

Community Group Connecting Events  
Grace Community Church  
Fall 2019

At Grace, our primary aim is to make disciples and “building spiritually healthy people for ministry in the world.” When we are considering adding something new we ask “How does this connect to our purpose and vision to make disciples?” Helping Grace members who are unable to attend a community group to connect with their “near-neighbors” is something we want to cultivate this year. This not only helps us care for our church family, but we see this as an intentional way to draw our members, attendees and visitors into disciple-making relationships.

**How will this happen?**

Community groups already plan periodic times of fellowship. Once each semester, we would like each community group to plan a connecting event near your area of town, and invite the members, attendees and visitors who live nearest to your host home. Elaine Atchison, our director of congregational care, will provide and update that list for you. This can be as simple or complex as you want it to be, with the goal of providing opportunities for Grace neighbors to gather and get to know each other in a fun, informal setting.

**What kind of events can we host?**

This is really up to each group: from a picnic at a nearby park, a block party, a board-game night, local hiking, backyard popsicles to a hot chocolate bonfire. Groups that meet at the church or nearby can schedule to use the building if necessary. We simply ask that you follow the same guidelines as other church activities:

Keep it Simple

Invite Everyone on the List

Communicate Details

Alcohol-free

Follow-up with Everyone (whether they attend or not)

**Can we do more than one per semester?**

Let’s see if this approach (one fall, one spring) is sustainable. We look forward to your feedback.

**Can people bring a guest?**

Yes. We always encourage people to bring friends who may be unchurched or without Christ. These events have the chance for people to interact with other Christians.

## **How do we get started?**

In your first community group meeting, communicate this plan to the group and start looking at the calendar (be sure to plan around other churchwide events). We will provide sample invitation and follow up emails as well as “connecting cards” with information about community groups they might join. You may want to enlist a point person in your group to research ideas your group is considering.

## **What if our community group is already at capacity?**

What would happen if 20 people suddenly wanted to join your group? What a great opportunity! Remembering that our goal is to have more Grace members meeting for discipleship, connection and care, we will need to start more new groups in Nashville area.

Also, our community groups are a natural starting point of caring for the Grace members who are experiencing transition, loss or crisis and are living within a few mile’s radius of each other. Will you pray with us, that as our church family continues to grow, that we will be able to provide more intentional avenues for discipleship and care across our city? As always, you can reach out to me with your questions and ideas ([jtucker@gccnashville.org](mailto:jtucker@gccnashville.org) or 615-618-9775).

[SAMPLE INVITE EMAIL]

Hello \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is [NAME], and I help lead a community group for Grace Community Church in [AREA OF TOWN]. You are receiving this email because you are a member/ attend Grace or have visited recently. This [SEASON] we are hosting a community connecting event to get to know people in our area of town who are part of Grace. On [DATE] we are going to host a [EVENT] at [LOCATION]. We would love to have you come and join us! You can RSVP by [EMAIL OR EVENT LINK]. We hope to see you on [DATE]. If you have any question, feel free to contact [CONTACT PERSON]. Thanks and have a great day.

[NAME]

[COMMUNITY GROUP NAME]

[CONTACT INFORMATION]

[SAMPLE FOLLOW UP EMAIL]

Hello \_\_\_\_\_,

Thank you for coming out to [EVENT]. For those who were unable to attend, we will host another event during the [SEASON]. It was great spending time together and getting to know others in our community. If there is anything, we could help with please do not hesitate to call or email. We look forward to seeing you at the next event! Have a great week.

[NAME]

[COMMUNITY GROUP NAME]

[CONTACT INFORMATION]