

Cell Groups in Our Congregation

In 1 Cor. 12:12-19, St. Paul uses the parts of a human body to illustrate the unity and interrelationship of the members of Christ's body, the church. Here St. Paul teaches the importance of interconnectedness we have and must maintain for the church to be healthy and perform the functions for which Christ established it. While pointing out the gifts which make us diverse, unless each member recognizes and functions as an integral part of the whole body, diversity will divide rather than unite, destroy rather than build up, and result in self-serving rather than self-giving. The church is an organic whole, the living manifestation of Jesus Christ that pulses with the eternal life of God. Disclaiming responsibility to be an active, functioning part of this body does not make a person less responsible for ministering (serving) within it. We have no right to remove ourselves from our God-given responsibilities just because we may be dissatisfied with something about ourselves or the body. Rev. John MacArthur identifies this as disobedience (MacArthur, *1 Corinthians*, p. 315).

Cell groups start meeting in September. Cell groups, also known as "small groups" or "home meeting groups" are an important part of congregational life in line with the teachings of St. Paul. They serve multiple purposes, but the most important is that they provide the setting for members of a congregation to make connections with each other, get to know each other better, and develop strong, lasting relationships throughout the congregation. Small groups provide the forum for the diverse members to come together and work together to make the whole body stronger.

Forming cell groups is vital to our congregation's survival and growth in these days. Our planning committee has been working hard this summer. Their goal is to begin meetings the week of September 15th. I urge all members of the church council, elders, and all leaders of the congregation, as well as members to attend these meetings at a host's home of your choice. A "host map" will soon be posted on the board in the narthex.