

Why Do I Come to Sunday Services?

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When I come to services, I listen intently to the service, and try to obtain meaning and understanding that can add to my life. What makes the worship experience different from say my listening to lectures or sermons on my IPOD, or reading a book? There is something unique about the worship experience: we are connected to the people around us with whom we worship. Gaining that connection is the hardest part for new members and visitors to our congregations, I imagine. So the question is, how can we create those connections, and more importantly how can we deepen those connections so that they become meaningful to our lives?

For me, Covenant Groups have created that deeply meaningful experience by giving me the opportunity to explore with a group of people, the deep questions of life in an environment that is trusting and nonjudgmental. I know that once a month those two hours are set aside to explore and share ideas with others on a designated topic. Covenant groups are also a way to share with others where we are in the course of our journey through life. All of these discussions deepen the meaningful connection we create with each other.

After a worship service which I led, a couple of members of my Covenant Group came up and gave me a hug. They said they felt they had a vested interest in my service, and my future (I am currently attending divinity school part time).

And that was so true, for they have listened to my story for over a year now, of the ups and downs, the excitement and doubts, of my journey. They have shared it with me and supported me, as I have shared their journeys with them, and that is what creates bonds. Yes, that is what gives me the special connection I feel when I worship here on Sundays.

What is truly unique though is that these bonds are created with people I might not otherwise know without the Covenant Group. I liken it somewhat to having moved to Greenwich Village in Manhattan after growing up in the Bronx in New York City. Walking side by side down the street were business people, punk rockers, young, old, gay, straight, starving artists, and people with trust funds. This diversity of people, accepting of each other, taught me that it is okay to be and think differently and that diverse people can live together peacefully.

What Covenant Groups provide is a means to allow all people, not just to walk side by side together but to meet, connect and develop friendships which each other. It is a way to build the foundation of, and expand our beloved community so that we can create and spread peace and harmony throughout the world. I encourage everyone to participate in and support covenant groups so we can continue to build the ever growing web of our connections.