

Hilltop Community Church of Christ
Small Groups News Letter
September 2009

Small Groups Pray like Nehemiah

What are our initial reactions when we hear bad news? How do we approach the Father with our heart felt needs and desires? Am I really able to ask God for help when I know that I have sinned and my family has been involved in unhealthy - sinful activities?

These are some of the questions we could ask Nehemiah and he would have a wealth of information and wisdom for our lives. These are also questions that we often deal with in Small Groups. As groups grow deeper in relationships and begin to share openly in conversations we can, like Nehemiah, intercede for each other both in prayer and also by walking with each other through the trials.

In the first two chapters of Nehemiah we see Nehemiah praying three times.

- (1) Nehemiah experienced the pain of the crisis with his family and he cried out to God on their behalf. (Neh. 1:3-4)
- (2) Nehemiah honestly confessed his own sins and the sins of his family. Then he asked God to remain faithful to them and fulfill His promises. (Neh. 1:5-11)
- (3) Nehemiah prayed in the moment as the window of opportunity opened for him. (Neh. 2:1-9)

In this news letter we are going to look at these three examples from Nehemiah's life - how he interacted with his community and God during a huge crisis and what happened when God opened a window of opportunity.



Nehemiah experienced the bad news along with his community

- *Before Nehemiah decided to do something, he mourned, prayed and fasted.*
- *He stayed in the pain and did not go for a "quick fix" to the problem.*
- *He prayed, crying out to God, in several different ways.*
- *Small groups at Hilltop are becoming the hands and feet of Jesus for each other by walking with each other and earnestly praying for each other.*

The Story Begins ...

"They said to me, Those who survived the exile and are back in the province are in great trouble and disgrace. The wall of Jerusalem is broken down, and its gates have been burned with fire. When I heard these things, I sat down and wept. For some days I mourned and fasted and prayed before the God of heaven.

Nehemiah 1:3-4

Pray for Each Other



Nehemiah confessed as he prayed

- Nehemiah was humble even though he had not personally experienced the sin.
- He confessed the sins of his family, not just his own sin. He realized that their sins had an impact on everyone around them.
- He was sorry for the sins they had committed.
- Because of his honest confessions he was in the right mind and place to approach the throne of God on behalf of his family.
- Our Small groups must be a safe place for us to confess and approach the throne of God for each other. We can also remind each other of God's promises for our lives.

The Story Continues...

Then I said:

"O LORD, God of heaven, the great and awesome God, who keeps his covenant of love with those who love him and obey his commands, ⁶ let your ear be attentive and your eyes open to hear the prayer your servant is praying before you day and night for your servants, the people of Israel. I confess the sins we Israelites, including myself and my father's house, have committed against you. ⁷ We have acted very wickedly toward you. We have not obeyed the commands, decrees and laws you gave your servant Moses.

⁸ "Remember the instruction you gave your servant Moses, saying, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations, ⁹ but if you return to me and obey my commands, then even if your exiled people are at the farthest horizon, I will gather them from there and bring them to the place I have chosen as a dwelling for my Name.' ¹⁰ "They are your servants and your people, whom you redeemed by your great strength and your mighty hand. ¹¹ O Lord, let your ear be attentive to the prayer of this your servant and to the prayer of your servants who delight in revering your name. Give your servant success today by granting him favor in the presence of this man."

I was cupbearer to the king.

Nehemiah 1:5-11

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

James 5:16

Pray In The Moment

Nehemiah prayed in the moment.

- Prayer was a natural part of Nehemiah's life.
- Nehemiah walked in conversation with God.
- Nehemiah knew how to listen to the Lord for the way to help his community.
- He could also lean on the Lord for strength to do what he needed to do in the moment.
- Our Small Groups can also pray in the moment for each other.
- Small Groups are the place where we learn how to pray in the moment, and then it becomes natural for us to pray throughout the week.

The New Opportunity

2 Artaxerxes Sends Nehemiah to Jerusalem

1 In the month of Nisan in the twentieth year of King Artaxerxes, when wine was brought for him, I took the wine and gave it to the king. I had not been sad in his presence before; 2 so the king asked me, "Why does your face look so sad when you are not ill? This can be nothing but sadness of heart."

I was very much afraid, 3 but I said to the king, "May the king live forever! Why should my face not look sad when the city where my fathers are buried lies in ruins, and its gates have been destroyed by fire?" 4 The king said to me, "What is it you want?"

Then I prayed to the God of heaven, 5 and I answered the king, "If it pleases the king and if your servant has found favor in his sight, let him send me to the city in Judah where my fathers are buried so that I can rebuild it." 6 Then the king, with the queen sitting beside him, asked me, "How long will your journey take, and when will you get back?" It pleased the king to send me; so I set a time. 7 I also said to him, "If it pleases the king, may I have letters to the governors of Trans-Euphrates, so that they will provide me safe-conduct until I arrive in Judah? 8 And may I have a letter to Asaph, keeper of the king's forest, so he will give me timber to make beams for the gates of the citadel by the temple and for the city wall and for the residence I will occupy?" And because the gracious hand of my God was upon me, the king granted my requests. 9 So I went to the governors of Trans-Euphrates and gave them the king's letters. The king had also sent army officers and cavalry with me.

Nehemiah 2:1-9



Small Group Current Events

Small Group

Leader's Appreciation Banquet

Date: Saturday, Oct. 24

Place: On the Hilltop
717 E. Grand Ave
El Segundo

Time: 6:00pm

Dinner & Entertainment

SAVE THE DATE!

New Small Groups

We welcome new members!

Ladies Evening Group

At various El Segundo locations

Tuesday - 7:00pm

Contact:

Rebecca Sweet 310.634.2324

Monica Moreland 310.590.6685

Savita Devlin 310.322.3270

Westchester Evening Group

At the home of Allyn & Kathleen Burke

Wednesday - 7:00pm

Contact:

Jon Reed 310.529.2505

Allyn & Kathleen Burke 310.502.1861

Gardena Evening Group

At the Home of Ben & Sienna Hopkins

Time TBA

Contact:

Ben Hopkins 310.717.9493

Sienna Hopkins 310.576.0481

Westchester Evening Group

At the home of Fred & Linda Smith

Sunday - 5:00pm

Contact:

Fred & Linda Smith 310.641.8495

Westchester Evening Group

At the home of Jeff Dimick

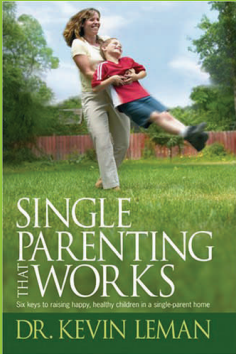
Sunday - 5:00pm

Contact:

Jeff Dimick 310.227.3822

Hilltop Support

Single Parenting That Works Class



On October 4 Hilltop begins to offer a wonderful Sunday morning class for Single Parents. We will meet at 10:00am for class, between 1st and 2nd Service.

Single parenting can be an overwhelming task, but marriage and family expert, Dr. Kevin Lehman offers encouragement for moms or dads carrying the load alone. Discover the six keys that will transform your perspective and help you create a plan for your time and finances tailored to you and your family.

There are workbooks for everyone. We are in this together and let's see how we can sojourn together and help each other out. Let's partner together as parents in God's Kingdom.

For more information contact Charla Griffy-Brown at (310) 420-2524 or Charla.Brown@pepperdine.edu

Service Projects in Small Groups

Small Groups are encouraged to do one service project together every year. Chrisi Mitchell, our Service Project Ministry Team Leader, is available to you with suggestions and support for our service projects. You can reach her at 903.376.5334.

Already this year small groups have helped with the Upward Bound service project. Other groups spend time each week writing cards of encouragement and spend time in prayer for Hilltoppers and friends who have special needs. Next week two groups are meeting together to encourage a Hilltopper who was recently laid off.

In addition to these kinds of service projects Chrisi Mitchell can introduce you to many different kinds of community service. Please give Chrisi a call and begin planning your next service project.



October Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Ladies Study 9am Prayer Group 12pm Full Throttle 7pm	2	3 Women's Ministry Luau 4:30pm
4 Evening Worship 5pm Hilltop Flicks (Youth) 6:30pm	5 Small Group Wyant & Riley 7pm	6 Small Group Women 1:30pm Ignite (Youth) 6pm	7	8 Ladies Study 9am Prayer Group 12pm Full Throttle 7pm	9	10
11 Evening Worship 5pm Hilltop Flicks (Youth) 6:30pm	12 Small Group Wyant & Riley 7pm	13 Small Group Women 1:30pm	14	15 Ladies Study 9am Prayer Group 12pm Full Throttle 7pm	16	17
18 Evening Worship 5pm Hilltop Flicks (Youth) 6:30pm	19 Small Group Wyant & Riley 7pm	20 Small Group Women 1:30pm Ignite (Youth) 6pm	21	22 Ladies Study 9am Prayer Group 12pm Full Throttle 7pm	23	24 Small Group Leader Appreciation Banquet! 6pm
25 Evening Worship 5pm Hilltop Flicks 6:30pm	26 Small Group Wyant & Riley 7pm	27 Small Group Women 1:30pm	28 AMPED 1pm	29 Ladies Study 10am Prayer Group 12pm Full Throttle	30	31

Day & Time	Name	Telephone & Address
Sun - 5:00pm	Hilltop , Hudson's & Edward's	310.322.4898 (Hudsons) 717 E Grand Ave, El Segundo, CA 90245
Sun - 5:00pm	Smith, Fred & Linda	310.641.8495 8312 Creighton Ave., Los Angeles, 90045
Sun - 5:00pm	Dimick, Jeff	310.227.3822 8300 Gonzaga, Los Angeles, CA 90045
Sun - 5:30pm	Burke, Allyn & Kathleen	310.216.9187 7803 Naylor, Los Angeles, CA 90045
Sun - 5:30pm	Collin's, Charly & Debbie	310.809.6174 5021 Atlantic Ave #24, Long Beach 90805
Mon - 8:00am	Fresh Brewed Girls	(310) 322-3271 844 Virginia St., El Segundo, CA 90245
Mon - 7:00pm	Hilltop , Riley & Wyant	310.640.9575 (Mike Wyant) 717 East Grand Ave, El Segundo, CA 90245
Tue - 9:30am	Albright, Carol	310.546.5479 (Carol) Various locations
Tue- 1:30pm	Hilltop , Ladies - Calhoun & Moreland	310.322.5757 717 E Grand Ave, El Segundo, CA 90245
Tue - 6:30pm	Geber, Jason & Aybar, Cindy	310.291.8659 (Jason)
Tue- 7:00pm	Sweet, Devlin & Moreland	310.322.5757 (Monica) Various El Segundo Locations
Tue - 8:30pm	Men - Dimick, Jeff	310.227.3822 8300 Gonzaga, Los Angeles, CA 90045
Wed - 6:30pm	Reed, Jon & Burke, Allyn & Kathleen	310.216.9187 7803 Naylor, Los Angeles, CA 90045
Wed - 7:00pm	Young Adults Grinley, Bob & Diane	310.837.9472 10812 Wagner St., Culver City, CA 90230
Wed - 7:00pm	Albright's & Holenstein	310.546.5479 (Albright) 922 10th St, Manhattan Beach, CA 90266
Wed. - 7:00pm	Buttles, Steve & Linda	310.306.5282 12620 Rosy Circle, Los Angeles, CA 90066
Thu - 10:00am	Hilltop , Ladies - Marriott & Moreland	310.322.5757 717 E Grand Ave, El Segundo, CA 90245
Thu - 11:00am	Shields & Hichborn	310.643.5775 5360 W. 124th Place, Hawthorne, CA 90250
Thu - 12:00pm	Hilltop , Lunch Time Prayer Group	310.322.5757 717 E Grand Ave, El Segundo, CA 90245
Thu -7:00pm	Clark, David & Kerrie	571.236.6704 646 Bungalow Drive El Segundo, CA 90245
Thurs - 7:00pm	Edward's, Randy & Kathleen	(310) 322-2336 434 Maryland Street, El Segundo, CA 90245
Thu - 7:00pm	Ng, John & Vivian	310.541.6717 28524 Cedarbluff Dr Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275
Thurs - 7:00pm	Full Throttle, Youth Group	(310)322-5757 717 E Grand Ave, El Segundo, CA 90245
TBD	Young Couples Mitchell, Nick & Nataliya	(310) 864-6818 9797 National Blvd., #23, LA, CA 90034