

AN
INTRODUCTION TO
KOINONIA
Christian Fellowship

Introduction To Koinonia

Koinonia Christian Fellowship is a community of believers in Jesus, committed to the objectives of Ephesians 4:15, 16. *But speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, from whom the whole body being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.*

That Strange Word - *Koinonia*

Nothing mysterious, just a Greek word found often in the Bible. It means *fellowship, communion, sharing or participation*. With regard to the church, it means a loving community of believers sharing together in the life of Jesus, which binds us into one body.

What Kind Of A Church Service Is This?

One of the first things you might notice about us is the structure of our weekend services. We don't have a rigid agenda for our meetings in which someone presents a prescribed program for the passive congregation. Instead, we have a meeting of believers ordered and directed by the Holy Spirit. It is a celebration of the presence of Jesus in us, a time to worship and love Him, and a time to listen to Him.

Many people are a little frightened at the openness of our meetings because there is no program to follow and the Holy Spirit may do things differently every time. In the meeting every individual believer is encouraged to participate under the direction of the Holy Spirit.

One may offer a prayer; another may read significant Scripture. Someone else may bring a song, a prophecy, an exhortation, or even an utterance in tongues with its interpretation (I Corinthians 14: 15, 26). The only requirement is that it be done *decently, and in order, with each one giving consideration to the others* (I Corinthians 14:40).

However, no one should feel that he has to do anything at all. One may want to clap his hands; others may not. One may worship standing up; another on his knees, or even on his face; while others sit quietly. Worship and love the Lord the way you want to, and let others do the same, without passing judgement.

The Lord's Supper

We celebrate the Lord's Supper often. We have no complicated theology about it; we just do it as He told us to, in remembrance of Him, believing that when we do we share (have *Koinonia*) in the body and blood of Jesus (I Corinthians 11:23-26). If you are a believer in Jesus, you are welcome to share with us. Children may participate at their parents' discretion.

Money

We are committed to the principle and promise of Malachi 3:10 regarding tithes and offerings. However, we do not take collections, but instead allow each Christian to be responsible before God to determine his financial participation and place it in the boxes located in the sanctuary. *See our separate booklet on tithing.*

Government

LEADERSHIP

We do not have a “democratic” form of government. The church is governed by a group of elders (or overseers) who are spiritual men, called by God and appointed to their office by other spiritual leaders. It is their responsibility to *watch over your soul*, and it is the responsibility of the congregation to *obey your leaders and submit to them* (Hebrews 13:17).

The elders are available for personal ministry at any time.
See information on back cover of each week's bulletin.

Membership

MEMBERS

There is no membership in traditional terms of having rights to vote or control. Instead, those who want to be a part of the fellowship are invited to attend a **Newcomers Group** where the covenant community and its various responsibilities are explained. Those who express a desire to be a part of Koinonia and demonstrate that desire by their attendance and active involvement in the various functions are considered to be a part of the covenant community. A meeting of the covenant community is called on special occasions to explain and discuss the issues and direction of the church.

Doctrine

BELIEFS

We recognize sound doctrine as being that which honors the Lord Jesus Christ, adheres to the spirit of the Word, promotes love and unity among brethren, and leads to solid Christian character, maturity and purity of life. We are committed to the Biblical truths generally held by Christian churches; such as the inspiration and authority of the Bible,

the one true God in the persons of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; salvation through repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ, the ordinance of water baptism for forgiveness of sin, the privilege of every believer to be filled with the Holy Spirit and to share in the manifestation of the Holy Spirit, and the imminent and bodily return of the Lord Jesus to judge both the righteous and the unrighteous.

However, we do not make an issue of those theological and philosophical beliefs which are not essential to faith. In these areas we allow for diversity of thought and opinion, and no one is to be argumentative in forcing his opinions on others.

Activities

We have a variety of activities geared to minister to the needs of the whole congregation. Since they are designed to meet current needs, they may change frequently. A list of current activities is published regularly, and includes various Bible studies, prayer meetings, and other groups designed for men, women, youth, etc.

What About The Children?

Children are an important part of our Koinonia family. However, we believe it is the responsibility of the parents to provide the primary teaching of God's Word to their children. This is because such teaching must be a part of the whole family-living experience, where children see God's truth demonstrated in the family life.

At time the children stay with us for the first half of our Sunday meetings and at others they have special ministry times geared toward their age group.

A Special Word About Tongues

Unfortunately, “tongues” is a divisive issue that causes many to stumble. The Bible shows clearly that the Holy Spirit gives us the ability to speak to God in a language we have not learned, and which we do not understand. This gift is for our personal edification, and is primarily for our personal communion with God (I Corinthians 14:2, 14).

In our services, if the whole congregation is worshipping and praising together, it is legitimate to speak or sing in tongues (as in Acts 2:4, 6). However, if one wishes to speak in tongues in such a way that others are to listen to him, there must be one present with the gift of interpretation, or the speaker himself must interpret. Otherwise, it is out of order.

For those who do not speak in tongues, we urge you to not be offended at the gift of God employed by others.

True *Koinonia*

But true *Koinonia* means more than our meeting together on Sunday. It means that we are becoming a real community in which we truly share together the common life in Christ. As we grow together it means:

1. Getting to know each other on more than a superficial level. We are learning to be honest with each other and to love each other for what we are in Christ.

2. Speaking to each other in ways that will build up, and not tear down. We deal with problems as in Matthew 18:15-17, by going to the individual concerned and in love seeking to maintain the relationship in Jesus. We never gossip or speak badly of another person.
3. Learning hospitality by inviting others into our homes and going to visit one another. In this way we develop our understanding and appreciation of our family in Christ..
4. Sharing materially, Acts 2:34 says that in the early church *there was not a needy person among them* because they shared what they had with each other. We should be conscious of the needs of others in our fellowship and see if there is a way to help. It may be giving away something gathering dust in the garage, sharing some of the meat in the freezer, providing transportation, baby-sitting for a young mother, mowing someone's lawn, fixing their car or giving money. As a body we will also help by teaching God's principles of money management, and when appropriate with the approval of the elders we will assist financially.
5. Ministering to one another. Every believer has gifts and graces from the Lord that will minister to others. We may do this by praying for one another, giving encouragement, exhorting one another in principles of the Word, or just listening and caring. *If we walk in the light as He Himself is in the light, we have Koinonia with one another. . . and indeed our Koinonia is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ* (I John 1:7, 13).

Small Groups

SMALL GROUPS

As the congregation grows it becomes challenging to relate to everyone in the way we have described. In order to meet the need for closer fellowship, greater opportunity for individual participation and better pastor care, small groups have been established.

These groups meet throughout the week in a group leader's home. The leaders of the group function in a pastoral role, and the group itself becomes a small "church in the home."

Newcomers Group

NEWCOMERS

Newcomers 101 is conducted for those who are new in this fellowship. Its purpose is to allow newcomers to become acquainted with the principles of life in Koinonia. At the conclusion of six meetings, participants are encouraged to become a part of the regular groups.

Ministry In Koinonia

PARTICIPATION

We believe that every believer is also a minister/servant in the kingdom of God. We also believe that ministry is given by God and flows out of the individual as he yields himself to the will of God. In Koinonia, there are many opportunities for service such as the Ministering Ushers and Greeters, Children's Ministry, Music, Sound and Tape Ministry, Jail Ministry, Evangelism, and others. If God is leading you to take an interest in these or other areas of service, please make an appointment with a pastor to discuss it.

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