: **MORE WORKERS ARE NEEDED FOR FRIDAY NIGHTS!!** Call **Chris Frizell** or the church office.

John Van Dalen and Tony and Lois Tysseling are part of the **SUMMER AIRE** singers who are performing in a concert titled 'Hallelujah' Chorus. It will be held on **September 19th** at 3:00 p.m. in the First Presbyterian Church. Time moves swiftly so you might as well flip your calendar pages over now to September and pen in the above date!

Now is the time to register for Ross Point camp. Mark your vacation calendars etc. Questions, feel free to email **Steve Dittoe** at stedittoe@verizon.net. The cabins and lodges are all full, but you can still take your RV and/or tent. Dates for Ross Point are July 25th thru the 31st.

Please bring your family and friends to First Baptist Church for our annual 4th of July **Fun In The Sun** street fair, 2:00-4:00pm. It will be held on Wetmore street between Pacific and 32nd. Watch this publication for more information as the time draws near. If you would like to help, please call the church office at 425-259-9166 and they would be glad to sign you up. If you have a canopy that you would let us use, you can bring that into the office anytime, please mark it with your name and phone number so we can return it to you.

Ron Newman will be heading out to pick up fruit soon, get your orders in for cherries now! 425-397-0676

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Conclusion: A Vision for the Church

So how long and how often should we gather together? Where should we be meeting? When? *The answer is, wherever and whenever and as long and as often as it takes to truly and deeply connect with each other as described above.*

Can all of that be done in one day? In one hour? It's important to realize that one of the greatest gifts we can give is time. We need to spend more time in smaller, more intimate gatherings without forsaking the larger, more celebratory gatherings.

Imagine groups of three, four, ten, or eleven coming together throughout the week praying and caring and trusting one another deeply, consistently, and faithfully. They call each other when they are having a crisis. They can't wait to share good news with their small group of fellow believers. They connect with each other often because they love each other. They've become family.

Now, when all these interconnected groups of loving, caring, praying people gather together with other small groups of loving, caring, praying people there is really a cause for celebration. They are able to celebrate what God is doing in their gatherings and what God is doing in their community. They don't just show up for a Sunday song and sermon, they are expecting God to challenge them, move them and change them.

From smallgrouptrader.com (used with permission)

** The SAM Picnic is Friday, July 16th. at Kayak Point Park. Bring either a salad or dessert. The cost is \$5.00. Chicken or BBQ ribs will be provided along with cups, utensils and coffee. Time: Noon until ? If transportation is needed, the two church vans will be available. They will be leaving the church parking lot at 11:15 a.m. There will be an extra cost of \$2.00 for the van. Be sure to sign up at

*S.A.M.
Happenings*



Join us for VBS...As they participate in fun-filled activities, children will learn about God's amazing love and His Word, the Bible! We will have a great time with lively songs, hilarious skits, creative crafts, exciting games, Bible stories and tasty snacks— all of the things that make Vacation Bible School so much fun for children.

Where: FBC Campus When: June 28th-July 2nd

Time: 9am-12:00

Who: Kindergarten-5th Grade

Lifegroup Contributing Opportunities

Here is a list of the supplies that are needed for VBS this year. If you could help in any way, please bring your things into the Office, we will update this list as needed. Thanks! ! !

V.B.S. Supply List

- Crepe paper-various colors
- Bag of white Rice (10 Bags) small individual size
- Paper towel tubes (100)
- Ball of twine (2) thin twist
- Elmer's glue—small school size
- Construction Paper (Various colors) Size (300)
- Paper Plates (700)
- Paper Cups (700)
- White T-shirts (Various Kid's sizes)
- Rubber bands (300)
- Brown Paper Grocery Bags-Standard
- Five Gallon Buckets (2)
- Tarps (3) any size
- Wire Coat Hangers (100)
- Various gift cards to Winco or Wal-Mart

We need canopies now for Fun In The Sun, bring into the office with a label, please.

July 4th service
is going to be on
July 3rd
at 6:00 pm.

Our new **Walking in the Light, Life and Love of God** devotional, group questions booklet will be available for a small donation (\$2.00) beginning July 3rd at our Saturday evening service. As a congregation we will have an exciting, life transforming venture as we work our way through 1 John this summer starting Sunday, July 11th. Booklets will be available in the hospitality room.

USHER CAPTAIN 2010:

June—Darrell Olson
Marc Owenby

July—Luckey Elkins
Pete Sontra

COFFEE HOUR 2010

June 27th
John VanDalen
The Followers

July 4th—**FUN IN THE SUN**
CHURCH SERVICE IS
SATURDAY NIGHT AT 6:00 PM
Lyle Gordon
SAM

July 11th
David Brock
Men's Life Group

July 18th
Mel Tessness
Elders



• June 23rd Darlene Hegeberg
Steve Jansen
• June 25th Bryan Blair
• June 27th Laura Oversvee
• June 28th Bill Deller
Nathan Hall
Mark Owenby
• June 29th Brett Sontra

Check out our FBC website @ www.fbc-everett.org