

Circles

Groups and Teams

At Stanley Park Community Church we place a lot of emphasis on relationships, small groups, community and service. One helpful way we have found to talk about this is by speaking of Groups and Teams as the main building blocks of our Church structure.

Groups

Over the years we have had many different kinds of groups.

- Groups that meet at the church
- Groups that meet in homes
- Groups where the children are involved
- Groups that go through a book or other curriculum
- Groups that meet primarily to pray
- Groups that meet a short time to study a particular course or theme
- Groups that meet for many years
- Groups for people interested in the basics of the Christian Faith
- Groups for people interested in discovering their gifts and talents

People meet in these groups to develop friendships, to worship together, to share honestly, to pray for each other, to learn from the Scriptures, to grow spiritually, and to develop ideas and listen to God's direction for loving and serving those around us. The focus of all these groups is on living out our faith together in a family like setting.

Circles

Over the years we have emphasized and organized Groups and Teams. But we have also discovered a fascinating thing. In addition to the groups that we plan there are all kinds of "unofficial" gatherings of people. Two or three get together to pray. Several meet to talk about their spiritual journey. Friends read a book together and talk about it.

And in addition to the teams that we organize people spontaneously get together to help and serve in the church and in the community.

We think this is excellent! We wanted to find a way to talk about these more spontaneous, less "official" groups and teams along side of our other groups and teams. And we want very much to recognize and affirm the vital role that these gatherings play in people's lives and the life of the Church.

In 2007 we started using the term "Circle" to describe all of these groups and teams. The planned ones and the spontaneous ones. The ones that could be put on an organizational chart and the ones that will never appear in any formal chart or report. We still very much think of Groups and Teams as the main building blocks of our church structure. But we joyfully recognize that there are always many more connections, many more gatherings, and much more service than can be easily described.

And this has led to a key double appeal.

- Do Something to Help You Grow
- Do Something to Bless Others

Whether formal or informal, find some folks to connect with. Do something with those people that will help you go the next step in your spiritual journey. Keep growing! And do something that will help someone outside of yourself and your usual circles. Get Going!

Teams

We believe that every Christian has been called and gifted by God to serve Him and others. Our Ministry Team structure aims to provide a simple way put this belief into practice. The network of ministry teams is a way to mobilize the Church for meaningful service.

Ministry Teams ...

- Aim to mobilize people for meaningful ministry.
- Are able to accomplish more than individuals because of the synergy of working together.
- Are Action Oriented -- they exist to DO something.
- Are formed as much by identifying peoples' gifts and passions as by identifying 'jobs' that need to be done.
- Vary greatly in size and complexity.
- Have as much structure - and only as much structure - as is needed to accomplish their mission.
- Can be started and disbanded quickly.
- Are part of a larger network of teams. We aim to provide real oversight for the teams via team leaders and the administrative structure of the Church. But we aim for the kind of oversight that enables and frees people to serve, and not the kind that stifles initiative and personal ownership.