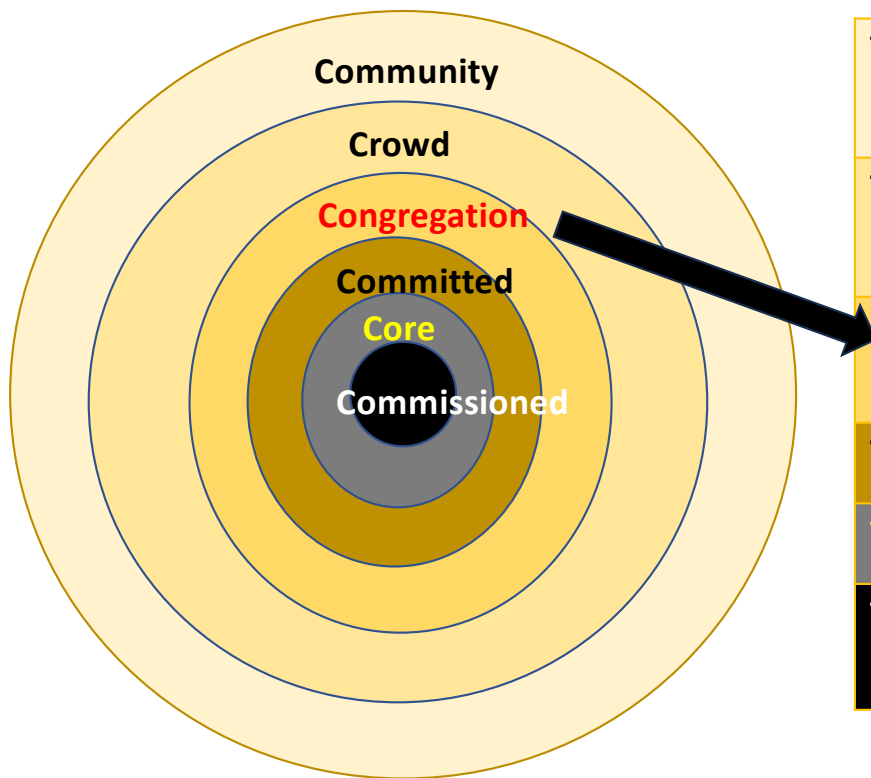


Ambassadors of Christ (7)



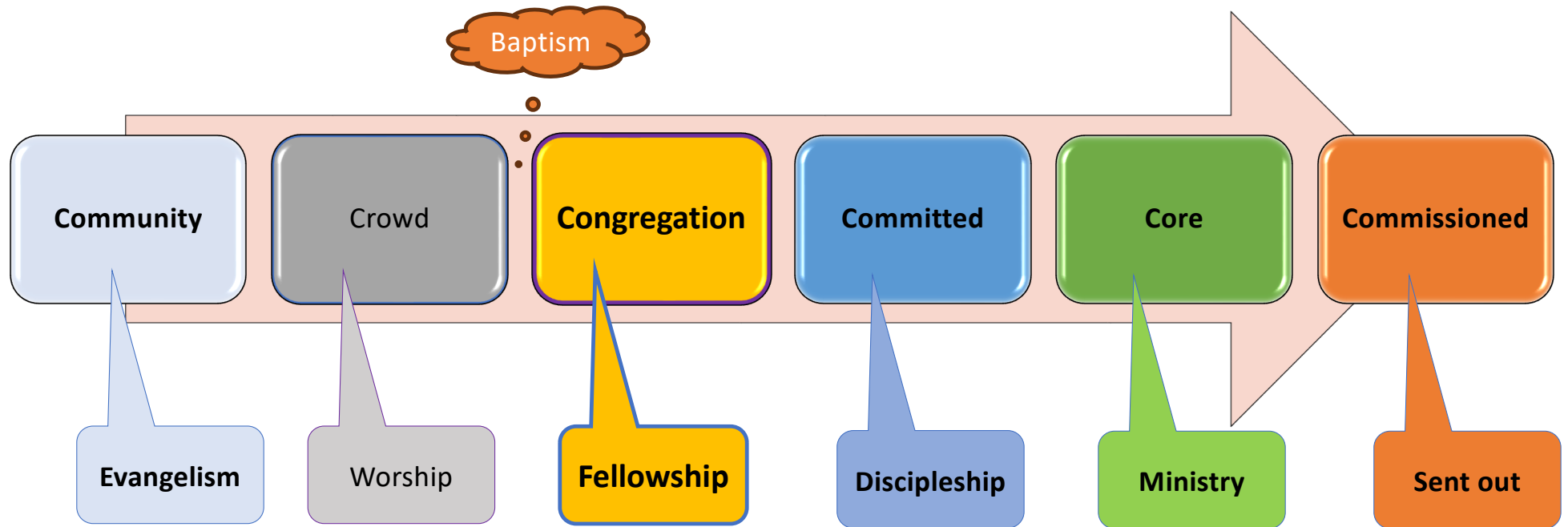
<https://www.shalomgrove.net/our-services>

Identifying the target



The Community	The uncommitted people who live within your ministry area
The Crowd	The people who are committed to attending worship each week
The Congregation	Those who have committed to membership
The Committed	Those who have committed to maturity
The Core	Those who have committed to ministry
The Commissioned	Those who have committed to their mission

Different Strategies Needed to Each Target



Building your congregation (crowd -> congregation)

Community

- Unchurched (the pool of lost people, no commitment at all to Jesus Christ.)
- This is where the purpose of evangelism takes place.

Crowd

- They come to your church/ministry, they may be believers or non-believers.
- Once a person has received Christ, your goal is to move him/her into congregation.

Congregation

- Now they are regular attenders and official members of your church/ministry.
- They are committed to the purpose of fellowship.

The Key Truths of the Church

- The church is a family
 - The church is God's household (a spiritual family).
 - The spiritual family is going to outlast your physical family. We're all going to be related in heaven, and this family will actually outlast the blood family that you have here on earth.
- God expects us to be a member of a family
 - The difference between being a Christian and being a member of a church family is the commitment. **I become a Christian by committing my life to Christ.**
 - Becoming a member of a church means to commit myself to God, the church, and other Christians.
- A Christian without a church family is an orphan
 - Every Christian needs a church family. A Christian without a church family is like a person who says, "I want to play soccer but I don't want to be a part of any team."

Fellowship (Koinonia)

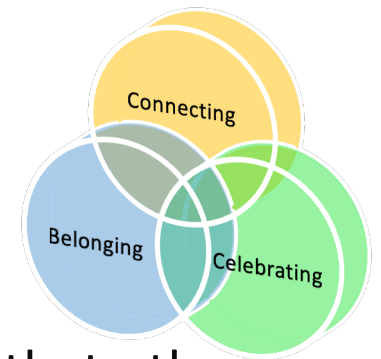
- Fellowship in the church
 - Fellow + Ship (Two fellows in the same ship).
 - A deep, spiritual partnership and shared life among believers, rooted in their connection to Jesus Christ.
 - It goes beyond socializing, encompassing mutual encouragement, vulnerability, shared faith, and tangible support.
 - While it can include eating or meeting together, true biblical fellowship is sharing life in Christ.
- Characteristics
 - Shared life: Investing in each other's lives and supporting one another.
 - Vulnerability: Sharing struggles, prayers, and hopes.
 - Unity: Viewing believers as part of one body, not isolated individuals.

Fellowship Development

1. Noticing to Belong (The Ministry of Observation)

- The early church in Jerusalem (Acts 6) noticed that the Hellenistic widows were being overlooked in the daily distribution of food. The leaders didn't wait for a complaint; they observed a disconnection and acted.
- Paul rebuked the Corinthians because they *failed* to notice the poor among them during the Lord's Supper.
- For when you are eating, some of you go ahead with your own private suppers. As a result, one person remains hungry and another gets drunk (1 Corinthians 11:21).
- Noticing as a spiritual discipline
 - Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24).
 - Consider (notice; katanoeo): Observe fixedly or understand deeply.

Connecting by noticing



- “**Notice** them:” Jesus makes sure to interact with people that others ignored.
 - Jesus **noticed** a man with the deformed hand (Matthew 12:9-10, NLT).
 - Jesus **noticed** a tax collector name Levi sitting in his booth (Luke 5:27).
 - Jesus **noticed** a poor widow giving two pennies for her offering (Luke 21:2).
 - Jesus **noticed** a paralyzed man who had been lying there helpless for years (John 5:6).
 - Jesus **noticed** a man who had been born blind (John 9:1).
 - When Jesus **noticed** that children were being prevented from coming to him, he got angry and said “let them come to me” (Mark 10:13-14, TEV).
 - Jesus said to Simon the Pharisee, ‘have you **noticed** this woman?’ (Luke 7:44).

2. Belonging (The Ministry of Unity)

- Belonging is not just a feeling; it resulted in radical sharing of possessions so that there were no needy persons among them.
- It is the transition from being strangers and aliens to members of God's household (Ephesians 2:19).
- True belonging means the body of Christ. If one part suffers, every part suffers with it (1 Corinthians 12:26).
- Cases of true & false belonging
 - All the believers were one in heart and mind. No one claimed that any of their possessions was their own, but they shared everything they had (Acts 4:32).
 - The church in Corinth struggled belonging. They had belonging based on cliques (some followed Paul, some Apollos). Paul corrected them in 1 Corinthians 12, explaining the Body of Christ.

3. Celebrating Together (The Ministry of Joy)

- Celebration is the natural "fruit" of the first two stages. This joy (celebration) was so infectious that they had the favor of all the people.
- Every day they continued to meet together in the temple courts. They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts, praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily (Acts 2:46-47).
- Biblical celebration is often tied to gratitude and victory over trial.
 - Rejoice in the Lord always (Philippians 4:4), even while he was in prison, because his sense of belonging to Christ and the church was so strong.
- Make people feel valued and special
 - Print a certificate of baptism.
 - Provide a new membership class.
 - Celebrate new members with banquets or receptions.
 - Use public testimonies to create heroes in the church.
 - Take their prayer requests seriously.

Noticing

- Considering (katanoeo)
- let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds (Hebrews 10:24).
- The Hellenistic Jews among them complained against the Hebraic Jews (Acts 6:1).

Belonging

- Fellowship (Koinonia)
- All the believers were one in heart and mind (Acts 4:32).
- You are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it (1 Corinthians 12:27).

Celebrating

- Gladness (Agalliasis)
- They broke bread in their homes and ate together with glad and sincere hearts (Acts 2:46).
- Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! (Philippians 4:4).

Fellowship Diagnostic Tools

Stage 1: Noticing (outward Look)	Stage 2: Belonging (Inward Bond)	Stage 3: Celebrating (Upward & Forward Expression)
Ensure no one is overlooked/ isolated	Cultivate one heart and mind	Sustain gladness and sincere hearts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can we identify 2–3 people who are currently on the edges of our group? • Do we know one specific personal struggle each member is currently facing? • When someone misses a gathering, how quickly do we notice, and who is responsible for reaching out? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On a scale of 1–10, how comfortable are members sharing their true failures or doubts without fear of judgment? • Does every member have a job or a way they contribute? • Do members speak in terms of "we" and "ours," or do they still view the church as "they" and "theirs"? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do we spend as much time rejoicing with those who rejoice as we do mourning with those who mourn? • Is there a dedicated time in our meetings to specifically celebrate what God has done since we last met? • How often do we have shared meals a week (month)?

Membership Covenant (Example)

Having received Christ as my Lord and savior and been baptized, and being in agreement with Shalom Grove's statements, strategy and structure, I now feel led by the Holy Spirit to unite with the Shalom Grove church family. In doing so, I commit myself to God and to the other members to do the following:

- 1. I will protect the unity of the church.*
- 2. I will share the responsibility of the church.*
- 3. I will serve the ministry of the church.*
- 4. I will support the testimony of the church.*

Date

Name

What it means to be a member

- The church is a family of God
 - Church membership is an excellent way for congregants to get more involved with their church. It's a great tool for churches to grow and sustain a healthy attendance at each and every service.
 - Let the peace of heart that comes from Christ be always present in your heart and lives, for this is your responsibility and privilege as members of his body (Colossians 3:15, LB)
- Benefits to membership
 - It identifies me as a genuine believer
 - It gives me a special family for support
 - It provides a place to discover and use my gifts in ministry
 - It places me under the spiritual protection of godly leaders
 - It gives me the accountability I need to grow