

Share Mission Cluster

Present: Tom Wicker, Beth Kilpatrick, Katina Kelley, Kris Olson, Brent Harris, Jenny Howell

Before us is the question and desire to live in authentic, intentional, loving Christian community and to do so, in whatever forms that community takes, as 'mission.' In our discussion, we recognize that the words we use as modifiers of 'community' change the way we feel about the concept and even change our understanding of it. For many of us these are loaded words. 'Christian Community' can sound like a small group Bible study to one and sound like a bunkered sectarian cult to another. 'Intentional community' can sound like someone moving into the inner city to live among the poor to one person and can sound like neighbors trying to share a few meals to someone else. It is probably less important to come to total agreement on the meaning of the words and more important to recognize that Christian, intentional, missional community can take many forms, even at DaySpring (except for the bunkered sectarian cult thing. We all agreed we didn't so much want to be that.)

Community, particularly practiced as hospitality, has been very important to DaySpring since the beginning. The founders didn't all agree on everything but practiced the sort of community that did not insist on 'getting my way' or 'winning' but on 'how can I help you get your way'. This sort of generosity is a guiding image for community among us. How can we help one another receive what each other needs the most. In that sense the practice of 'community' with one another has been a mission of DaySpring all along. Today, when we welcome new members to the church we do so by asking them to sit down with current members to learn the story of the church, so that they become part of the community and learn the story that shapes us together.

Much of our discussion centered around the idea of a DaySpring house in Waco. We didn't think through the details of it, but talked about what it might be in terms of a place that was a) an extension of DS, not just a couple of families trying to do mission so the rest of us get off the hook, b) a learning experience for the rest of us to more creatively 'do' community with our neighbors, c) not the only way DS lives out community such that it is elevated above doing community on the DS campus or in neighborhoods across Waco and surrounding locations. It is one way that DS is experiencing and practicing community with one another and inviting our neighbors into our lives as an act of relational Christian witness.

We talked about how DS has much in common with the New Monastics. For info on the values and 'marks' of New Monasticism. See

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/New_monasticism. While we didn't get too far in discussing particular initiatives in the area of community, perhaps doing something that correlates with one or more of the 12 marks could be a way to get started? We also briefly discussed how the idea of intentional community might intersect with the Serve Cluster's conversation about children and prison ministry. And we decided to try to meet again in about a month after praying and reflecting on these things.