

COSMOS COVENANT FOR COMMUNITY GROUPS

For God so loved the **cosmos** that he gave his only Son...
[John 3:16]

We believe that the church is called to take its place in the ongoing story of God's love for the world. We receive God's love through his son, Jesus, and by the power of his Spirit we extend it to the world. By using the acronym, COSMOS, we acknowledge that this task is bigger than us! Only by God's Spirit will we answer the call to be a community of ...

Compassion

Led by the Spirit of God, we will be passionate about relieving suffering and fighting injustice, living out the transforming message of the resurrected Jesus. Jesus calls his church to be a force for good in the world, and we believe that the church is at its best when it serves, sacrifices, and loves, caring about the things God cares about. We were created to live for something larger than ourselves. [Matthew 25:31-46]

Central to biblical community will be our commitment to care for one another. This is the practical help for those in difficult situations. [2 Corinthians 1:3-4]

Shaping our Community Groups:

Each group will identify and participate in at least two compassion projects a year.

Outward focus [local]

We are intent on seeing people come to know Jesus. Obeying Jesus' command to make disciples will drive us to pray for and reach out to individuals in our various spheres of influence. Loving our non-Christian neighbors and telling the good news of Jesus will form our relational approach to evangelism. [1 Peter 3:15-16; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; Psalm 96:3; 2 Corinthians 4:6-10]

Shaping our Community Groups:

Each household in the group will commit to pray for the salvation of one other household. The group will pray monthly for the personal requests of these non-Christian households. So, there will be encouragement among group members to be getting to know the people, learning ways to pray for them, forming relationships, and praying faithfully for them to receive Christ.

Serving

Everyone has a place to fit! As members of this local body, we will commit ourselves to discovering our unique spiritual gifts and using them in the building up of the church. [1 Cor 12; Ephesians 4:11-13; Romans 12:3-8]

Shaping our Community Groups:

Everyone will be encouraged and given the opportunity to discover their spiritual gift(s) and expected to be serving in ministry at The Bridge.

Multiplication

Our desire is to be a church that reproduces itself by sending out equipped teams to plant new churches. We depend on the Spirit to produce fruit on every level: one-on-one, small groups, and church body.

We believe that multiplication, or bearing fruit, is a central part of the biblical story. As individuals, we will be committed to the work of reproducing ourselves in others. Our Community Groups will welcome new people and prepare leaders so that they can regularly launch new groups. Led by the Spirit, our church will be a church that plants new churches, effectively multiplying the work God is doing locally to a more regional scope. This multiplication movement will be fueled by growth from the conversion of people and an equipping leadership that reproduces itself. [John 15:16; Healthy multiplication of the church throughout the book of Acts; 2 Timothy 2:1-2]

Shaping our Community Groups:

All groups will be open to new people, will have at least one “leader in training,” and be prepared to launch a new group as God adds to the number. Every 12-18 months, every group will strive to launch a new, healthy group.

Outward focus [global]

As an expression of our desire to see all people come to know Jesus, we will pray, fund, send, and look for opportunities to go. We will see our ministry as a piece in the larger, global mission of God. [Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8]

Shaping our Community Groups:

Each group will support one international missions project through increased awareness, commitment to prayer, financial support, and hands on involvement.

Throughout the year, groups will share the stories of their missions projects in our worship gatherings.

Spiritual formation

We believe that God offers a new way to be human by redeeming every part of us. We embrace the salvation Jesus offers as the only hope for repairing our relationships with God, each other, our self, and creation.

God desires to transform each of our lives through the life-long journey of following Jesus. This conviction leads us to expect change and growth in one another. The church will create opportunities for all followers of Jesus to take the next step in their journey.

Shaping our Community Groups:

While the groups may all look and “feel” different, we will be united in a common value of centering our meeting time on biblical teaching/discussion.

The Bridge exists to be and develop disciples of Jesus in authentic community for the good of the world. We believe that the biblical functions of COSMOS represent a way to live out this mission.

It's our goal to be a relational place where everyone can pursue this life together. This means that the church won't develop competing activities, programs, or functions; instead we will encourage everyone who calls The Bridge home to simplify their lives and embrace COSMOS in their natural rhythm of life as a neighbor, co-worker, and friend.