

Missional families at St.Clair CC

St.Clair exists to share the love of Christ and make disciples in the Sherman neighbourhood, Hamilton and the rest of the world.

Discipleship (multiplication)

We long to be a group of people who are disciples and who are making disciples of Christ. The starting question is how do we make disciples not how do we run the church? Mike Breen writing about this said “if you make disciples you will always get the church but if you build the church you won’t always get disciples”. So what are the elements that make up the life of discipleship?

How do we make disciples?

“**Go** and **make** disciples, **teaching** them to **obey** what I commanded” (Matthew 28)

“Anyone who **hears** these words and puts them into **practise** is like a **wise** man” (Matthew 7 – sermon on the mount)

And you should **imitate me** as I imitate Christ (1 Corinthians 11:1)

Discipleship will involve us studying together, praying together, serving together and eating together and seems to fit with the New Testament model. Sunday mornings won’t be the focus of our church family life but rather these smaller communities of people (missional family groups). This is most likely where people will invite their friends and begin to journey with those who don’t know Christ. Sunday mornings then will truly be a celebration and a place where followers of Jesus can be encouraged, equipped and sent out again to live the life of the church and gospel in our contexts.

(Weekly) discipleship groups

We don't want to run "classic" small groups. We want our weekly groups to be a place where we eat together, read the scripture, pray and be involved in mission. The hope is that they function more like a family and that this is where "church" is taking place as much as on Sundays. We will need to tweak these ideas as we go but it will be important to have 3 key elements for these discipleship families.

There will be a focus on:

"UP" – our relationship with God

"IN" – our relationship with each other

"OUT" our relationship to those outside the group

Each missional (family) group will take on a life of its own like an actual family, however each group will have these same values:

- Eating together
- Praying together
- Studying together
- Serving together
- Accountability

Eating together: Each group will share a weekly meal together. It can be potluck or taking turns, whatever is easiest for the specific group. This will be such a great time to invite people in the community to.

Praying together: Each group will take time to share and pray with one another. One idea was that each group would have questions to answer about their own walk with God, how they are interacting with their neighbours and those around them and how they are doing personally. This time will be important to pray for each other as well as the needs of their friends and people they daily come into

contact with. We want to be a community that believes God wants to transform people's lives and draw people to himself.

Studying together: As disciples and disciples makers we want to grow in our knowledge of Christ and in our knowledge of Scripture. We will take time each week to study God's word and discuss it. This could look slightly different each time but we want the scripture to be central to forming us as followers of Christ. We don't just want to know the text but also to live it out. Two of the questions we want to keep coming back to is "what did God say to you?" and "what have you done about it?"

Serving together: Each group will serve their community together. This doesn't need to be weekly or a set event, although it is so important that this does take place. It can be as simple as hearing about a need from a friend, neighbour or organization in the community and gathering together to be a blessing and the hands and feet of Christ. It could be a friend moving, or giving to a food bank together, or simply filling a need in the community around where the group meets. As we encourage people to reach out the hope is that the group will discern together where they are to get involved in the community. Rather than tell the groups what to do we will give them space to try and experiment with a few things.

Accountability: Accountability will take place possibly in smaller groups within the family. Whether that is boys and girls separate... or a few people meet together bi weekly, or whatever works but this will be an important time to get intentional and vulnerable. We know this may not happen in the big family gathering especially if people are inviting their friends but accountability is an important part of growing in our relationship with Christ.