

TRIOS

at Community West

What is a Trio?

Trios are intentionally small gatherings of three people that foster spiritual depth, vulnerability, and growth. In a Trio, you can explore, begin, or return to your faith in Christ. These groups commit to meet for six months before branching out to form new Trios.

Should I be a part of a Trio?

Trios provide space to explore, begin, or return to your faith. If that captures the season you're in, we'd encourage you to walk through it in community alongside others in a Trio.

Why is it important for our neighbors, coworkers, friends, and loved ones?

At Community West, we *make disciples sent in love* (our mission) *to see the people and places of West Richmond and beyond transformed by the love of God through Christ Jesus* (our vision). Our neighbors, coworkers, friends, and loved ones need spaces to be invited into so that they can explore faith, return to faith, or strengthen their faith among those who know Jesus. We hope for Trios to be highly invitational, regularly multiplying in order to make space for those who God has placed in our lives.

What if I don't have people to start a Trio alongside?

If you're not sure who to form a Trio with, a great place to start is with prayer. Prayerfully consider for a few days: "God, who have you placed in my life 1) who might explore faith for the first time, or 2) who is beginning their faith in Jesus; or 3) who has wrestled with great doubt in their faith or walked away from faith altogether?" If you are struggling to discern who to invite or need help finding people for a Trio, know you can always reach out to one of our pastors for guidance.

How should we start?

After you have two other people you'd like to form a Trio with, be bold and ask if they would like to explore, begin, or rebuild their faith alongside you. You can either suggest a book to go through together or send them the options below and see what they are most interested in. Choose a time to meet together that is regularly available for all three of you, then begin meeting! Before your first time together (and throughout the whole season you meet together), take time to pray for God to bless the journey you're on - that He would draw you and them nearer to Himself!

What should we read through together?

Exploring Faith

Making Sense of God by Tim Keller

Making Sense of God acts as a "prequel" to Keller's The Reason for God, arguing that secularism is also a faith system that fails to satisfy deep human needs for meaning, identity, and hope. Written with a highly intellectual, culturally aware, and respectful tone, it systematically breaks down modern cultural narratives. It is the ideal resource for modern secularists, skeptics, and progressive thinkers who believe science and modern culture have made religion completely obsolete.

For someone exploring faith for the first time, this book is specifically helpful because it doesn't force you to believe the Bible right away; instead, it simply shows you why it is completely rational and necessary to take religion seriously.

Why Christianity Makes Sense by Gavin Ortlund

Why Christianity Makes Sense offers a thoughtful exploration of how the Christian narrative provides the most coherent and beautiful answers to the human search for cosmic meaning, beauty, and longing. Ortlund adopts an empathetic, gentle, and deeply literary tone that favors the human soul over cold arguments. It serves as an excellent resource for artistic or philosophically minded doubters who find themselves drawn to beauty but remain hesitant about religious dogma.

It is incredibly useful for a first-time explorer because it speaks to your heart and imagination first, making the idea of God feel beautiful and inviting rather than restrictive or rule-based.

Simply Christian by NT Wright

Simply Christian uses universal human "echoes"—our intrinsic longings for justice, spirituality, relationships, and beauty—as historical and practical entry points into the foundational story of the Christian faith. Wright delivers these concepts in an accessible, narrative-driven, and historically grounded tone that avoids complex jargon. This makes it a perfect fit for readers searching for a baseline introduction to Christianity that favors history and story over dense systematic theology.

This book is perfect for someone starting from scratch because it begins with everyday human experiences you already look for—like fairness and beauty—and builds a clear, step-by-step bridge directly to the story of Jesus.

The Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John)

Beginning Faith

Multiply by Francis Chan

Multiply is a practical guide that outlines the biblical call for every believer to actively study Scripture and disciple others. Chan writes with an urgent, direct, and challenging tone. It is highly recommended for new or stagnant believers who are ready to move past or avoid the pitfall of "consumer" faith and step into active ministry and leadership.

For someone new to their Christian faith, this book is specifically helpful because it builds a proactive mindset right from the start, showing you exactly how to study the Bible and immediately share what you are learning with others.

The Gospel-Centered Life by Robert Thune

The Gospel-Centered life is an interactive study that teaches believers how to apply the mechanics of the Gospel to everyday relational conflicts, internal motivations, and emotional habits. The tone is practical, direct, and highly collaborative, utilizing charts and exercises to keep readers engaged. It is the ideal curriculum for small groups and new Christians seeking a healthy framework to prevent them from falling into performance-based legalism.

This book is incredibly useful for a brand-new believer because it clearly explains that growing as a Christian isn't about being perfect to earn God's approval, but about relying daily on His grace.

Life With Jesus by Tim Chester

Life With Jesus is a brief, 12-session manual that covers the foundational basics of the Christian life, including prayer, Bible reading, overcoming temptation, and integrating into a church community. Written in a punchy, straightforward, and foundational tone, it cuts straight to the core habits a new believer needs. It is best suited for brand-new Christians or mentors looking for a quick, step-by-step introductory crash course to early discipleship.

This book is perfect for a new believer starting from scratch because it removes the guesswork from early faith by offering a highly structured, bite-sized roadmap for building your daily spiritual habits.

The Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John)

Rebuilding Faith

Searching for Enough by Tyler Staton

Searching for Enough explores modern restlessness and the high psychological cost of living a hyper-individualistic life, guiding readers toward ancient relational spiritual disciplines. Staton speaks in a candid, modern, and deeply pastoral tone that directly addresses the exhaustion of the

digital age. It is specifically tailored for weary, burnt-out individuals and millennials looking to escape the emptiness of self-help culture and rebuild an authentic spiritual life.

For someone looking to rebuild their faith, this book is specifically helpful because it meets you right in the middle of your spiritual exhaustion, helping you untangle the pressures of modern life from the simple, relational peace that God actually offers.

Gentle and Lowly by Dane Ortland

Gentle and Lowly serves as an ideal balm for lifelong believers and skeptics alike who are wrestling with heavy guilt, spiritual exhaustion, or the wounds of strict legalistic religion. Drawing heavily on historical Puritan writings, this book examines Jesus's literal heart for struggling human beings, proving His deepest instinct is to move toward our failures with affection rather than anger. The tone is exceptionally tender, comforting, and deeply devotional, treating the reader with profound gentleness.

It is incredibly useful for someone rebuilding their faith because it offers a gentle reset button for your emotions, replacing the image of a permanently disappointed God with the reality of a Savior whose heart moves closer to you when you stumble.

The Reason for God by Tim Keller

The Reason for God provides a direct defense of the intellectual viability of faith, systematically dismantling the top seven modern objections to Christianity, such as science, suffering, and hell. Keller writes in a logical, analytical, and highly structured tone that respects the intelligence of the reader. It is the ideal audience for analytical skeptics who have specific, hard intellectual questions blocking them from believing that Christianity is true.

This book is perfect for someone rebuilding their faith because it respects your intellect, giving you permission to ask your hardest questions and providing a rock-solid logical foundation to replace a faith that may have previously collapsed under doubt.

The Gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke, or John)

What should we do when our 6 months wrap up?

After your Trio wraps up their time together, please take these follow-up steps:

1) Each of you should consider forming a new Trio. Forming new opportunities for others to explore, begin, or rebuild their faith in Christ is crucial for the growth of Jesus' kingdom. We hope you thoroughly enjoyed your time with your Trio - and if you are looking to maintain those relationships, you might consider being a part of a Community Group together. Trios, though, are meant to multiply into new Trios in order to make space for others as God continues to move among us.

2) Share with us one story (or many stories!) of something God did in your Trio. You can send us your quick stories and reflections by emailing Pastor Mary Harrison, our Pastor of Discipleship (maryh@communitywestchurch.org). We look forward to celebrating what God has done!