

Hometown: On a Mission

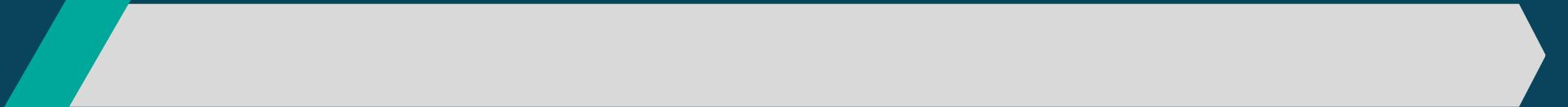
Our mission as Christians,
our mission as a church





Mission Statement

At Hometown we exist to connect people with God, with each other, and with the community






The Punchline

Connecting with others isn't a breath of fresh air,
it's the air we NEED to breathe






And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Be Connected

- ❑ Persecution caused some to not meet together
- ❑ Meeting together will have a positive outcome
- ❑ This is a NEED

Monopoly




A large teal chevron graphic pointing to the right, located on the left side of the slide.

“I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong, that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other’s faith.”

For Encouragement

- ❑ Paul longs to see the people he is writing to
- ❑ There will be mutual encouragement
- ❑ See what other people have been through and be encouraged with their faith

A large teal chevron graphic pointing to the right, located on the left side of the slide.

Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing.

For Encouragement


- ❏ Teamwork makes the dreamwork
- ❏ Build each other up
- ❏ See others and yourself the way that God does

“Lean On Me”

Bill Withers 1972

“We all need somebody to
lean on”



A large teal chevron graphic pointing to the right, located on the left side of the slide.

As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another


Proverbs 27: 17

For Sharpening

- ❑ Can't be sharpened alone
- ❑ Being connected allows us to sharpen each other
- ❑ Be sharper and more effective followers of Jesus

For Sharpening

- ❑ Accountability
 - ❑ Sharing struggles
 - ❑ Takes time, effort, and willingness to share
- ❑ Be willing to sharpen and be sharpened



Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

For Unity

- ❏ So much can divide us
- ❏ When we're connected as Christians we reminded something binds us together

Parts of a Boy Band

Bad Boy

Young One

Heartthrob

Shy One

Older Brother

For Unity

- ❑ United about having eternity with God
- ❑ This is missing with some Christians today
- ❑ Too much divides us and we're missing what unites us
- ❑ Be connected and united in your love and devotion to Jesus

How Do We Do It?

- ☐ You gotta want it
- ☐ Individually
- ☐ Sunday services
- ☐ Small Groups
- ☐ Events

Wrap Up

- ❏ We're not made to be alone
- ❏ Be connected
- ❏ Encouragement
- ❏ Sharpening
- ❏ Unity

Audio file

[Connect With Others Audio.mp3](#)

Transcript

How many of you have to do these in, like work scenarios where you have to do like getting to know your coworkers and all those kind of stuff? Yeah, I'm starting in a group with a bunch of pastors and I'm waiting for one of these stuff to, like, get to know each other. Generally, these are not like my kind of thing either. I'm like, if there's a point to a meeting or getting together, let's do it. But often times the point is to connect with the other people, either on your team, at work or with each other like I want us to. All here get to know each other and that's we're going to focus on today is connecting with others. We are in week two of our little three-week mini series on our mission statement here at hometown. If you need a refresher or you've never heard it before quickly, here is our mission statement it says hometown. Exists to connect people with God with each other and with the community. So we talked about connecting with God last week and today we're going to talk about connecting with others next week, connecting with the community so each one of the three parts so today. Connecting with others for our purposes today it'll be with other Christians, with other people that believe in Jesus that follow God as well. We'll touch on talking and connecting with people that don't know Jesus. Yet next week in the community part that is super important. But for today we are going to focus on connecting with other Christians. So that's we're going to hit. And what I want to talk about is how important this really. And I want us to see it as something that we need to do, that we have a drive to do. We do it every week here with the connection question to kind of like kind of nudge you to do this right, because it's important and we want you to be able to connect with other people. And the punchline today is kind of this as I was thinking about it, connecting with others isn't a breath of fresh air. It's the air we need to breathe, so connecting with others isn't a breath of fresh air, but the air we need to breathe. Basically, it is in a. Necessity, right? Sometimes we can get together with other people and connect. Wow, that was just so great that we got to get to. That was so nice. We should do that more often. And that's true. It is great. But I think we need to see it as more important than that, something that we start treating as a need, see it as part of the lifeline of us as Christians connecting with each other. So we're going to do today, we're going to look at this, the importance of being connected and then kind of see what connecting with others leads to and that being encouragement. We can sharpen each other and have unity and then also look at a few kind of practical ways to actually do this. Alright, so let's dive in. We're going to look at a number of different passages today. We're going to start with Hebrews 10, verses 24 through 25. Everything will be up here. That Hebrews passage is bookmarked there in the Bible, on your table. So be kind of our theme verse, but we'll touch on a few others. So this is just the importance of connecting with each other. If you want to follow along on a phone or tablet or anything, that is great. I'm in the NIV translation today, so here's 10:24 and 25. Five says this. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the day approaching will stop there. In this time when when Hebrews was written, groups met together fairly regularly, Jews would gather. Weekly on the Sabbath, Christian groups that we're meeting would be at least weekly, but that started to fall off and some of the thought is due to persecution. They were afraid. They're like, I don't

know if we should get together. Some were even afraid to get together in home. Groups anymore, it just wasn't. As important as it had been, or there was some fear that was keeping them from it, and our writer of Hebrews is. Saying don't give. Up on that, don't neglect it. Don't stop meeting together. Why? Because they're intended these meetings are intended to a positive outcome, a helpful outcome. They're a good thing. Now the Greek word that was used here for getting together usually referred. Two more formal gatherings, something like this. However, it doesn't specify for sure because I think it applies to just getting together with each other as well, right? Again, this is more than just a nice idea, right? Ohh man Chris. Be great if we could just get. Together. Instead, it would be dude, we need to get together. We need to get together and do this now for you introverts out there. I hear you. I see you. I'm one of you. This doesn't mean you never have alone time. You're never by yourself to recharge, right? You can still have that. But still getting together is a need. Don't totally isolate because we're so much better. We can do more when we do get together. Who here has played the game of Monopoly? Many of us have played Monopoly, right? OK, so, you know, I play this game. My son, Jeremiah. A lot. We have the Wisconsin apply versions of the UW version. And what happens is when you buy the properties, one of them is great on its own. But when you get all three, you make more money off it. Then you can put houses or. Hotels on it and our game, it's diplomas and years of credit. We have the college version, right? So if you get one of these, see grad school. This is great on. Its own right, it's fine, but when I get. All three, right. It's even better because all together I've all of them. They're Better Together, these landmarks fine on their own, but so much better when they're together. They can do things together that they can't on their own. God wants us to come together to put all the pieces together, so don't give up being together. Make it a priority. And as our writer says, good things will come well. Like what? What kind of good stuff will come? The first one. Is encouragement. Encouragement comes from being together Romans. One verse 12 says I long to see you so that I may impart to you some spiritual gift to make you strong that is that you and I may be mutually encouraged by each other's faith and courage. That is my emphasis added there because encouraged as part of this, Paul is writing this letter to the Romans. Paul wrote many of his letters to the churches. He had many from prison, but he is seeing I want to be with you, I. Want to see you and why? To be mutually encouraged, Paul, our Big Deal Apostle Church Starter Church planter Guy that wrote a ton of our New Testament. He needs to speak with other people and see them to be encouraged as well. It's important being together cause we can encourage each other, right? You can see what other people in life have been through and how they're still living their faith. Let that be encouraging to you as you go through the only things in your life we all have stuff in our lives we all need to be encouraged and to see that and to know that takes being connected to each other. 1st Thessalonians 5 eleventh is therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing build each other up together. We have a saying in our house where we say teamwork makes the dream work. We say that on our House all the time is like we're going to do this all together. We're going to get through things. Together and it's easy to feel like on our. Own we're not good enough or we can't do it. We're just by ourselves. Then let's stop trying to tackle everything alone. We don't have to see when others need to be built up and then get out. That spiritual toolbox and let's go help each other build each other up. There's going to be times when you need. To be built up. There's going to be times when others need to be built up when we're connected and we're together, we can see that in each other and. Help that process. That happen. See others when you're connected with them. Let them see you the way God does that. You're not a failure and that you do have value to God and you always will. Right now, you can totally encourage and build people up in, in their jobs and their goals and projects they're doing. That is great and that's important,

but let's not forget to build them up as other children of God as other people that follow Christ, that God loves them and values them so much that he sent his son to die. For them so that he could have eternity with them. And that all goes for you too. So let's build each other up in that, because that never falters. Lean on each other in that. Is anybody familiar with the old song? Lean on me. Bill Withers. Sometimes. Yeah, we all need somebody to lean home. Right. But Weathers wrote this in 1972, and he said he wrote it with his small hometown in West Virginia in mind. And he said his quote about it is people were more attentive to each other and a little less afraid of each other. And what he saw in big cities. So he noticed, people saw each other. They recognized when they needed help, they recognized each other's struggles and needs and were together. They leaned on each other. So like the song says, lean on each other, encourage each other, and build each other up. Because we all need that sometimes it's OK. To need that, it's also great to help others when they need it, but being connected, being with each other helps us see that. So be connected with each other and encourage each other. OK, so we need to be together. We got that. What does it help with? Encouragement. Next thing it helps with is what I would say is sharpening. Proverbs 27:17 says as iron sharpens iron so one person sharpens another. This proverb, this proverb gets thrown around a lot. I've heard this in all types of contexts and we probably mainly. I know I do think. Of iron is like this. Tough and strong metal, right? And it can easily be this proverb taken to be OK, we just got to be tough and strong all the time. We're just going to kind of. Beat each other. Up into, into sharpening and ohh right. Or like we're in the gym and we're throwing heavy iron weights around and I love that, right. I like to be in the gym and throw the weight around, but that kind of idea misses the point of this proverb, because iron as we know it wouldn't actually sharpen right. If I take two of my dumbbells and just start rubbing them together, they're going to get sharper. They might create some heat or some friction, but they're not going to get sharp. All right, here's what actually matters about this. If I do want to sharpen something, say I have a knife in my kitchen and I want to sharpen it by itself. That knife does not. Get sharper. But if I bring out either a sharpening rod or use a sharpener, I can sharpen it. It takes. Two things to sharpen it. Sharpening doesn't happen alone. Right. What we take from this is being with someone else connected to someone else is how we can sharpen each other, right? It takes being together, not just being alone. Sharp followers of Jesus become effective followers of Jesus. So we're there to sharpen one another. This week I was on Wednesday, I took Jeremiah to his karate class and they have a time after the regular class where they do kids sparring. So he's in sparring. She gets all geared up and they. Spar and I. Love the way they start and they basically play what looks like a game of tag with different people because they're teaching what's called point sparring. So it doesn't matter how hard you hit them, but you're just trying to get them in a certain spot. So they have them kind of going around and working with each other and the first guy, Jeremiah gets up against is somebody right around his belt level. So they're doing well. They're going at each other, learning different things, getting better. And then they rotate and now he ends up with this girl who's probably about four belt levels ahead of him and is the daughter of one of the instructors. And I'm sitting there behind this girl's mom. I'm thinking he understand chance, right. He gets in there against her. She's good. She's got this. So I'm watching them, but I'm seeing them both. Even though once higher than the other one, learning from each other. Because Jeremiah is learning things as he's going, for how she's blocking him. He's throwing moves at her, maybe a little unorthodox, so she's like, OK, here's what I have to do. The point is they get. Better with each other. That's why they do these in tandem. You sharpen each other together. They got better at sparring together. They were connected on the sparring mat to get better. That's the iron sharpens iron part right. We do that with each other to get better and more effective as followers of. Jesus and I think for us this happens with accountability.

And accountability is the word we throw around in the church is a lot basically holding each other accountable, holding each other. Two things we want to do. Water sharing struggles with someone else and holding them to working on it. So if maybe I'm saying I want. To do better here or. I struggle here and I want to clean this up. I say that to somebody and then the way this works best. Is if they. Also share with me it's best as a two way St. this brings in honesty and transparency and then relatability. Because we all have struggles and we should all want to improve on those. Now doing this is not always easy or fun on the front end, because we have to be honest and it takes time and it takes effort. It takes a willingness to share the good in your life and the not so good, the bad stuff, and it takes a willingness sometimes to speak the truth and love to other people that need to hear it. Because helping helping somebody sharpen isn't always easy for them to hear. Being sharpened is not always easy for us. All right, this is difficult, but it's so important and I think it's what God wants from us. Now. This can take a variety of forms. There's not one way to do. It there's sometimes people will do this in groups of, you know, four or five, and it'll be their accountability group. It can be one on ones. It can be any of those. There's also different ways it gets approached depending on the need. At times we may need to be gentle with each other saying I hear you. I see the struggle we. At this at times it might be a little tougher. Loves like, hey, let's do better. I know you. I know you. Can overcome this so. Let's go. It maybe either one of those be sensitive to that, but be with people that you trust that follow Jesus, but be willing to share these things and sharpen each other. And even if it's hard or a little. Painful on the front end, it does get better and it works so well when we're together, so be willing to sharpen and be sharpened. Alright, so encouragement, sharpening and the third one unity being together helps with the unity. Ephesians 4/2 through six says be completely humble and gentle. Be patient bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the spirit to the bond of peace. There's one body, one spirit, just as you were called to 1 hope when you were called. 1 Lord. One faith, one baptism, one God and father of all who is overall. Through all and in all. When we are connected with other Christians, we share a common ground. There is something that unites us and that is our belief in Jesus as our Lord and Savior, because there are so many things in this world that want to divide us and can divide us from politics to social issues to sports music, mode of transportation, the food we eat and we think. Like, it's kind of ridiculous how many things can separate and divide us, but when we're connected as other Christians, we're reminded that there is something that binds us together, something that is far bigger than any of these things that can separate us. There was some big news that dropped this week for any of you around my age, maybe recognize it, but the story came out that the good old boy band In Sync is going to release some new music. I don't if anybody caught this, but I did Ryan smiling at least Ryan's with me on this. OK, I grew up in that era. All the boy bands were all the rage. When I grew up, OK, but if you understand boy bands at all, if you don't, I'll give you a quick little primer. OK. Parts of a boy band usually have these. Five, you got your bad boy right? The rough and tumble one, the shy one kind of keeps himself the young one. Right. The kid, the little cute one, the older brother. Kind of the mature, overseeing. Then the heart throb. Right. You're Justin Timberlake's of the world. Nobody actually likes those guys. OK, here's the thing. These differing personalities could easily conflict, right? The bad boy and the older brother are naturally going to **** heads, right? This happens because they're different, right? Maybe the shy one. Conflicts with the heart throb because the attention right this can happen, but they unite around something bigger. At least they should, right? That perfect harmony and that beautiful ballad song, or that perfectly choreographed dance move where all five of them come together and it looks ridiculous. Awesome. Right. The focus is what unites them and not what's divide them, right? They put these personalities aside to make the band and the song and. The show bigger.

That's kind of what we need to focus on as Christians. What unites us, not what divides us. So what does unite us having eternity with God? That Jesus came, died and rose again for us? Right? You will not agree with every Christian and everything in life. I know plenty of Christians. Many of you here who I disagree with on. All the things I listed earlier, right? I know many of you disagree with my love of country music. We did this a few weeks ago, right? I don't think any of you have gotten on my train yet. That's fine, right? We disagree on plenty of these things, but we agree on Jesus that he's bigger than all of that bigger. And our politics bigger than our views on different things, bigger than music and sports and. All of this. Stuff and I think this is kind of missing with Christians today. I really feel like we're letting too much divide us and losing sight of what actually unites us. And I really think it can change if we just got together and talked about it. Right. And talked about what really does unite us see each other as people and not just usernames or handles behind an app, right? Rather than sharing the posts that true followers of Jesus will share this, I think Jesus would rather all the people that might share it actually got together and talked about him in their lives and talked about what actually. Unites them. Be together, be connected through your love and devotion to Jesus. Being connected with each other is so important and necessary. We're supposed to do it. It leads to encouraging to sharpening and to unity. So how can we do it right? We know we need to do it. We gotta be together. We gotta do all these things. It takes intentionality. We have to want to do it. You gotta wanna. It doesn't just happen on its own. You won't stumble in to connecting with other people usually, so we have to want to do it. And again, there's no singular way to do it. Start by going out for coffee or on walks or common interest, and connect with people there. There are a variety of ways to do this. Get together with each other here at hometown we have our services. You are all here right now. We have the time where we sing together. We have the time where you listen to me talk. But a big part is that you're just here together and you can talk before service. After service, during our connection. Question being together should be what's attractive about coming on a Sunday morning. The author James Brian Smith I'm reading a book called The Good and Beautiful community by him. And he talks. About when he started going to a church service in. And what he said about it is that perfection, elegance, talent and performance didn't draw me, but the fellowship, the togetherness, the unity and diversity intrigued me. Right. He wanted to be there just because they were together and that being together was something he saw and he loved. And then we have our small groups that we talked about Tuesday and Wednesday nights for women's and Men's group, another time for conversation, getting to know people and sharing life so. We have all of that. And then events, we're going to touch on this more next week because these are also a time when we can connect to the Community. But just being together at these events, serving together at them, spending time together at them as a way to connect with each other. So we'd love for you to take advantage of some of the ways we're trying to provide you connect with each other and take some steps on your own to connect with people because it's so important to connect with each other and to grow with each other. In the end, I would love for you to see the need for it, not just that it's nice, but that it's something we really need. As Christians, we are not made to be alone. We're made to be together, so don't give up on that. Just like our writer of Hebrews says don't give up meeting together. We all need encouragement sometimes and being together, being connected can bring that we all need to be built up to to be on like a team and bring each other up. We need that for sharpening. We don't want to become dull. We want to be sharpened as followers of Jesus and then for unity. We need to remember that we have something. That unites us and that is bigger than anything else and it all comes with being connected with each other. So again, I would encourage you to not see being connected with others as a breath of fresh air, but that air that you need to breathe, that it's such a need. Let's pray. Got to thank you for this

morning. I'm glad that you brought us all here and that meet us that we can meet together and we can start connecting with each other right here this morning.

Kind of.

God, I pray that you would put it on our hearts to reach out to someone and get together with them. Just one person this week. That we would see the need for it. Gather. We see the benefit of what comes with it. So we gotta thank you. For everything that being together as followers of Jesus brings God, for for the encouragement. For the sharpening guide for the unity that we can remember, we are together in some. So, God, I pray again for all of us to just really have it on our hearts to connect with somebody. This week your name. Amen.