

Community Training

SHOULD WE DO A RETREAT?

Yes! It is one of the best things you can do to strengthen your community group.

One of the Core Values of Community is Pursue Relationally. God calls us to pursue deep relationships with one another that have the foundation, motivation, and goal of love. "Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor." Romans 12:10

In the busyness of life (jobs, kids, serving, etc.), it can feel difficult to get extended time together on the calendar, but making it a priority is one of the best things you can do to grow your relationships within community. Along with daily touchpoints, weekly group meetings, monthly dinners and/or fellowship nights with one another, extended times away can allow for some of the most fruitful conversations to happen and fun memories to be made.

Nothing bonds a group like getting away and enjoying one another's presence – to get out of the city for a few days, let life slow down, experience the Lord and enjoy a cup of coffee or a shared experience. People also get to see other sides of you when you participate in fun activities, play late night games, laugh until you cry or take time and space to open up and be vulnerable.

This is our challenge to you: will you plan dedicated time to leave Dallas and pursue deeper relationships with one another? We believe you will be amazed at how this sacrifice will propel your group forward to a whole new level.

So, how do you plan the time away? We'd love to help! Check out the ideas below and in the other attachments for some ideas.

WHEN

Try your best to get a full weekend away. It's amazing what can happen in 36-48 hours. Doodle is a great tool to schedule your time.

WHERE

As you may have already heard, this year Watermark has a partnership with Pine Cove Bluffs Family Camp. If you are interested in using Pine Cove as a place for your Community Group Retreat, [START HERE!](#) If not, see if someone in your group or someone you know has access to a lake house, ranch, cabin or even camping gear.

There are some beautiful State Parks within two hours of Dallas. You can also reserve an AirBnB at Lake Texoma, Broken Bow Oklahoma, Lake Whitney, Lake Travis or even venture to the Texas Hill Country.

HOW

When it comes to planning your time together, different people like to relax at different speeds, but we find that less is more when filling the schedule. Leave lots of room to linger over mealtimes, have unhurried conversations, play a round of golf or take a walk. A good rule of thumb is to have 1 “intentional” aspect woven throughout the retreat (ex: everyone shares their life maps) and one planned fun activity (ex: a mandatory Spades tournament with a prize for the winner and a “consequence” for the loser) and the rest of the time can be filled in with extemporaneous fun or rest.

We have attached some resources to help you plan your time together. You won't be able to use it all in one retreat, but hopefully it helps with some of the planning to get you ready to have some intentional time.

- Preparing for your retreat
- Potential Retreat Questions
- Life Map Sharing Instructions
- Ice Breakers and Games

EXAMPLE SCHEDULE

Day 1 (Friday)

- Leave DFW before lunch on Friday
- Go have lunch together on the way out of town
- Arrive at retreat location and get settled
- Free Time
- Dinner
- Intentional Group Time
- Late Night Play (games, activities, laugh & have fun)

Day 2 (Saturday)

- Breakfast around 9:00am
- Individual time to worship the Lord (read, pray, journal, etc.)
- Free Time
- Lunch around noon
- Free time or planned fun
- Dinner around 6:00pm
- Intentional Group Time
- Late Night Play (games, activities, laugh, and have fun)

Day 3 (Sunday)

- Breakfast around 9:00am
- Corporate worship
- Intentional Group Time
- Pray and thank God for the weekend
- Pack up, clean up, and head home

We as a Community Team are praying for you and are here for you! Please let us know if there is anything we can do to help you and your community group grow in deep friendship with one another as you Pursue Relationally.