

### 1: Life Community Church - Home

*Life in Community lays a compelling foundation for the theological reasons why the Christian life without community is an enemy to the gospel while consistently showing practical ways to live in community.*

Certainly my theology and philosophical inclinations are. But I recognize that many of you are not Catholic. And I want to learn from you. I believe that when our traditions come into dialogue, we not only come to a better understanding of one another, but we can also strengthen our own traditions by drawing from the great good that we recognize in one another. So while I may use terminology or ideas that come out of my own tradition, I hope that you can consider them, and I invite you to set aside what may not be useful or helpful and to receive or consider what you think may be good and beautiful. When I was asked to speak at ReVoice, the first topic that came to my mind was community. After college and coming out as gay, one of my first concerns was where I would find love and intimacy. We were all made to give selflessly of ourselves, to offer ourselves to others in self-sacrificial love. But we were also made to receive this love. And to say that we were made to give but not receive love would be to claim a status greater than God Himself, who is communion, a Trinity of mutual self-offering. And so we are called to image this love not only in giving but also in receiving. Where would I go when I felt lonely? First! One of my favorite theologians, John Henry Newman, once said that in a higher world it may be otherwise, but here below to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often. I think this phrase captures what it means to be a Christian here on earth. Being a Christian is not simply a static state. And no life is susceptible to or in need of a simple solution. Gnosticism is always easier than sanctity. Sanctity happens in a life. Community is not the cure-all or the fix. Community is not the easy finish. Community is not a building we can shove them into. Community is the soil. It may be necessary, but simply having it there is not sufficient for achieving the Christian life, or finding happiness. And Christians have a responsibility to build, maintain, contribute to, and love our communities. Community is for Christians. We all need it. Fourth! Community is something that flows out of the interior lives of each of its members. And it manifests itself at the intersections of those lives. So a robust prayer life, a commitment to shared values, and mutual love and affection will always undergird the most robust communities. You love most deeply from your interior life, and our interior fears, anxieties, and pride will eventually manifest themselves in how we dwell in community. One command that surfaces throughout the Gospels is: And so one of our first responsibilities to our communities is to overcome our own personal fears so that we can love and live in freedom. Fifth! Community is also personal. My community cannot also be your community. I think that good communities are like good architecture. They draw on the local resources and look to the local architecture to build something that is organic, sustainable, functional, and beautiful. So a little about my community. When I was a junior in college, I took a leave of absence to participate in a study abroad program in Rome. The program was through the Catholic Studies department at the University of St. I fell in love. I lived in an old convent with about thirty other students, along with a professor and his family. We prayed together in the chapel in our building, cooked together, took courses on philosophy and art and theology, had community meals, and I discovered a great acceptance in that group. Those friends were some of the first people I came out to. After college, I decided to move to Minnesota to pursue a Masters degree through the Catholic Studies program, as well as a degree in law, and my one of my first roommates in St. Paul was one of the guys I studied abroad with. About a year later, a group of three women from our study abroad group, along with a fourth in my Masters program were living in the upper unit of a duplex, and the lower unit opened up just as my previous lease was ending. So I moved in with two other guys. At that time, the house consisted of seven of us who had lived together in Rome, plus the extra from my Masters program. And I lived in that house for four years. Three of the women stayed the same for those four years, though the guys are all different now. Those relationships have become much less like roommates and more like family. A broader community grew with and stayed connected to the house. Now, unfortunately, the house is no more. A couple of months ago, after I had committed to this talk, our landlord decided not to renew our leases.

**2: Life In Community Print - LIT : The Saint John's Bible**

*The Life in Community (LinC) program offers support for people with mental health issues, and their carers, to get involved in social inclusion activities by encouraging community linkage, building on natural supports and developing social connections.*

The love of Christ has gathered a great number of disciples to become one, so that, like him and thanks to him, in the Spirit, they might, throughout the centuries, be able to respond to the love of the Father, loving him "with all their hearts, with all their soul, with all their might" cf. Among these disciples, those gathered together in religious communities, women and men "from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and tongues" Rev. Born not "of the will of the flesh", nor from personal attraction, nor from human motives, but "from God" Jn. All that is said here about religious communities applies also to communities in societies of apostolic life, bearing in mind their specific character and proper legislation. These transformations, as well as the hopes and disappointments which have accompanied them, and continue to do so, require reflection in light of the Second Vatican Council. The transformations have led to positive results, but also to results which are questionable. They have put into a clearer light not a few Gospel values, thus giving new vitality to religious community, but they have also given rise to questions by obscuring some elements characteristic of this same fraternal life lived in community. In some places, it seems that religious community has lost its relevance in the eyes of women and men religious and is, perhaps, no longer an ideal to be pursued. With the serenity and urgency characteristic of those who seek the Lord, many communities have sought to evaluate this transformation, so that they might better fulfil their proper vocation in the midst of the People of God. Where the encounter with these sources and with the originating inspiration has been partial or weak, fraternal life has run risks and suffered a certain loss of tone. The values and counter-values which ferment within an epoch or a cultural setting, and the social structures which manifest them, impinge on everyone, including the Church and its religious communities. Religious communities either constitute an evangelical leaven within society, announce the Good News in the midst of the world, the here and now proclamation of the heavenly Jerusalem, or else they succumb by decline quickly or slowly, simply because they have conformed to the world. For this reason, a reflection and new proposals on "fraternal life in common" must take this existential framework into account. For all these reasons, this document, before addressing its topic directly, begins with an overview of the changes encountered in the settings which have more immediately affected the quality of fraternal life and its ways of being lived in the various religious communities. The Second Vatican Council contributed greatly to a re-evaluation of "fraternal life in common" and to a renewed vision of religious community. More than any other factor, it is the development of ecclesiology which has affected the evolution of our understanding of religious community. From this, several consequences follow: Much more deeply, it is a participation in and qualified witness of the Church-Mystery, since it is a living expression and privileged fulfilment of its own particular "communion", of the great Trinitarian "koinonia", in which the Father has willed that men and women have part in the Son and in the Holy Spirit. For this very reason, it has as its commitment and mission, which cannot be renounced, both to be and to be seen to be a living organism of intense fraternal communion, a sign and stimulus for all the baptised. It is part of the organic communion of the whole Church, which is continuously enriched by the Spirit with a variety of ministries and charisms. Those who enter into such communities must have the particular grace of a vocation. In practice, the members of a religious community are seen to be bound by a common calling from God in continuity with the foundational charism, by a characteristically common ecclesial consecration, and by a common response in sharing that "experience of the Spirit" lived and handed on by the founder and in his or her mission within the Church. Religious community exists for the Church, to signify her and enrich her, 7 to render her better able to carry out her mission. It is from this that the fraternal communion of religious community derives its vigour as sign and instrument. In fact, fraternal communion is at both the beginning and the end of apostolate. The Magisterium, since the time of the Council, has deepened and enriched the renewed vision of religious community with fresh insights. When it speaks of "common life", it is necessary to distinguish clearly two

aspects. While the Code 9 could have given the impression of concentrating on exterior elements and uniformity of life-style, Vatican II 10 and the new Code 11 insist explicitly on the spiritual dimension and on the bond of fraternity which must unite all members in charity. The new Code has synthesised these two elements in speaking of "living a fraternal life in common". It underlines "communion of life" and interpersonal relationships; 13 - the other, more visible: Development within society 4. Society is in constant evolution and men and women religious, who are not of the world, but who nevertheless live in the world, are subject to its influence. Here we will mention only some aspects which have had a direct impact on religious life in general and on religious community in particular. Local Churches have reacted actively in the face of these developments. Above all in Latin America, through the general assemblies of the Latin American episcopate at Medellin, Puebla, and Santo Domingo, the "evangelical and preferential option for the poor" 18 has been strongly emphasised, and has led to a new emphasis on social commitment. Religious communities have been profoundly affected by this; many were led to rethink their presence in society, in view of more direct service to the poor, sometimes even through insertion among the poor. The overwhelming increase of suffering on the outskirts of large cities and the impoverishment of rural areas have hastened the "repositioning" of a considerable number of religious communities towards these poorer areas. Everywhere, there is the challenge of inculturation. Cultures, traditions, and the mentality of a particular country all have an impact on the way fraternal life is lived in religious communities. Moreover, movements of large-scale migration in recent years have raised the problem of the co-existence of different cultures, and the problem of racist reactions. All of these issues also have repercussions on pluri-cultural and multi-racial religious communities, which are becoming increasingly common. In the immediate wake of the Council, this process, especially in the west, quickened and was marked by moments of calling meetings about everything and rejection of authority. The Church and religious life were not immune from such questioning of authority, with significant repercussions for community life as well. A one-sided and exasperated stress on freedom contributed to the spread of a culture of individualism throughout the west, thus weakening the ideal of life in common and commitment to community projects. We also observe other reactions which were equally one-sided, such as flight into safely authoritarian projects, based on blind faith in a reassuring leader. These factors have severely tested the ability of some religious communities to "resist evil" but they have also given rise to new styles of personal and community life which are a clear evangelical testimony for our world. All of this has been a challenge, a call to live the evangelical counsels with more vigour, and this has helped support the witness of the wider Christian community. Changes in religious life 5. In recent years, there have been changes which have profoundly affected religious communities. In many countries, increased state programmes in areas in which religious have traditionally been active -- such as social service, education, and health -- together with the decrease in vocations, have resulted in a diminished presence of religious in works which used to be typically those of apostolic institutes. Thus, there is a shrinking of large religious communities at the service of visible works which characterised various institutes for many years. This is accompanied, in some regions, by a preference for smaller communities composed of religious who are active in works not belonging to the institute, even though they are often in line with the charism of that institute. This has a significant impact on the style of their common life and requires a change in traditional rhythms. This, however, has also made evident the need for changes in the traditional profile of religious communities, which are deemed, by some, to be inadequate for coping with the new situations. This was followed immediately by a sharpened sense of community, understood as fraternal life built more on the quality of interpersonal relationships than on the formal aspects of regular observance. Here or there, these accents were radicalised giving rise to the opposing tendencies of individualism and communitarianism, sometimes without coming to a satisfactory balance. This has led to a different way of approaching problems, through community dialogue, co-responsibility and subsidiarity. All members became involved in the problems of the community. This greatly affected interpersonal relationships and, in turn, affected the way authority is perceived. In not a few cases, authority then encountered practical difficulties in finding its true place within the new context. The combination of changes and tendencies mentioned has affected the character of religious communities in a profound way but also in ways that must be differentiated. The differentiations, sometimes rather notable,

depend, as can be easily understood, on the diversity of cultures and continents, on whether the communities are of men or of women, on the kind of religious life and the kind of institute, on the different activities and the degree of commitment to re-read and reclaim the charism of the founder, on the different ways of standing before society and the Church, on different ways of receiving the values proposed by the Council, on different traditions and ways of common life, and on various ways of exercising authority and promoting the renewal of permanent formation. These problematic settings are only partially common to all; rather they tend to differ from community to community. Objectives of the document 6. In light of these new situations, the purpose of this document is, above all, to support the efforts made by many communities of religious, both men and women, to improve the quality of their fraternal life. This will be done by offering some criteria of discernment, in view of authentic evangelical renewal. This document also intends to offer reasons for reflection to those who have distanced themselves from the community ideal, so that they may give serious consideration again to the need for fraternal life in common for those consecrated to the Lord in a religious institute or incorporated in a society of apostolic life. For this purpose, the document is structured as follows: To enter into the mystery of communion and of fraternity, and before undertaking the difficult discernment necessary for renewing the evangelical radiance of our communities, we must humbly invoke the Holy Spirit, that he may accomplish what he alone can do: "You shall be my people and I will be your God" Ez. Before being a human construction, religious community is a gift of the Spirit. The Church as communion 9. In creating man and woman in his own image and likeness, God created them for communion. God the Creator, who revealed himself as Love, as Trinity, as communion, called them to enter into intimate relationship with himself and into interpersonal communion, in the universal fraternity of all men and women. In his great love, the Father sent his Son, the new Adam, to reconstitute all creation and bring it to full unity. When he came among us, he established the beginning of the new People of God, calling to himself apostles and disciples, men and women -- a living parable of the human family gathered together in unity. He announced to them universal fraternity in the Father, who made us his intimates, his children, and brothers and sisters among ourselves. In this way he taught equality in fraternity and reconciliation in forgiveness. He overturned the relationships of power and domination, himself giving the example of how to serve and choose the last place. During the Last Supper, he entrusted to them the new commandment of mutual love: Then he turned to the Father asking, as a synthesis of his desires, for the unity of all, modelled on the Trinitarian unity: By his death on the cross, he destroyed the barrier that separated peoples, reconciling us all in unity cf. By this, he taught us that communion and unity are the fruit of sharing in the mystery of His death. The coming of the Holy Spirit, first gift to believers, brought about the unity willed by Christ. Poured out on the disciples gathered in the Upper Room with Mary, the Spirit gave visibility to the Church, which, from the very first moment, is characterised as fraternity and communion in the unity of one heart and one soul cf. This communion is the bond of charity which joins among themselves all the members of the same Body of Christ, and the Body with its Head. The same life-giving presence of the Holy Spirit 22 builds in Christ organic cohesion: Along her path through history, she has become increasingly conscious of being the People and family of God, the Body of Christ, Temple of the Spirit, Sacrament of the intimate union of the human race, communion, icon of the Trinity. The Second Vatican Council has brought out, perhaps as never before, this mysterious and "communional" dimension of the Church. Religious community as expression of ecclesial communion From the very beginning, consecrated life has cultivated this intimate nature of Christianity. In fact, the religious community has felt itself to be in continuity with the group of those who followed Jesus. He had called them personally, one by one, to live in communion with himself and with the other disciples, to share his life and his destiny cf. The first monastic communities looked to the community of the disciples who followed Christ and to the community of Jerusalem as their ideal of life. Like the nascent Church, having one heart and one soul, so the monks, gathering themselves under a spiritual guide, the abbot, set out to live the radical communion of material and spiritual goods and the unity established by Christ. This unity finds its archetype and its unifying dynamism in the life of unity of the Persons of the Most Blessed Trinity. In subsequent centuries, many forms of community have arisen under the charismatic action of the Spirit. He who searches the depths of the human heart reaches out to it and satisfies its needs. He raises up men and women who,

enlightened by the light of the Gospel and sensitive to the signs of the times, give life to new religious families -- and hence to new ways of living out the one single communion in a diversity of ministries and communities.

### 3: Community Life Church | Forney - Sunnyvale - Kaufman - Rockwall

*Life in Community Community Is an Antidote to Addiction. November 1, by Jordanna Bazeley. When I looked up and saw the hand-drawn poster made by a particularly artistic friend of mine, I realized what was going on.*

Gemeinschaft usually translated as "community" and Gesellschaft "society" or "association". No group is exclusively one or the other. Gemeinschaft stress personal social interactions , and the roles, values, and beliefs based on such interactions. Gesellschaft stress indirect interactions, impersonal roles, formal values, and beliefs based on such interactions. New social tools relieve some of those burdens, allowing for new kinds of group-forming, like using simple sharing to anchor the creation of new groups. Conversation creates more of a sense of community than sharing does. Collaborative production is a more involved form of cooperation, as it increases the tension between individual and group goals. The litmus test for collaborative production is simple: An online community builds weaker bonds if allows users to be anonymous. Organizational communication Effective communication practices in group and organizational settings are very important to the formation and maintenance of communities. The ways that ideas and values are communicated within communities are important to the induction of new members, the formulation of agendas, the selection of leaders and many other aspects. Organizational communication is the study of how people communicate within an organizational context and the influences and interactions within organizational structures. Group members depend on the flow of communication to establish their own identity within these structures and learn to function in the group setting. Although organizational communication, as a field of study, is usually geared toward companies and business groups, these may also be seen as communities. The principles of organizational communication can also be applied to other types of communities. Public administration[ edit ] Public administration is the province of local, state and federal governments, with local governments responsible for units in towns, cities, villages, and counties, among others. The most well known "community department" is housing and community development which has responsibility for both economic development initiatives, and as public housing and community infrastructure e. To what extent do participants in joint activities experience a sense of community? A "sense of community index SCI was developed by Chavis and colleagues, and revised and adapted by others. Although originally designed to assess sense of community in neighborhoods, the index has been adapted for use in schools, the workplace, and a variety of types of communities. Socialization Lewes Bonfire Night procession commemorating 17 Protestant martyrs burnt at the stake from to The process of learning to adopt the behavior patterns of the community is called socialization. The most fertile time of socialization is usually the early stages of life, during which individuals develop the skills and knowledge and learn the roles necessary to function within their culture and social environment. But socialization also includes adults moving into a significantly different environment, where they must learn a new set of behaviors. Other important influences include schools, peer groups, people, mass media, the workplace, and government. Community development Community development is often linked with community work or community planning, and may involve stakeholders, foundations, governments, or contracted entities including non-government organisations NGOs , universities or government agencies to progress the social well-being of local, regional and, sometimes, national communities. More grassroots efforts, called community building or community organizing , seek to empower individuals and groups of people by providing them with the skills they need to effect change in their own communities. Public administrators, in contrast, need to understand community development in the context of rural and urban development, housing and economic development, and community, organizational and business development. Formal accredited programs conducted by universities, as part of degree granting institutions, are often used to build a knowledge base to drive curricula in public administration , sociology and community studies. Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University are examples of national community development in the United States. The Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University in New York State offers core courses in community and economic development, and in areas ranging from non-profit development to US budgeting federal to local, community funds. In the United Kingdom, Oxford University

has led in providing extensive research in the field through its Community Development Journal, [14] used worldwide by sociologists and community development practitioners. At the intersection between community development and community building are a number of programs and organizations with community development tools. The institute makes available downloadable tools [15] to assess community assets and make connections between non-profit groups and other organizations that can help in community building. Community-Making and Peace Scott Peck argues that the almost accidental sense of community that exists at times of crisis can be consciously built. Peck believes that conscious community building is a process of deliberate design based on the knowledge and application of certain rules. When people first come together, they try to be "nice" and present what they feel are their most personable and friendly characteristics. People move beyond the inauthenticity of pseudo-community and feel safe enough to present their "shadow" selves. Moves beyond the attempts to fix, heal and convert of the chaos stage, when all people become capable of acknowledging their own woundedness and brokenness, common to human beings. Deep respect and true listening for the needs of the other people in this community. Community building that is geared toward citizen action is usually termed "community organizing. Where good-faith negotiations fail, these constituency-led organizations seek to pressure the decision-makers through a variety of means, including picketing, boycotting , sit-ins, petitioning, and electoral politics. Organizing often means building a widely accessible power structure, often with the end goal of distributing power equally throughout the community. Community organizers generally seek to build groups that are open and democratic in governance. Such groups facilitate and encourage consensus decision-making with a focus on the general health of the community rather than a specific interest group. If communities are developed based on something they share in common, whether location or values, then one challenge for developing communities is how to incorporate individuality and differences. Rebekah Nathan suggests[ according to whom? Community currencies[ edit ] Some communities have developed their own local exchange trading systems LETS [24] and local currencies , such as the Ithaca Hours system, [25] to encourage economic growth and an enhanced sense of community. Community currencies have recently proven valuable in meeting the needs of people living in various South American nations, particularly Argentina, that recently suffered as a result of the collapse of the Argentinian national currency. Community service Community services are a wide range of community institutions, governmental and non-governmental services, voluntary, third sector organizations, and grassroots and neighborhood efforts in local communities, towns, cities, and suburban-exurban areas. In line with governmental and community thinking, volunteering and unpaid services are often preferred e. Non-profit organizations from youth services, to family and neighborhood centers, recreation facilities, civic clubs, and employment, housing and poverty agencies are often the foundation of community services programs, but it may also be undertaken under the auspices of government which funds all NGOs , one or more businesses, or by individuals or newly formed collaboratives. Community services is also the broad term given to health and the human services in local communities and was specifically used as the framework for deinstitutionalization and community integration to homes, families and local communities e. However, while many community services are voluntary, some may be part of alternative sentencing approaches in a justice system and it can be required by educational institutions as part of internships, employment training, and post-graduation plans. Community services may be paid for through different revenue streams which include targeted federal funds, taxpayer contributions, state and local grants and contracts, voluntary donations, Medicaid or health care funds, community development block grants, targeted education funds, and so forth. In the s, the business sector began to contract with government, and also consult on government policies, and has shifted the framework of community services to the for-profit domains. However, by the s, the call was to return to community and to go beyond community services to belonging, relationships, community building and welcoming new population groups and diversity in community life. Ecovillage A number of ways to categorize types of community have been proposed. One such breakdown is as follows: These are also called communities of place. They may be included as communities of need or identity, such as disabled persons , or frail aged people. The usual categorizations of community relations have a number of problems: This involves enduring attachment to particular places and particular people. It is the dominant form taken by customary and

tribal communities. In these kinds of communities, the land is fundamental to identity. This involves giving primacy to communities coming together around particular chosen ways of life, such as morally charged or interest-based relations or just living or working in the same location. Hence the following sub-forms: This is where a community is self-consciously treated as an entity to be projected and re-created. It can be projected as through thin advertising slogan, for example gated community , or can take the form of ongoing associations of people who seek political integration, communities of practice [34] based on professional projects, associative communities which seek to enhance and support individual creativity, autonomy and mutuality. A nation is one of the largest forms of projected or imagined community. Community of place Possibly the most common usage of the word "community" indicates a large group living in close proximity. Examples of local community include: A municipality is an administrative local area generally composed of a clearly defined territory and commonly referring to a town or village. Wakefield, Massachusetts is an example of a small town which constitutes a local community. Although large cities are also municipalities, they are often thought of as a collection of communities, due to their diversity. A neighborhood is a geographically localized community, often within a larger city or suburb. A planned community is one that was designed from scratch and expanded more or less following the plan. It was also common during the European colonization of the Americas to build according to a plan either on fresh ground or on the ruins of earlier Amerindian cities. Community service is a free service. Community of interest In some contexts, "community" indicates a group of people with a common identity other than location. Members often interact regularly. Common examples in everyday usage include: A "professional community" is a group of people with the same or related occupations. Some of those members may join a professional society , making a more defined and formalized group. These are also sometimes known as communities of practice. A virtual community is a group of people primarily or initially communicating or interacting with each other by means of information technologies, typically over the Internet , rather than in person. These may be either communities of interest, practice or communion. Research interest is evolving in the motivations for contributing to online communities. These communities are key to our modern day society, because we have the ability to share information with millions in a matter of seconds. Intentional community Some communities share both location and other attributes. Members choose to live near each other because of one or more common interests. A retirement community is designated and at least usually designed for retirees and seniorsâ€™ often restricted to those over a certain age, such as It differs from a retirement home , which is a single building or small complex, by having a number of autonomous households. An intentional community is a deliberate residential community with a much higher degree of social communication than other communities. The members of an intentional community typically hold a common social, political or spiritual vision and share responsibilities and resources. Intentional communities include Amish villages, ashrams , cohousing , communes , ecovillages , housing cooperatives , kibbutzim , and land trusts. Special nature of human community[ edit ] Definitions of community as "organisms inhabiting a common environment and interacting with one another," [36] while scientifically accurate, do not convey the richness, diversity and complexity of human communities. Their classification, likewise is almost never precise. Untidy as it may be, community is vital for humans. Scott Peck expresses this in the following way:

**4: Life Community Church | North Carolina**

*Life in Community The Life in Community (LinC) volunteer program operates across the Australian Capital Territory and in Melbourne, out of the North Fitzroy and South Yarra Prevention and Recovery Care (PARC) service and Opening Doors residential service.*

Historiographic background[ edit ] Ulrich Bonnell Phillips wrote the first major historical study of the 20th century dealing with slavery. In *American Negro Slavery*, Phillips refers to slaves as " negroes", who for the most part were by racial quality submissive rather than defiant, light-hearted instead of gloomy, amiable and ingratiating instead of sullen, and whose very defects invited paternalism rather than repression. Although African American academics such as W. Stampp in *The Peculiar Institution*: He questions the reality of plantation paternalism described by Phillips: He argues that slaves had instead been infantilized, or "made" into Sambos, by the brutal treatment received at the hands of slaveowners and overseers. Elkins compares the process to the infantilization of Jews in Nazi concentration camps. Stampp admits that "few ask what the slaves themselves thought of bondage. As historian George P. Rawick points out, more weight was often given to white sources: Focusing on the perspective of the slave, new studies incorporated the slave narratives and WPA interviews: Wood, *Black Majority*: One of the more controversial of these studies was John W. He asserts that the retention of African culture acted as a form of resistance to enslavement: Blassingame notes, " Antebellum black slaves created several unique cultural forms which lightened their burden of oppression, promoted group solidarity, provided ways for verbalizing aggression, sustaining hope, building self-esteem, and often represented areas of life largely free from the control of whites. He remarks, "While many of these tales were brought over to the South, the African element appears most clearly in the animal tales. Southern slaves often included African animals like elephants, lions, and monkeys as characters in their folk tales. Other religious survivals noted by Blassingame include funeral rites, grave decorating, and ritualistic dancing and singing. Blassingame, however, points out that in spite of restrictions, slaves were able to build a strong musical tradition drawing on their African heritage. Music, songs, and dances were similar to those performed or played in Africa. Instruments reproduced by slaves include drums, three-stringed banjos, gourd rattles, and mandolins. While ministers preached obedience in the presence of the slaveowners and other whites, slaves often met in secret, "invisible" services unsupervised by whites. In these " invisible churches", slaves could discuss freedom, liberty, and the judgment of God against slaveowners. Blassingame grants that slaveowners did have control over slave marriages. They encouraged monogamous relationships to "make it easier to discipline their slaves. While the form of family life in the quarters differed radically from that among free Negroes and whites, this does not mean it failed to perform many of the traditional functions of the family—the rearing of children being one of the most important of these functions. Since slave parents were primarily responsible for training their children, they could cushion the shock of bondage for them, help them to understand their situation, teach them values different from those their masters tried to instill in them, and give them a referent for self-esteem other than the master. When children understood that they were enslaved usually after their first whipping, parents dissuaded angry urges to run away or seek revenge. In the quarters, he "acted like a man", castigating whites for the mistreatment of himself and his family; in the field working for the master, he appeared obedient and submissive. According to Blassingame, "Sometimes children internalized both the true personality traits and the contradictory behavioral patterns of their parents. The family was, in short, an important survival mechanism. Sambo was a combination of the Uncle Remus, Jim Crow, and Uncle Tom figures who represented the faithful, submissive, and superstitious slave. Jack worked faithfully until he was mistreated, then he became uncooperative and occasionally rebellious. Nat was the perpetual runaway and rebellious slave feared by slaveowners. Named after Nat Turner, the Nat character retaliated against slaveowners and was subdued and punished only when overcome by greater numbers. Southern writers felt a need to defend slavery from allegations of abuse and brutality leveled by northern abolitionists, so Sambo became a common portrayal to justify and explain the need for plantation paternalism. Finally, slaveowners used the Sambo stereotype to alleviate their own fears and anxieties about the potential

rebelliousness of their slaves. Like a man whistling in the dark to bolster his courage, the white man had to portray the slave as Sambo. He argues that variations present in plantations, overseers, and masters gave the slave "much more freedom from restraint and more independence and autonomy than his institutionally defined role allowed. Consequently, the slave did not have to be infantile or abjectly docile in order to remain alive. Sullivan claims that "significant others", persons with the most power to reward and punish individual behavior, were primarily responsible for determining behavior. Interpersonal theorists argue that "behavioral patterns are determined by the characteristics of the situation, how the person perceives them, and his behavioral dispositions at the time. Blassingame explains, "Our sense of self-esteem is heightened or lowered by our perception of the images others have of us. The extent of submissiveness often depends on the structure of the group to which the person belongs.

### 5: FRATERNAL LIFE IN COMMUNITY

*The life of a Sister can be challenging, but friendship, support and a strong faith bind us together and bring joy and laughter to our lives. Our life in community nurtures our spirit and strengthens our relationship with God, giving us the inspiration to carry out our mission every day.*

Student Ministry News Jul 30, In just a couple of weeks, we will have a special evening service that you will want to attend. Pastor Rob has faithfully served Life Community Church for 14 years and has invested in the lives of hundreds of students. He has been a loyal, dedicated servant, but most importantly, a dear friend to me who has demonstrated a heart for God and for students. We will have a night of appreciation at 6: I have contacted and received resumes from pastors of some of the largest churches in the country. But a few months ago, God began to work in the life of my son, reminding him of the most satisfying and fruitful times in his life and ministry - his senior year at Wesleyan Academy when he was one of the student chaplains. There he began an early morning prayer time and spoke at chapel. He has also been reflecting on his ministry as an R. As God was taking him down memory lane, Jake took a few students from Mosaic to Crossroads Camp for the week, and while there, God began to clarify and confirm direction in his life. I spoke with our Pastoral staff, getting their feedback as well as the Personnel Committee. I interviewed my son for a couple of hours focusing on two questions: After a couple of hours of conversation, I was convinced the young man who grew up in this church and was licensed and ordained to the gospel ministry by this church was ready to serve this church in this capacity. I look forward to him sharing his strategy with the parents of our students in the near future. Jake has been meeting with a group of young men from Mosaic on Thursday nights in his home and will continue to do so even while he begins to serve full-time here at LCC. Please pray for this time of transition and for the other staff positions that will need to be filled. Pray that God will continue to lead and send those who are called and equipped to serve here. We, as followers of Christ, need to realize what we say and do really matters. We need divine direction during these difficult days to impact our community. That you would come down! That the mountains might shake at Your presence! Is that the cry of your heart? May God give us His vision for His glory. We need for God to burden us over a lost, lonely and hurting world. We need to love God and love others in such a way that it is contagious. In other words, they come to the hospital for healing, but get an infection while there. That is not on purpose, but it happens. Those who are spiritually sick ride by our church, and many others attend every week seeking answers and hope in the midst of hopelessness. Do they find hope and help in their time of need? Or are there spiritual germs that contaminate and hinder them from knowing the truth? We have a responsibility to our Lord to be a lighthouse, a lifesaving station, a place of rest in the midst of restlessness. There will be an exciting time of praise and worship in the morning services as we celebrate our risen Savior, and our evening service will be powerful and engaging as we lift up the Lord in song.

**6: The Slave Community - Wikipedia**

*Home; Life in Community Why We Live in Community. We are convinced that a life in church community is the greatest service we can offer humanity and the best way we can proclaim Christ.*

What is the Church? The Church is spread across the whole world and made up of every culture and language—all believers alive on planet earth. It is not limited to a building, just as a natural family is not limited to their house. As Christ is the head of this family, all members are considered part of the Body of Christ. It is like having relatives all over the world but living with your immediate family. A local church is a group of believers committed to worshiping Christ, teaching his Word, supporting each other as you follow Jesus together and proclaim the good news to others. Why do you think it would be important for you to spend time with other Christians? Discover the benefits of life in this new community!

1. The local church provides opportunity for us to enjoy this community. You will see that the benefits are mutual. Pastors and teachers help you grow in your Christian life as they feed you the spiritual food of the Bible and help you to know God better. In what areas of life do you feel tossed about by every wind of teaching? Just as a house keeps people protected from harm, a good local church community can keep Christians safe from false teaching. Would you be able to recognize false teaching on your own? Being part of a church family helps you learn how to love others and their differences. As we do so, we model his love to the world. Why do you think Christians loving one another would be such a powerful witness? Read 1 Corinthians God has given you spiritual gifts to benefit your church family. A local church family can help you discover your gift and learn how to use it to strengthen the Body of Christ. Whether God gave you the gift of singing, teaching, or giving, that role is a crucial one for healthy functioning of the Body of Christ. How do you think someone discovers her or his spiritual gift? Finding Community in a Local Church God knows you need the guidance of a pastor, the care of other Christians, and the safety and support of a good church to help you grow as a Christian. What makes a good church? No church is perfect just like no family is perfect. But, as stated on the first page, a healthy church is committed to certain things. Look for a church that

- Worships Christ A healthy church presents Jesus as the Son of God and faith in him alone as the only way to be saved from your sins and have a relationship with God.
- Grows Believers to Follow Jesus Together A healthy church encourages you to personally follow Jesus as his disciple and grow stronger in your faith—what you read in Ephesians 4: Pray and ask God to help you find the local church he wants you to join. He has promised to provide for you, so you can trust him to answer your request. When you find a healthy church that is committed to the four values listed above, thank God! Ask him how you can serve there. The sharing of our lives requires sincere love, kind speech, continuing encouragement, heartfelt forgiveness, and selfless generosity. All these qualities are possible because of the Holy Spirit living inside each member and binding us all together. Relationships among believers should be marked by love for each other, which is the very thing that attracts those who do not have a relationship with Jesus. Just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. Everyone will know by this that you are my disciples—if you have love for one another. He knows the difficulty we all have at times with one another. Our relationship with him does not prevent us from experiencing misunderstandings or differences of opinion. Sometimes these relational challenges tempt us to harbor grudges against someone with whom we differ or to isolate ourselves from the community. Neither of these is healthy for a believer. Reconcile Relationships Quickly Jesus helped his disciples through their conflicts with one another. By faith in Christ, we are not only commanded to love but are given his love to give to others. How should we respond to a broken relationship with a fellow believer? Stay Connected One of the main reasons some Christians live defeated lives is that they have isolated themselves from other believers. A coal that is separated from the others will soon grow cold. Isolation will lead to stunted spiritual growth and a lack of joy in your life. Why is it important to stay connected to other believers? While you are part of the universal Church, God wants you to be part of a local church family. You may or may not belong to a local church right now, and there is still a bit to learn about it all. But, take a moment now and thank God for adopting you into his family and giving you a new community in which to enjoy your new life. Renewing Your Mind with Truth

Continue putting truth in your mind through memorizing Bible verses that are relevant to what you are learning. Review Memory Verse 1 – Ephesians 2: Review Memory Verse 2 – John Review Memory Verse 3 – Galatians 5: Review Memory Verse 4 – Hebrews 4: Find and read the verses listed. Write observations of what you see and how you feel about each benefit. Learn to live your new life in community with other Christ-followers. Your church community can help you to grow strong in your faith and to know God better: Your church community can keep you protected from being swayed by false teaching: Your church community can help you to discover your spiritual gifts and learn how to use them to serve the church family: Your church community can be a source of encouragement to you: Join a small Bible study and prayer group. Use your gifts to reach others for Christ. Look for mature believers who can disciple mentor you as you grow. Ask God for someone you can disciple, sharing with her what you are learning. Getting to Know Christ Continue reading through the gospel of Mark to get to know Jesus better – reflecting on his life, his relationships, and his teaching. Also, begin to pray regularly to your Heavenly Father. Consider praying for specific issues in your life, for friends and family you desire to know Christ, and for your personal spiritual growth. Day 2 Discover Jesus Read: Reflect on what you read – Day 3 Discover Jesus Read: Reflect on what you read – Day 4 Discover Jesus Read: Reflect on what you read – Day 5 Discover Jesus Read: Reflect on what you read – Day 6 Discover Jesus Read: Reflect on what you read – Days 7 Review and Ask Questions Spend time reviewing what you have learned this week about your new life in Christ. What discoveries have you made? What questions do you have? Graceful Beginnings, Lesson 6.

**7: From the ReVoice Conference: My Life in Community – A Blog by Chris Damian**

*Life In A Community Garden Greenside Up Community Garden Portfolio For several years Dee Sewell has been involved with social community garden projects in Ireland.*

The Nail Salon Samaritan Nov 15, When was the last time you were left speechless, in complete awe of the goodness and kindness of a stranger? The last time someone reminded you of the beauty and hope and joy that is left in this world? I will never forget the moment when I last felt this. It was just days after my mom had completed her last round of chemo, a brutal battle that consumed all of our lives for six months. To celebrate her life and the closing of a chapter, we did what all girls love to do especially when doctors forbid you from doing this during chemo: While we were sitting in the chairs getting pampered, conversation began to flow with the women around us. My mom, who had no hair at the time, struck up conversation about her cancer journey. Different women around us began chiming in, giving their condolences and congratulations. A woman in her mid 20s – very edgy looking, with facial piercings and tattoos from shaved head to toe – said a few nice words, then went on her way. Moments later, the manager of the salon came to us and told us that the lady with the shaved head had paid for our entire bill. Especially when you get the deluxe package for two as we had both done that day. Tears filled our eyes and goosebumps covered our arms and legs. In that moment, I was not only humbled and so incredibly thankful, but I also felt deeply convicted. I hate to come off as judgmental in any way, but I did not expect such a kind and heartfelt gift from such an unexpected person. She simply did it out of the goodness of her heart. She did more for us that day than she will ever know. In that moment, God spoke to me and grabbed a hold of my heart. As Christians, we tend to spend our time with people that look like us, talk like us, share the same worldview, listen to the same music, and have the same political and social stance, but in doing that, are we really growing the kingdom? Are we making a difference in the world? Are we leaving our mark? Are we showing his love and shining a light? Wherever we go, we are ambassadors of the kingdom of God. That is a huge responsibility given to us by God. Are we taking our jobs seriously and living each moment as if the growth of the kingdom depends on it? In the parable of the good Samaritan, a man is robbed, beaten and left to die. A priest and a Levite see him but pass him by, and an unlikely hero, a Samaritan a race hated by the Jews, stops to help. We see struggle, hardship and suffering all around us, yet too often we do nothing more than walk by or at most, say a small prayer for them. As Christians, we have to stop passing by and start taking action. We are called to do so. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me. And when did we see a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you? Can you imagine seeing him on the street, bleeding, broken and crying out for help, yet doing nothing? Every single time we pass up on an opportunity to help someone, we are doing the same. Shine your light into the darkness and let his love show through you. The problem with Christian slogans is that they are often repeated, but seldom understood. This particular slogan is not necessarily misunderstood, but it is misstated. But this does not represent a biblical view of Christians. Read the following two statements and notice the different truths that are conveyed: Christians are to be in the world, but not of the world. Christians are in the world, but not of the world. Do you notice the difference? Sentence one is stating a goal that Christians should strive for, while sentence two is stating a characteristic of Christians. Sentence two is the correct statement. Christians do not have to strive to attain something they received the moment they were saved. True Christians are not of the world, and they do not have to fight to be different from the world. True Christians cannot help but be different from the world, because they have been regenerated born again. They are new creations with a new nature. Their home is heaven, their father is God, his Spirit indwells them, and they look and behave a lot like their father. Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation. Their old self sinful nature was put to death Romans 6: The person who is in Christ is not simply a renovated version of their old self. They are truly a new creation with a new nature. The old sinful nature was a slave to sin and unable to love and obey God. The new

heavenly nature is free to love and obey God. At the moment of salvation, God not only creates a new heavenly nature within a person, he also places his Spirit within them, which causes a desire for obedience and causes actual acts of obedience. Moreover, I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances. God created people with a heavenly nature that was free to love and obey him, and he commanded them to do so. People sinned against God, and now all people are born with a sinful nature that is enslaved to sin and unable to love and obey God. Christians have a new heavenly nature that is housed in an old fleshly body full of sinful desires. There is a constant war between the heavenly nature and the sinful flesh Romans 7: Even though the Christian now has a new heavenly nature that is free to love and obey God, the sinful flesh prevents the Christian from successfully loving and obeying him. As you can see, God not only saves us by his grace, it is also his grace that produces love and obedience in our lives. So, to reiterate what I said at the beginning, true Christians are not of the world, and they do not have to fight to be different from the world. True Christians cannot help but be different from the world. What does all this mean for you? You may be a good person. You may live a good life, treat everyone right, go to church, go to a community group, read your Bible, pray every day, and do your best to obey the Ten Commandments. But none of that is evidence that you are a new creation. If you do not passionately pursue the God you once had no time for, if you do not treasure Jesus more than your family, if you do not seek his will above your own, if you do not hate the sins you once loved, if obeying God is a burden rather than a pleasure, and if you are not a completely different person than you were before, then what evidence is there that you are a new creation? What evidence is there that you have a new nature? If you truly are a new creation, then you cannot help but be different. If you are not different, then you are not a new creation. And your only hope is to cry out to God and keep crying out until he saves you from the eternal wrath you have spent your life earning. Jesus then says that the one who proved to be a neighbor to this man was the one who showed him grace, the Samaritan. The Samaritan could just as easily have passed by just like everyone else, and no one would have thought any less of him. He stopped to help. Why would he associate himself with such shame and pain? Samaritans were known for keeping to strict Old Testament laws during this time, and associating yourself with this person would not have been something that a Samaritan would typically do. This one, however, helped the man up, aided his wounds, took him to an inn, and paid for his time there while he healed. The point of this passage is that we should do the same for the people that we encounter on a daily basis. We are chosen by him, and we have been gifted an inheritance in him, just as Ephesians 1: We, as believers, are not of this world because Christ dwells in us. We have been changed by God, and we have been called to live for him, against what the world and what the flesh tells us to do. We may not be of this world, but that is not means for us to resent it or to judge it out of pride. This story in Luke lays it out clearly, that we are to love our neighbor as ourselves. What if our neighbor is addicted to drugs? What if our neighbor is a thief? What if our neighbor is a homosexual? The answer in all of these conditions stays the exact same. No matter the circumstance, we are called to love everyone with the same love, grace and mercy that Christ showed us when he gifted us with eternal life. If all we do is sit in our little church, protected by our walls, we are failing and we are not living out this passage that Jesus laid out for us. He chased us down and paid the price out of love for us, giving us life. We have been given life eternal, and by sitting around and not sharing that with everyone that we encounter, we are failing to understand the Gospel that saved us in the first place. We are not called to conform to or agree with the sins world, but we are called to love each and every person in it, because that is what Christ did for us. A man that had been passed over by his is own countrymen and the people in his own religious group. God intends for all believers to love and serve the people of this world, regardless of their background, history, religious or political convictions.

**8: Community: God's Design For Growth | [www.enganchecubano.com](http://www.enganchecubano.com)**

*Learn to live your new life in community with other Christ-followers. Your church community can help you to grow strong in your faith and to know God better: Ephesians Your church community can keep you protected from being swayed by false teaching: Acts*

At the mere mention of the word community, people often eye you as if you had dropped in from another world, smile tolerantly, and hope you change the subject. Good, sensible, Christian people. Or that they have to abandon their fertilized lawns and move to the inner city. The idea of community is, in a sense, from another world, a world very unlike our own. But it is neither from the world of communes in Vermont nor from the placid world of cookies and tea Christians share before they rush back to their isolated lives. Community is from the world as God wants it to be. It is the gift of a rich and challenging life together, one that we need and can receive with joy. Christian community is simply sharing a common life in Christ. It moves us beyond the self-interested isolation of private lives and beyond the superficial social contacts that pass for "Christian fellowship. We know all too well that maturity takes time. We know less well that it also takes our sisters and brothers in Christ. Love one another, forgive each other, regard each other more highly than yourselves. Be friends with one another, kind, compassionate, and generous in hospitality. Serve one another and submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. This list just scratches the surface, but it is enough to remind us that we need the community of faith to grow up in Christ. Christian community is the place of our continuing conversion. Its goal is that, individually and together, we should become mature, no longer knocked around by clever religious hucksters, but able to stand tall and straight, embodying the very "fullness of Christ" Eph. When I confess my sin and they forgive me, I know that God forgives me, too. When they pray for my brokenness, I know that they are sharing in the healing work of Jesus. In our dog-eat-dog, enemies-with-their-teeth-bared world, when we feel the crush of hostility and of our own failures, to have our Christian community surround us with compassion and encouragement lightens our loads, strengthens us, and gives us the courage to keep on trying. A Source Of Accountability and Guidance The community also furthers our continuing conversion by being a place where we teach each other and hold ourselves accountable to each other. When I hear what God is teaching others, it teaches me, too. When I submit to the guidance and scrutiny of my brothers and sisters, it forces me to grow and to be accountable to the commitments I make. Ignoring this powerful element is one of the main reasons many small groups never really experience Christian community. They prefer to remain superficial. Inadvertently, perhaps, they enter into a pact of mediocrity in which they tacitly agree to let all the members "mind their own business" and not to hold people accountable either to each other or to the teachings of Christ. I tend to overfill my calendar with activities, projects, and meetings, a flaw that, for me, has spiritual roots. When I began work on my first book, I took the idea to a group of trusted Christian friends who knew about my weakness. We had a wonderful and terrible meeting. After listening to me for a while, they said they thought God wanted me to write the book. They also asked to see my appointment calendar. I took their counsel, although giving up some of those plans made me heartsick. I also sent each of them a schedule of my "writing days" as a further step toward accountability. It is clear now though I knew it then that they were right. If I had failed to submit to their wisdom under God, that book would still be merely a few notes in a manila folder. It works, instead, to encourage us and help us in our growth and commitments. We may ask for guidance about how to handle a difficult relationship on the job or about how to put together a family budget that reflects our commitments about lifestyle and giving. The community gives us a place to air our growth and our struggles, our successes and failures. It simply gives us a way of guiding each other ever more fully in the ways of Christ. Both by instruction and by example, the New Testament teaches us to pray and to pray for one another Eph. We are called as well to a life of worship and praise. Yet, frankly, our experiences of prayer and worship in the church often shunt us toward merely watching others pray and take active roles in worship. We need a lab. We ourselves need to pray for each other. Each of us needs to be prayed for personally. And the small community is precisely the place where we can experiment and learn the life of prayer. When I am not involved in a Christian community, it is the times

of prayer and worship that I miss the most. Many of us are never really prayed for beyond a brief mention in one of those quick-and-dirty list prayers. I once privately offered a simple prayer of blessing for a friend who had been in public ministry for many years. I was overwhelmed when he said to me afterward, "No one has ever prayed for me like that before. Similarly, as we learn the ways of worship in the small community, we not only deepen our own lives but also enrich the life of public worship. In my experience, community is at its best when it becomes a workshop for prayer and worship. A Place To Serve The community is also where we learn to strip away our self-interest in order to serve others. It is here that we learn to share what God has given us, whether it be goods or spiritual gifts. It is also here that we learn to be served, though we are sometimes prideful and reluctant like Peter, who balked at Jesus washing his feet Jn. Sometimes we are the washers and sometimes the washees, but in many ordinary ways we can learn what submission and service mean. One community I know gave time and money so a mother worn down by the demands of young children could take a spiritual retreat. Others have found practical ways to swap mowers and ladders and child care; some have explored group buying to help each other grow in stewardship. In whatever ways, community means watching over one another for good, knowing that as we serve, all of us are growing stronger in Christ. Such communities, by their character and their action, witness to the power and presence of God in the world. They are models of what God wants for all of humankind. Too often, unfortunately, this beacon of witness has fallen far short in candlepower, especially where Christians have accommodated darkness rather than penetrating it. In these clusters of Christians, people should be able to see what they hope for but hardly expect: People of widely different social statuses and professions honoring each other rather than putting each other down Gal. People who tell each other and everyone else the truth, rather than lying out of convenience or cussedness Eph. They can see a people who are no longer captive to the spirit of the times. They will see love and acceptance, compassion and kindness, commodities that are in short supply in any age. And where they see this, the stark contrast of these communities compared with the world around them is itself a very compelling witness. They carry "the ministry of reconciliation" 2 Cor. That work goes forward visibly in many ways. One Christian community spends enormous energy trying to meet the plight of the homeless. Another works to rehabilitate homes of the poor and the elderly. Yet another quietly yet actively pursues a ministry of prayer and healing. And still others focus directly on evangelism, on feeding the hungry, on getting justice for the oppressed, and on much more. Function Over Form Some Christians feel that they must follow the call to community in rigorous, perhaps even radical, ways. We can thank God for the example of our brothers and sisters in communities such as Koinonia in Americus, Georgia, and Sojourners and the Church of the Savior in Washington, D. They help teach us principles that God wants for the whole Christian fellowship. Structure is not the point; relationships are. The good news is that community is a gift God offers to pour love out on us all. Getting Small Even though forms may not matter much, size does. For community to be specific and personal enough to reach its potential, we need groups small enough for everyone to be directly involved. The practice of the earliest Christians suggests a small scale. And it is clear that when Paul advised the Corinthians that "everyone" should be ready with a psalm, some instruction, or a revelation, he expected the meeting to be small enough for everyone to participate 1 Cor. The lived reality of communityâ€”in whatever form it takesâ€”holds great promise both for the Christian fellowship itself and for the world at large. For Christians it provides a place where together we can change and grow strong in following Jesus. A Call to Community The practice of Christian community, quite simply, makes the gospel a lived reality. It embodies a specific, personal way of life together in Christ. And it is necessary. When we imagine that we, as Christians and humans, can live in total independence and self-sufficiency, we are deluding ourselves. God, from the beginning, never intended that we should go through the world "alone. Without experiencing such life together, we will not discover how wonderful the news about Jesus really is. Community is not to be feared, but welcomed. The reward is to enter into life as God intended it to be lived from the beginning. How can we balk at an offer like that?

## 9: Life in the Community | Economic Community of West African States(ECOWAS)

*Community LIFE is dedicated to helping older adults stay healthy and at home. As regional experts in advanced chronic illness management, Community LIFE is an all-inclusive program tailored to meet the healthcare needs of seniors.*

What is community and why should educators be concerned with it? We explore the development of theory around community, and the significance of boundaries, social networks and social norms – and why attention to social capital and communion may be important. This was coined by C. Galpin in relation to delineating rural communities in terms of the trade and service areas surrounding a central village Harper and Dunham. A number of competing definitions of community quickly followed. Some focused on community as a geographical area; some on a group of people living in a particular place; and others which looked to community as an area of common life. For some it might mean little more than a glorified reworking of the market. For others, it may be a powerful organizing ideal such as those concerned with advancing the communitarian agenda. Here we will focus on understandings within social theory – and ask why should educators be interested in them? Approaching the theory of community It is helpful to begin by noting that community can be approached as a value Frazer. As such it may well be used to bring together a number of elements, for example, solidarity, commitment, mutuality and trust. It comes close to the third of the ideals that were inscribed on many of the banners of the French Revolution – fraternity the others, as you will most likely remember, were liberty and equality. A Dream of John Ball, Ch. In practice the two are entwined and often difficult to separate Frazer. Here we will initially explore community in three different ways after Willmott ; Lee and Newby ; and Crow and Allen. Territorial or place community can be seen as where people have something in common, and this shared element is understood geographically. They are linked together by factors such as religious belief, sexual orientation, occupation or ethnic origin. One example here would be the Christian communion of saints – the spiritual union between each Christian and Christ and hence between every Christian. There is, of course, a strong possibility that these different ways of approaching community will also overlap in particular instances. Willmott argues that it is legitimate to add a third understanding of community – that of attachment – as communities of place or interest may not have a sense of shared identity. This, and the above discussion, leads us to three key questions: How is one community or communion marked off from another? What sort of social networks or systems are involved in a particular grouping or encounter? Community, thus, implies both similarity and difference. It is a relational idea: This leads us to the question of boundary – what marks the beginning and end of a community? Some may be religious or linguistic. However, not all boundaries are so obvious: As such they may be seen in very different ways, not only by people on either side, but also by people on the same side. This is the symbolic aspect of community or communion boundary and is fundamental to gaining an appreciation of how people experience communities and communion. An obvious example of this is the sorts of ritual people connect with in terms of religious observance, for example, the rites of worship, the objects involved and the actions of the priest, imam or rabbi. Indeed, it is very significant that the notion of community recurs in major religions: Confucianism is not, of course, a religion, but neo-Confucianism is closely intertwined with Buddhism and with traditional religious cults of the family and ancestors, and Confucian norms of family and community life are politically significant in many contemporary contexts. The defining of a boundary places some people within, and some beyond the line. The benefits of belonging to a particular group are denied to non-members. A physical barrier is erected to keep out, in this case, those who are poor or who are seen as a threat Blakely and Snyder. Community as network and local social system As Lee and Newby. There may be little interaction between neighbours. In a very influential study, Bott. She looked at the changing composition of networks using three criteria: As a result she identified five types of support network. Wenger on support networks for older people Wenger identified five types in her study: This mainly relied on close kin, who often shared a household or lived locally. This typically consisted of local family, friends and neighbours. Usually restricted in scale and containing mainly neighbours, this form had relatively little kin involvement. Involving a high level of community activities, this form also typically entailed a high number of friends and

kin. Humans are social animals. Connection and interaction both widen and deepen what we can achieve, and makes possible our individual character. There are strong forces working against the formation and health of local social systems. Increasingly we operate across significant distances for example, via letters, the telephone and the internet when dealing with financial matters such as banking, shopping and the payment of bills Beck ; Giddens The various forces linked to globalization commodification, marketization and the corporatization have led to significant shifts in the locus of power. Governments whether local or national have become increasingly market-driven. This has entailed two particular dynamics: The combined impact of this movement is a drive towards encouraging people to view themselves as consumers of services rather than participants and an associated move towards individualization from more collective concerns. In this situation, as Zygmunt Bauman However, in a world where market ideologies have become dominant and infused all areas of life, we have increasingly lost a sense of working together to make change. Insecurity affects us all, immersed as we all are in a a fluid and unpredictable world of deregulation, flexibility, competitiveness and endemic uncertainty, but each one of us suffers anxiety on our own, as a private problem, an outcome of personal failings and a challenge to our provide savoir-faire and agility. We are called, as Ulrich Beck has acidly observed, to seek biographical solutions to more systematic contradictions; we look for individual salvation from shared troubles. That strategy is unlikely to bring the results we are after, since it leaves the roots of insecurity intact; moreover it is precisely this falling back on our individual wits and resources that injects the world with the insecurity we wish to escape. To judge the quality of life within a particular community we, need to explore what shared expectations there are about the way people should behave “ and whether different individuals take these on. Three linked qualities appear with some regularity in discussions of communal life: Tolerance “ an openness to others; curiosity; perhaps even respect, a willingness to listen and learn Walzer Reciprocity “ Putnam describes generalized reciprocity thus: In the short run there is altruism, in the long run self-interest. Closely linked to norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement Putnam ; Coleman , social trust “ trust in other people “ allows people to cooperate and to develop. Trusting others does not entail us suspending our critical judgment “ some people will be worthy of trust, some will not. One of the fascinating things about these qualities is that in a very important sense such expectations do not need to be imposed upon people. As Matt Ridley Humans have social instincts. They come into the world equipped with predispositions to learn how to cooperate, to discriminate the trustworthy from the treacherous, to commit themselves to be trustworthy, to earn good reputations, to exchange goods and information, and to divide labour! Far from being a universal feature of animal life, as Kropotkin believed, this instinctive cooperativeness is the very hallmark of humanity and what sets us apart from other animals. Self-interest may bring people together, but in interaction something else emerges. Fostering community “ social capital Here I want to suggest that a sense of belonging and the concrete experience of social networks and the relationships of trust etc. It could be argued that we should be focusing on enhancing the quality of social networks etc. This is the line taken by writers such as Stacey From there I want to return to the idea that in meeting with others there is the possibility of communion “ and that this is, for many, a highly desirable goal. See Beem for a discussion and critique of Putnam et al. This is how Putnam Whereas physical capital refers to physical objects and human capital refers to the properties of individuals, social capital refers to connections among individuals “ social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them. A society of many virtuous but isolated individuals is not necessarily rich in social capital. In other words, interaction enables people to build communities, to commit themselves to each other, and to knit the social fabric Beem Putnam marshals an impressive amount of material to demonstrate that: Child development is powerfully shaped by social capital. A growing body of research suggests that where trust and social networks flourish, individuals, firms, neighbourhoods, and even nations prosper economically. Social capital can help to mitigate the insidious effects of socioeconomic disadvantage. There appears to be a strong relationship between the possession of social capital and better health. Regular club attendance, volunteering, entertaining, or church attendance is the happiness equivalent of getting a college degree or more than doubling your income. Civic connections rival marriage and affluence as predictors of life happiness *ibid.*: However, that was prior to the marshalling of evidence in *Bowling Alone*

Putnam The book is a powerful argument for the cultivation of social networks and the norms of reciprocity, trustworthiness and truthfulness they entail. It also draws attention to some of the downsides of such networks – they can be oppressive and narrowing. It is, therefore, important to work for tolerance and the acceptance, if not celebration, of difference. Fostering community – communion Elizabeth Frazer On occasion or at such times members experience a centred and bounded entity that includes the self as such; they engage in exchanges and sharing that are personalized; the orientation to each other and to the whole engages the person and, as some are tempted to put it, his or her soul. For Buber encounter Begegnung has a significance beyond co-presence and individual growth. He looked for ways in which people could engage with each other fully – to meet with themselves. As Aubrey Hodes puts it: When a human being turns to another as another, as a particular and specific person to be addressed, and tries to communicate with him through language or silence, something takes place between them which is not found elsewhere in nature. Buber called this meeting between men the sphere of the between. We can only grow and develop, according to Buber, once we have learned to live in relation to others, to recognize the possibilities of the space between us.

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