

## Resources for “Finding Common Purpose in Christian Community” Roundtable

Nurturing Communities Network – January 15, 2022

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From [Englewood Christian Church](#) in Indianapolis, IN. Shared by Joe Bowling.

Here are 5 questions Englewood has asked repeatedly and sequentially to help arrive at a common purpose or unity:

1. What is God doing, or what is the mission of God?
2. What is the primary way God is accomplishing this mission?
3. What has God called our particular expression of the church both to be and to do?
4. What are the ways God uses to shape us for being and doing?
5. What are the resources with which God has supplied us for being and doing?

Many communities, like ours, have worked together through open conversation and discernment on a "**Covenant Agreement**". We did that initially about ten years ago and took part of last year to revisit it. That allows for new persons to feel more connected to it and also recognizes that community and community context is dynamic. Here's a link to our [original covenant agreement](#).

Englewood's practice of **Sunday Conversation** has been transformative. More in that section on [this page](#). This book by Englewood's Christopher C. Smith enlarges on this practice:

[How the Body of Christ Talks: Recovering the Practice of Conversation in the Church](#)

From [Brudershof communities](#)

A young woman joining the Bruderhof in 1932 explains the common purpose she finds in the original Bruderhof settlement in Germany:

["People have gathered together here in order to live their lives filled by a clearly defined and common purpose."](#)

**About the Roundtable on January 15 2022:**

**Theme:** Whether starting out or years along, every community works hard at finding agreement among its members on what it deems most essential. How does your community find a common vision so as to agree on priorities?

1. Importance of having a common purpose
2. How has your community found common purpose?
3. Ways you've seen a community's common purpose change over time (good and bad)
4. The purpose (vision) must be renewed, revisited, re-explored as we continue

5. What counsel for a new community for how common purpose can be found?

**One Take-away:** Our quest for the common purpose meant for our fellowship is built on our relationships and practices with one another in our group.

The deeds of love to one another, “foot-washing in all its many expressions” actually overcome our differences, opinions and grievances, so we can find again and again the oneness in Christ which sharing our lives as brothers and sisters is essentially about.

Only then can we find and hold to a common purpose in our fellowship, and remain together.