

How Covenant Churches Do Teaching/Learning – A Sample

Berkeley Covenant Church, California

http://www.berkeleycov.org/community/adult_education.html

"Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind..."

— *Romans 12:2*

Renewing Our Minds Series

Classes are designed to challenge us by looking at Christian responses to current social and scientific issues. While some may be wary of a "Big Kid" Sunday school, we believe that in order for us to make the transition from an adolescent faith to an adult faith, we must be well educated in the Truth.

Childcare is provided. While you're in class, your kids will love to participate in our Choir and the Arts programs this fall!

Past Series

- God & The Environment
- God & Science
- How to Have Healthy Relationships
- Orthodoxy and Ecology: On being a good steward of the earth
- Survey of the Bible
- Mere Christianity
- Comparative Religions – Understanding our Differences & Similarities
- Family Relationships & Parenting
- Beginning Greek
- Listening Prayer
- Understanding Injustice & Our Response
- Theology Matters
- Against the Gnostics – Why Heresies Are So Dangerous

3.4 INTENTIONAL DISCIPLESHIP

Community Covenant Church, Santa Barbara, California

http://comcov.org/ministries/spiritual_formation_institute.php

Spiritual Formation Institute

Based on the scriptural truth that every Christian is called to minister, we desire to equip people for a lifetime of ministry. Spiritual Formation Institute is a primary means for equipping, instructing, and training each person in the body of Christ for their unique ministry. SFI classes are offered on Sunday mornings before the worship service as well as in the evenings during the week.

Three Ways to Study:

1. Take courses as you please as a non-certificate student.
2. Get on a course of study for a general certificate.
3. Get on a course of study for a certificate of emphasis in one of four areas:
 - Spiritual Formation
 - Practical Ministry
 - Biblical Studies
 - Missions

General certificate and certificate of emphasis students must complete six core classes. Six additional elective classes are required for general certificate students. Two elective classes and four classes in the area of emphasis are required for certificate of emphasis students. All certificate students must also complete four terms of field education in some area of ministry.

Six Core Classes:

- Theological Foundations
- Gospel Foundations
- Church Foundations
- History of Christianity
- Christian World View
- Survey of the Bible

Each class includes elements of practical application and equipping for service. Enrollment priority will be given to certificate students.

Ongoing certificates of emphasis may be earned by completion of six classes in other areas of emphasis.

3.4 INTENTIONAL DISCIPLESHIP

Sanctuary Covenant Church, Minneapolis, Minnesota

<http://sanctuarycov.org/events-and-groups/classes>

Classes & Groups

CORE – Classes about what matters most to us.

These are the essentials. The things that are at our core. The non-negotiables.

1. Belief Matters (An exploration of what it means to be a Covenant Church)
2. Stewardship Matters (Practical guidance and basic theology around managing God's resources)
3. City Matters (A conversation about God's passion for our cities)
4. Community Matters (Learning about God's desire for us to do life together)
5. Membership Matters (When we join together for the journey with Christ)

JOURNEY – Classes for life-long growth

There are a range of classes that fall under the heading of Journey Classes. Anything that helps you grow on our spiritual journey can be a journey class.

We offer classes in the following areas and more:

- Spiritual Gift/Servant Profile Discovery
- Bible Classes
- Relationship Building (marrieds, unmarrieds, etc.)

GROUPS – Growing Together

A great way to experience classes is in a Community Group. Consider gathering a group together to learn together and share the journey.

Something we've learned over the last few years is the necessity of healthy relationships. When people are pursuing God, there are going to be some rough patches or plateaus that can't be crossed in isolation.

Community Groups are a place to get connected and journey with others. Whether it's a group formed mostly for fun, or a group centered around a deep biblical study, Community Groups are the place to get connected at Sanctuary.

Thornapple Covenant Church, Grand Rapids, Michigan

Sunday Adult Education

<http://www.thornapple.org/sundayadulthood>

Adult Education classes on Sunday mornings provide another place for people at Thornapple to grow in their faith and experience community. The classes are made up of adults who meet together for Christian growth and fellowship on Sunday mornings from September to May. Our goal is to provide an environment for adults that furthers the Thornapple mission of helping people find and follow Jesus. All adults are invited to attend the classes (which take place during both services). You can begin at any time.

3.4 INTENTIONAL DISCIPLESHIP

General Information: Adult education classes create an environment in a smaller and more personal setting than the corporate worship services. They are a step toward helping adults know others and be known by others. Building community is an important aspect of our time together. It is accomplished by striving toward these objectives:

- A Place to Learn - Biblical teaching that encourages us to grow in our Christian faith
- A Place to Connect - small group fellowship with other adults at Thornapple, helping us build deeper relationships
- A Place to Belong - a place where each of us is welcomed and embraced

Gospel Transformation Class

<http://www.thornapple.org/event/2011-01-12/gospel-transformation-class>

Gospel Transformation is a course that meets Wednesdays at 6:30 pm starting on September 21.

The Gospel Transformation course is a 25-week study designed to help us more fully appreciate and enjoy all we have been given by God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Bringing together deep theological truths with practical application for where we live every day, the Gospel will turn your world upside-down, but in a good way! After all, isn't that what Transformation is all about? Come and let the Spirit move you to receive the freedom that is yours by God's grace.

"...where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom" 2 Corinthians 3:17.

No homework required.

Here is what a few past participants have said about the class:

"Through all of the various Bible studies that I have participated in my life, never have I encountered something so personal and challenging as I have in participating in the Gospel Transformation class. Thoughtfully led by Deborah Edwards, Gospel Transformation is not just a Bible study; I discovered it to be more as spiritual counseling. This experience has allowed me to look closer at the gifts that God has for me. It has also reaffirmed what my relationship and reliance upon Christ must look like. As I am a vessel through which God's power flows, this class has not only transformed me but affects the people in my life. God placed upon Deborah a gift of proclaiming HIS word. Through her transparent walk in Christ, she reveals the Gospel in ways that are life changing."

"While I have attended a strong evangelical church all of my life, there was something important I did not seem to understand. Ephesians 1:18, 19 reads, "I pray also that the eyes of your hearts may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, and his incomparably great power for us who believe." It is this last part that I did not seem to understand. While doing the Bible study, Gospel Transformation, with Deborah Edwards last year, I gained a new understanding of the inheritance I have and the power that is available to me as I continue to believe the truths of the Gospel. It all became clear to me because the way she taught it was like someone finally connecting all the dots in a child's picture."

3.4 INTENTIONAL DISCIPLESHIP

Life Groups

Life Groups for adults are small groups that meet for study, fellowship, and prayer.

Our Life Groups are designed to encourage meaningful relationships and a deepening awareness of God's presence in our daily lives.

At Life Group meetings we...

- Share our life experiences
- Have a biblical focus such as a study of the Bible, a Christian book or video, or a topical discussion and application to our lives.
- Pray together for each other's needs and support one another with prayer between meetings.
- Care for one another as we experience life's joys and pain.
- Enjoy warm fellowship, often around a snack or a meal.

Some Life Groups emerge with a common identity, such as young married couples, parents of teenagers, neighbors, or people with a common ministry task. Often groups come together with a wide diversity of ages, life circumstances, and spiritual maturity. *Everyone* is welcome.

We are usually 8 to 15 people who meet in homes twice a month, though some groups meet weekly, and others once a month.

Life Groups are stable communities for lengthy periods of time with people being welcomed and enfolded continuously.

Senior citizens have a special Life Group called Soup and Study. The Soup and Study group is a larger group that meets the first and third Fridays of each month at 10 am, September through early June. Seniors come to hear a special speaker who shares a message on various spiritual topics. The event includes a time for fellowship and eating a delicious lunch together.