



## Missional Community Leader Info

Thanks for your interest in becoming an emergence missional community leader! Missional communities are at the heart of life in the emergence body. It's where we grow deeper in Christ, get to know others, and stretch outward on Christ's ministry of reconciliation. Here's what they're all about...

### So what's a Missional Community?

#### ***Scattered and Sent:***

Most things we do at emergence fall into one of two categories, *gathered* functions and *scattered* functions. For a simple example of a gathered function think about our large Sunday worship services. People come from all over the region to a central location in order to worship Jesus together. They've *gathered* in a large group.

Missional communities are a big part of what we call the *scattered* function of emergence. Instead of all of us collected in a building that says 'emergence' on the outside, we're back in our own cities, towns, neighborhoods and homes – still as people of emergence - but now *scattered* throughout the region.

Central to a proper understanding of biblical discipleship is the concept of *sentness*. In John 20 verse 21, Jesus, as he was dispersing his disciples told them, "as the Father has sent me, I am sending you." In other words just like God the Father sent Jesus the Son to reconcile the world to Himself, we are sent into the world (to places like our work, school, and homes) to show everyone Jesus and what He has done for us. So we're not just scattered, we're scattered and sent *on purpose* and *with purpose* – Jesus' gospel mission.

Put a few *scattered and sent* disciples together who are centered on the gospel, a common passion, project or place and you've got the makings of an emergence *missional community*.

### What does a missional community look like?

#### ***Equipped, Empowered and Released:***

We strongly believe that God desires to see His church equipped, empowered and released to effective local ministry. So our vision at emergence is to see potentially hundreds of these missional communities scattered throughout Northern New Jersey, each ministering and serving according to the unique circumstances God has placed them in. So no two groups will look alike.

Some communities meet in homes, others meet in "third places" like Starbucks or Panera. Most meet every other week for study and an additional day or two per month if they have a regularly scheduled service project. We also encourage our communities to eat and celebrate together regularly. It all depends on what the community decides. The team needs a leader (hopefully you!), and if the community meets in a home for its study time, there should be a host. It's better not to have the leader host the group too. Your team may also want to pick someone to be the "coordinator" - keeping in touch with everyone in the community and making sure they have the latest group info.

While there's no such thing as a 'typical' missional community, there are three key ingredients that each one should have:

#### ***Spiritual Formation:***

An essential ingredient to any missional community is *spiritual formation*. That's a fancy term for saying that together as a group we are learning to abide in Christ more deeply and encouraging each other become more like Him.

Reading and applying the scriptures is an integral part of spiritual formation. In a missional community that generally occurs in one of three ways: direct 'inductive' study of the bible, 'sermon based study' - going deeper into the Sunday message, or reading through and discussing a christian book. The community leader and the pastor of missional connection work together to find an appropriate course of study based on the needs of the group and the gifts and abilities of the leader. Whichever route is taken, the end goal is the same - learning to abide in and obey Jesus. This is where the group learns to pastor and love one another, by pointing to the truth of the gospel in one another's lives.

Of course formation can include other things, too. We strongly encourage communities to develop an active prayer life and explore other practices like worship.

### **Mission:**

*Mission* is the other essential ingredient of any missional community. Abiding in and obeying Jesus is not simply learning to think like Him. It's learning to act like Him too. We believe that learning to acting like Jesus means learning how to join Him in His ministry of reconciliation: redeeming, forgiving and healing broken, sinful people.

Simply put when we think "mission" we see a community that is "leaning outward" ministering to others outside of the group - preferably outside of the emergence family. We believe it is essential that a missional community exist for a purpose beyond ministering to itself. Communities are encouraged to *explore, equip* and then *engage* in a missional activity of their own choosing.

A missional activity can be virtually anything that allows a group to intentionally form a relationship with others outside of the community. Over time that relationship should present opportunities for the group to demonstrate and declare the gospel to those in need of Jesus. Some of our groups are serving in homeless ministries, some in inner city children's programs, still others in care centers.

But "missional activity" does not always mean "service project." It also very much means building genuine, intentional, gospel relationships with people like our neighbors, or the other parents at our kids' ball games and dance practices. It could mean reaching out to and including in authentic ways a coworker into the community. Or it could simply mean providing an environment where our "missional community friends" and our "regular friends" get a chance to bump into each other at a BBQ. Local ministry is expressed in as many different ways as there are groups on mission.

### **Community:**

When eight, ten or twelve people spend time together learning scripture, praying and rolling up their sleeves in ministry, they bond. That's the simple recipe for building meaningful community.

We believe that every person at emergence needs meaningful biblical community. Jesus himself did not live His life alone and He always directed His disciples to minister in teams. Biblical community is important. It keeps our lives on target and challenged. And it gives us a place of encouragement to belong to.

### **What does it take to be a missional community (MC) leader?**

The two most important factors are commitment and passion. MC leaders must be committed to Jesus and passionate about following Him with their whole lives. MC leaders must be passionate about the Bible and committed to applying it's truth to their lives. And leaders need to be passionate about Jesus' mission and committed to leading and walking with others to see it happen locally.

### **What are the requirements of an MC leader?**

- An obedient, fruitful walk with Jesus as your Savior and Lord.
- Passion to see others trust their lives to Jesus, and/or abide more deeply and fruitfully in Him.
- The willingness to take some risk(s) in order to discover ways to "live outwardly" in community.
- The desire and willingness to be trained and equipped as a missional community leader.
- Available time to devote to leading the group.
- Covenant membership with emergence.

When it comes to emergence missional communities and their leaders we are far more concerned with quality than quantity. We're not focused on how many groups we have, we are committed to making sure that they are effective and bearing gospel fruit. So new communities will only be added as folks respond to God's call to step up to leadership in local ministry. We invite you to prayerfully consider your role.

If you would like to continue exploring missional community leadership, the next step in the process is to fill out a brief survey at: <http://emergencenj.org/mc-leader>. After that we'll be in touch!

If you have more questions feel free to email me at: [mkuder@jacksonvillechapel.org](mailto:mkuder@jacksonvillechapel.org)