



Welcome to a New Year of Home Group community. If you are new to Home Groups, here is a quick overview of what we hope you will experience in community:

We hope you will feel included and valued.

We want to encourage and support each other.

We want to do life together in a way that reflects God's love and meaning.

At Trinity Church, we believe that God created us to live in a love relationship with Himself and each other. People seem to share the same desires – to live life to the fullest, to be connected with other people, and to believe that their life has meaning. According to the Bible, this is all a part of God's design and something that God wants for us. In Home Groups, we are in pursuit of God's rich desires for us to share in His goodness together.

There are multiple facets to Home Groups. While each group is different, we all share some key pursuits:

1. To pursue rich and real relationships
2. To pursue knowing God
3. To pursue truth, meaning, and purpose

We believe that Jesus Christ is at the center of what God has revealed. What we know about Him has come through (1) the Scriptures, (the Bible) and that God oversaw the writing and preservation of the Bible, (2) through the testimonies of millions of people who have known God passed this down for generations, and, (3) through the understanding of life and nature that we believe points to a creator. Therefore, in our pursuit of life and truth, love and meaning, we will discuss what the Bible has revealed about Jesus and God's master plan for our lives.

WE ARE STARTING A NEW SERIES IN THE BOOK OF "MARK"

The first four books of the New Testament (i.e. the time of Jesus and following) are commonly called 'the gospels.' The word "gospel" is an old English word which means "good news" or "good message." Their genre is somewhat of a narrative, telling the story of Jesus Christ. However, it is also a retelling of the oral proclamation made by many about the life and works of Jesus.

Most of the community groups (Home Groups) will have multiple facets that include, time together as a group, time in relationships throughout the week, and time praying for one another.

When gathered together, we will spend some time discussing what we are reading in the book of "Mark." The "Home Group Notes" will include some life sharing, some guiding questions and some discussion of application. You get to decide how much you share and engage in the study. No one should be pushy or judgmental – we are all in a different place in our journey to know God and strive to encourage each other daily.

LEARN FROM THE BIBLE TOGETHER

A NEW YEAR

Question: Is the new year start-up just another day on the calendar or a time to look back and look forward? Perhaps you might be a mix of both. What percentage are you of each?

WHAT WAS GOOD NEWS TO YOU?

Most of us have received ‘good news’ at various times in life. What was some for you?

THE GOOD NEWS OF “MARK”

Read the first thirteen verses of Mark chapter one. (Mark 1:1-13)

Tips:

- The word “gospel” = good news
- Isaiah was a prophet in the Old Testament who predicted the actions of “John” (v. 4)
- To “prepare the way” means that something / someone is coming and you should prepare or be ready for it/them.
- Mark is citing the prophet Isaiah (2-3) who promised that a Messiah would come and that he would be announced
- John is sometimes called John the Baptist
- “He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit” refers to what Jesus Christ does in the life of a disciple (follower). He sends the Holy Spirit to immerse us in the life of God through Jesus. The Holy Spirit (God) comes to live in us, reconciles and unites us to God, and places us in the family of God.

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS TOGETHER

Mark’s narrative of “the good news about Jesus Christ” moves fast. He is succinct, selective, and focused on key points.

As we read these thirteen verses, who are the key players?

How are each of them a part of the story of Jesus?

What are the key points in Mark’s introduction?

How does the temptation (i.e. testing) of Jesus figure into this story?

What ‘tone’ do these key points set for the rest of the narrative of good news?

DISCUSS TOGETHER

How do we separate fact from fiction when we consider a story about someone?

What, in this account, seems authentic? What doesn’t?

If you were one of the original readers of this account, what might you think or feel? What questions might you ask?

BEYOND INFORMATION

Each week, we will be discussing how the information in the Scriptures can be applied in our lives. For this week, what stands out to you? What is something you might consider?