

# tiny GROUPS

*a.k.a. Christoformity Companions*

## AGREEING TOGETHER

*Forming a shared set of expectations*

### INTENTIONS | GROUP CULTURE

It can be extremely helpful to clarify together the purpose of your *tiny GROUP*. For example, we recommend that each person talk about the following statements (which echo the “official” purposes of *tiny GROUPS*):

- I intend to live as a disciple of Christ - faithful to the Word of God, growing in maturity toward the goal of living *all of life in reference to Christ* (Christoformity). I would like to be encouraged toward this goal and graciously held accountable.
- I would like to engage the discipleship / Christian formation curriculum materials that the church provides for our *tiny GROUP*.
- I would like to develop (or refine) a personalized *Rule of Life* that I will seek to live by. (A “Rule of Life” is a tool to help a person be intentional about their discipleship practices - examples include: attending worship, solitude & silence, scripture study, daily office, confession, fasting, etc.)
- I intend to structure my life to prioritize this *tiny GROUP* relational commitment over the coming weeks and months. I agree to be a proactive communicator. I also agree to not overwhelm others with my needs or communication expectations.

Beginning date of *tiny GROUP*: \_\_\_\_\_

Formal End date: \_\_\_\_\_ (*the group shall continue on only by mutual agreement thereafter*)

Early Exit: I am committed to doing my best to gracefully exit this *tiny GROUP* if I need to for any reason (moving away, life change, the group has become dysfunctional and/or harmful, etc.). I will involve Pastoral Staff assistance as necessary.

Other potential topics to discuss:

- Leadership / Coordination (is one person going to be the coordinator, or is this a shared responsibility?)
- Preferred communication mediums
- Spontaneity / Flexibility
- Level of vulnerability / truth-speaking
- Fears or anxieties
- Hopes and desires

**A Shared Practice of Confession?** Are you open to the practice of confessing sin to one another (see James 5:16) with the help of a simple liturgy designed for such? - *This can be immensely powerful! It is something that a group can grow into over time as people become more comfortable with each other. However, no one should feel compelled to practice confession in this context if he/she does not feel comfortable or safe to do so.*

## **MEETING SCHEDULE**

How often do we plan to FORMALLY meet together?

- Once a week
- Every other week
- Other (please specify and agree to this together):

How / where do we plan to meet?

- In person (physical-distanced, if necessary); location: \_\_\_\_\_
- Video chat (FaceTime, Google Meet, Zoom, etc.)
- Both (TBD)

When will we meet? How long should our meetings be? Is there a hard-stop?

What happens if I have to miss a meeting or cancel? Do the remaining members meet without me?

## **LEVEL OF ENGAGEMENT OUTSIDE OF FORMAL MEETINGS**

*There is often a correlation between the frequency of interaction between tiny GROUP members and the degree to which trust and safety grows. This is not a rule, merely an observation.*

Talk together about what you might imagine or prefer in terms of texting, emails, calls, video chats, hangouts, etc. outside of the formal meeting... or decide that you want to leave it to develop organically as it feels natural. - There is nothing to urge here; it just might be good to be clear if there are expectations.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

The *tiny GROUP* should clarify the terms of their confidentiality.

A couple of examples (you are encouraged to determine the precise agreement you want together):

*We agree to keep what is shared amongst us strictly confidential (including spouses), except in cases when a person might physically harm his/herself, or endanger the life of another. In these cases we give permission to contact the police or another appropriate authority.*

*We agree to keep what is shared amongst us strictly confidential (not including for spouses) except in cases where we have asked permission of the person who shared. The only other exceptions would be when a person might physically harm his/herself, or endanger the life of another. In these cases we give permission to contact the police or another appropriate authority.*