

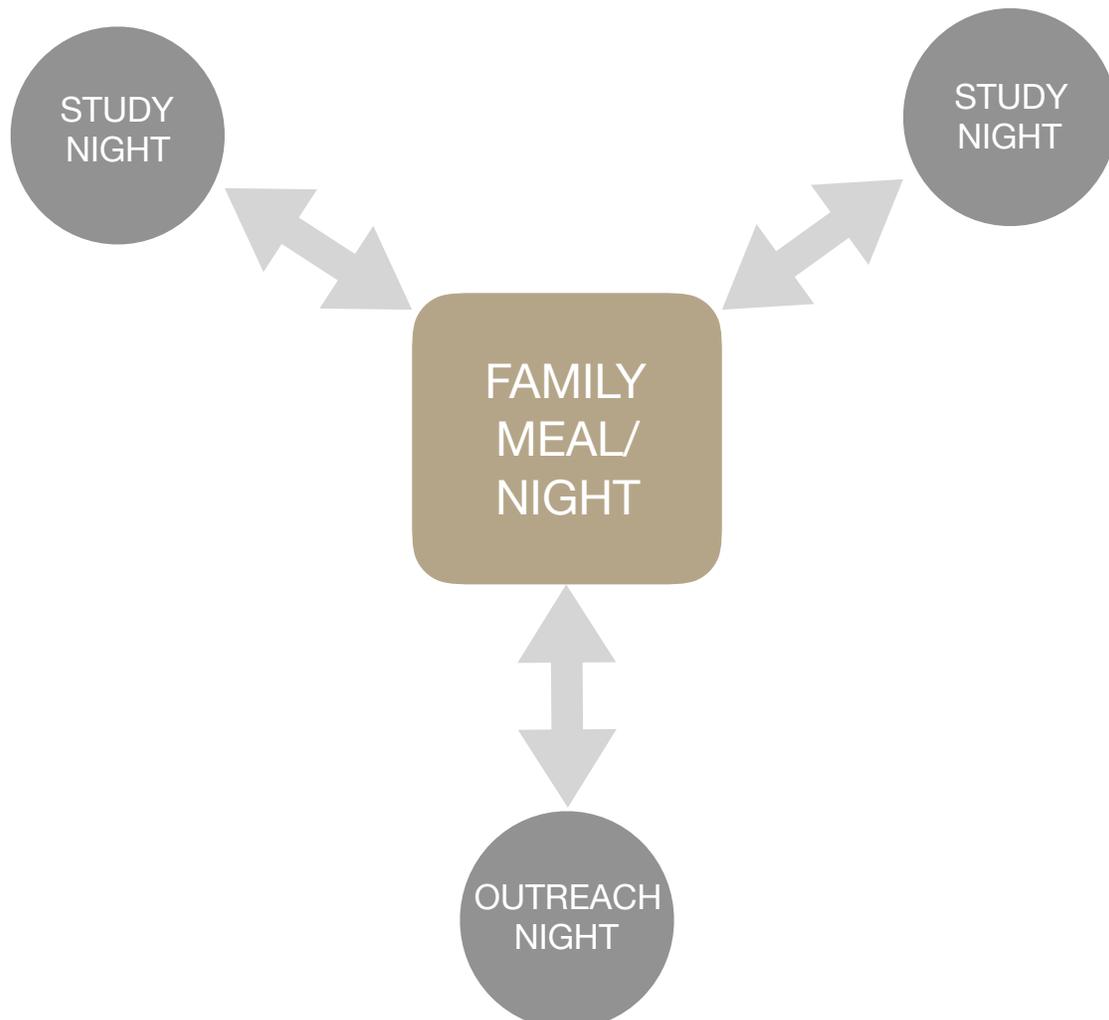


HYBRID MODELS FOR COMMUNITIES

DO WE HAVE TO HUDDLE THE SAME WAY ALL THE TIME?

Often we lack the creativity or imagination to see how we can organize our Community or microchurch in different ways. In fact, many Communities can quickly become nothing more than a small group or impersonal Bible study if the leaders are not mindful. With that in mind, below are two sample ideas of a hybrid approaches to gathering and huddling your Community. At Renaissance, we simply desire each Community to involve *Communion, Community, and Co-Mission* in some form or fashion on an ongoing basis. More simply stated, when people huddle together in communion with God, operating as a community/spiritual family, and living out God's mission, they are the church. We encourage leaders of our Communities to experiment and evaluate what is working within the lives of those that are connected with their Community.

HYBRID MODEL #1 - MOBILE

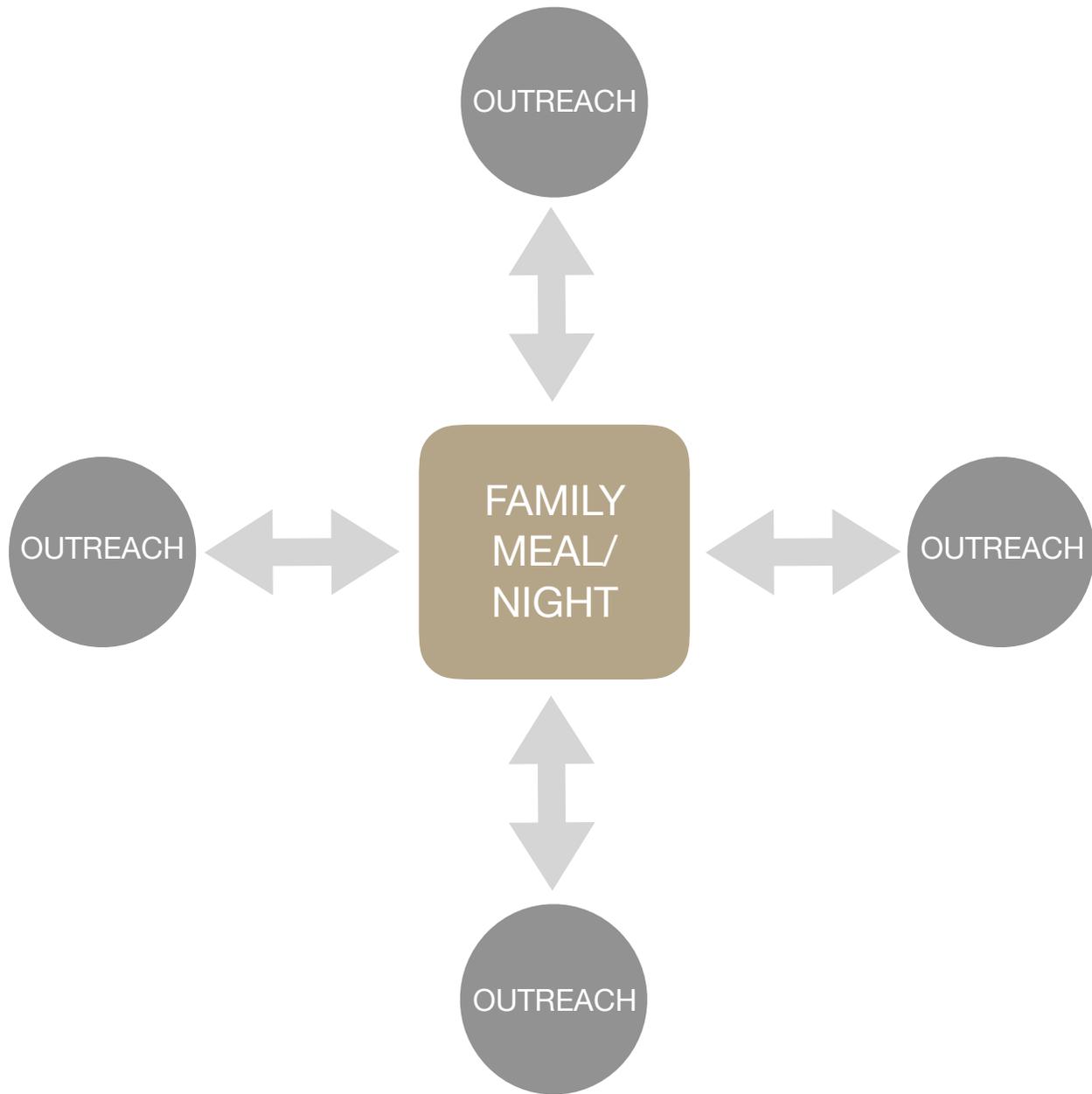


The hybrid approach allows Communities to do life together in a rhythm that doesn't grow stale. It also allows for more flexibility for those with families. It's not uncommon for a Community or huddle of believers to have dozens of kids. Trying to meet each week and accommodate the different schedules of each child can create an exhausting rhythm.

Here's the breakdown:

- Gather Monthly for a Family Meal. Once a month create a space for your whole community to gather to eat, fellowship, worship, and/or pray together. This is a great place to incorporate your kids.
- Gather in Smaller Study Groups. A couple of times a month the Community huddles in smaller study groups. These groups can either meet based along the lines of gender, life stage, geography, or even based on shared life. Some options for this time include:
 - DBS Bible study
 - Accountability (Asking the hard questions and making commitments)
 - Discipling younger believers through evangelism/discipleship
 - Prayer for each other
 - Prayer for outreach
- Gather for an Outreach Night: Once a month the Community huddles to serve those where they live, work, or play. Or the Community commits to a third space to frequent and have fun. This is a space where you do life together and can invite non-believers into check out what you're doing. An effective Third Place is *neutral* ground that is informal and non-committal. It *naturally* fits into the rhythms of your non-Christian friends lives, and you can do it *regularly*.

HYBRID MODEL #2 - OUTREACH



The outreach approach allows Communities to have a clear purpose in their time together, while also allowing smaller factions within the group to love/serve people intentionally. You could even use this rhythm to meet in an every other week rhythm with your Community (one week as a larger Community/Family and one in smaller outreach groups).

Here's the breakdown:

- Gather for a Family Meal. Once a week or once every other week create a space for your whole community to gather to eat, fellowship, worship, and/or pray together. Some options for this time include (led by different facilitators):
 - Hospitality
 - Music Worship
 - Sharing of Needs/Struggles
 - Prayer
 - Bible Study
 - Listening Prayer
 - Outreach updates (from small huddles)

- Gather with a Outreach Group. Once a week or once every other week, smaller huddles of 2-4 people from the Community spend time in outreach together. These do not have to be the same 2-4 people continually. For instance, you could have new outreach ideas come up during Family Time that seem valuable. New or reformed huddles could be created to live out the Gospel in new ways. In fact, younger believers could be invited into apprenticing under more mature believers in these settings. These outreach “attempts” or “rhythms” don't need to always be intense either. They can include:
 - Throwing a party for the neighborhood
 - Reaching out to soccer moms/sports teams
 - Spending time with people from a common workplace
 - Having fun with non-believers in a shared hobby
 - Frequenting the same coffee shop or pub
 - Serving the homeless in your neighborhood
 - Caring for/taking in an international student
 - Taking ownership of a local park/community garden
 - Etc...

The beauty of this model is that it allows ownership. It also allows for organic disciplining to take place. For instance, if a group is seeing fruit from their outreach attempts, they might be able to start their own small study group/DBS group to invite non-believers in before inviting them into the Family Time.

SUMMARY

These are just examples, but they showcase the freedom and flexibility that exists for leaders. The above examples still hits on the 3 C's (communion,

community, co-mission). A Community doesn't have to be complex – it's thinking outside the box we have built for ourselves, and asking the question "how do we obey what God has commanded?" Whether you're leading a Community or attending one, I want to challenge you to consider – how are our practices fostering obedience to Jesus?