

## 6. Nurturing Community

We value the nurturing of Kingdom community life in its various expressions. These are communities of Jesus followers who are called by God to be covenantal in their relationships and missional as they reach out. By covenantal we mean learning to love and live wholeheartedly committed to Jesus and one another, the way Jesus loves and faithfully walks with us, as we are disciplined by Him and one another. By missional we mean giving and serving with the Father the way Jesus did – within and beyond the community – in ways that delight God and extend His Kingdom, as we learn together to live and share the Unshakable Kingdom of God.

*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. 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 those who were being saved. Acts 2:42-47*

*Acts 4:32-35*

\*Please note: KKI recognizes that we are all at different stages in our current involvement with what is community to us. Realizing how important community is now and will be in increasing ways into the future, we encourage everyone to continue from where they are (which may involve as few as two or three people regularly meeting together) and then prayerfully consider how to help their community grow and be further strengthened. The 18 principles listed in this KKI Nurturing Community core value describe important aspects of covenantal missional community life which we hope can be pursued and developed further, as God leads—in His timing and His ways.

\*\*Please read the document “Background for the Development of Value 6 – Nurturing Community” on the KKI website for more background on why and how this value was recognized and developed as an essential aspect of KKI's continuing journey.

### 6.1 Knowing, Loving and Walking with God

We are called to know, love, trust and obey God in every aspect of our lives, and to daily seek and enjoy His presence, delighting Him as we walk with Him in the things He has on His heart. This is true not only for individuals, families and teams, but also for communities, as part of the KKI levitical calling.

*The One who sent me is with me; He has not left me alone, for I always do what pleases Him. John 8:29*

*At that time the Lord set apart the tribe of Levi to carry the ark of the covenant of the Lord, to stand before the Lord to minister and to pronounce blessings in His name, as they still do today. That is why the Levites have no share or inheritance among their fellow Israelites; the Lord is their inheritance, as the Lord your God told them. Deut. 10:8-9*

*John 4:34, John 15:9-11, Acts 2:28*

As we desire to know God and bring Him joy, we discover and experience His satisfying joy over our lives! When we learn to be with Him, tune into what is in His heart, and agree with Him in prayer, we can then take steps of faith with Him in order to see His desires fulfilled, as we bring His presence and blessings to those He leads us to.

## 6.2 Covenantal Relationships

Pursuing loving, committed, healthy relationships with God and one another is essential to community life.

*A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. John 13:34-35*

*John 15:12-13, John 17:20-23, Romans 5:5, 1 John 4:7-8*

As we daily grow in our intimate love relationship with God, He enables us to love others in the way He loves us. His love opens the way for us to have deep, loving commitments to each other in our family, friendships and community relationships. Jesus is our prime example of this, as He made a new covenant with us by shedding His blood for us. Sacrificial, unconditional agape love comes from God's heart and is imparted to us by the Holy Spirit. These covenantal relationships are at the heart of living and sharing the Kingdom of God.

## 6.3 Community Leadership

The community is served by a leadership team that walks in unity, shares responsibilities, lives out and inspires a biblical lifestyle the way Jesus did, and nurtures healthy community life.

*They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. Acts 2:42-43*

*Here is a trustworthy saying: Whoever aspires to be an overseer desires a noble task. Now the overseer is to be above reproach...He must also have a good reputation with outsiders, so that he will not fall into disgrace and into the devil's trap. 1 Tim. 3:1-7 (see entire passage)*

*Titus 1:6-9*

Leadership team members should – as they live by grace – lead with loving, humble, servant hearts, live balanced lives, and help others to develop their potential and discover their unique place in God's Kingdom. They should recognize people's spiritual gifts and talents and release them in these areas, as in the body of Christ, "there are many parts, but one body" (1 Cor. 12:20). Leadership team members should fulfill biblical criteria for leadership and be accountable to one another and to the community.

## 6.4 Biblical Foundations

The community promotes and joyfully lives out biblically-grounded truth, including KKI beliefs, values and principles.

*All scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man [or woman] of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work. 2 Tim. 3:16-17*

*Psalms 1:1-3, Psalm 119:9-11, Psalm 138:2, 1 John 2:14, Col. 3:16*

The Bible is the inspired, authoritative Word of God and foundational to community life. God's Word is unchanging, reliable, and relevant in every generation, nation and culture – past, present, and future. The KKI values are derived from Scripture and are key for living and sharing a Kingdom lifestyle.

## 6.5 Intergenerational

We seek to nurture community that is intentionally intergenerational.

*In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your young men will see visions, your old men will dream dreams. Acts 2:17*

*The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call. Acts 2:39*

*Deut. 6:4-9, Mal. 4:5-6, Psalm 78:2-7, Acts 16:33*

We deeply value and promote the linking of the generations through the nurturing of intergenerational relationships in the biological family, the community and in all of life. We also recognise the importance of generational transfer and partnership as keys for vibrant community life. The link between the generations strongly determines the degree to which God is glorified and how effectively He and His Kingdom can be known and shared throughout and beyond the community.

## 6.6 Community Guidelines

The community recognizes the importance of establishing clear, practical guidelines about how to welcome people into the community and how to live a healthy community life.

*From Him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work. Eph. 4:16*

*Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. Col. 3:12-14*

*Col. 3:15-25 (general relationship principles), 1 Cor. 11:33-34, 1 Tim. 5:3-16 (examples of specific community guidelines)*

As there are various practical challenges in community life, each community will need to agree on shared expectations about a whole range of practical details that affect each other and that are relevant to the community. In the Scriptures we find a range of examples of guidelines, often specific for that time, regarding how people were to interact as a community. The question is, what are the negotiable and non-negotiable behaviors in the community? Clarity and transparency are keys to avoiding the tensions of misunderstanding and the crossing of personal and family boundaries. For example, a cross-cultural community may need to look at different forms that parenting and child discipline might take, especially related to group settings. Another example of guidelines to consider is how to welcome people into the community and how they progress from guest to member.

## 6.7 Regular Worship and Prayer

The community gathers regularly for thanksgiving, praise, worship, prayer and intercession.

*Again, truly I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything they ask for, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven. For where two or three gather in my name, there am I with them. Matt. 18:19-20*

*Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Eph. 5:18b-20*

*The trumpeters and musicians joined in unison to give praise and thanks to the Lord. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals and other instruments, the singers raised their voices in praise to the Lord and sang: "He is good; His love endures forever." Then the temple of the Lord was filled with the cloud, and the priests could not perform their service because of the cloud, for the glory of the Lord filled the temple of God. 2 Chron. 5:13-14*

*2 Chron. 20:21-22, Acts 2:46-47, Acts 4:31*

Regular worship and prayer is vital to experiencing the presence of God in our community life. As a community, our knowledge and experience of God is deepened as we worship and pray together.

## 6.8 Joyful Celebrations

The community gathers regularly for fellowship, celebrations, fun and creative expression, raising the joy level!

*There, in the presence of the Lord your God, you and your families shall eat and shall rejoice in everything you have put your hand to, because the Lord your God has blessed you. Deut. 12:7*

*Ex. 12:14, Ex. 23:14-16, Lev. 23:39-41, 1 Kings 8:65, 2 Chron. 5:13-14, 2 Chron. 30:21, Neh. 8:10, Psalm 150:1-6, Matt. 22:1-10, Luke 15:3-10, Luke 15:22-24*

The Bible reveals that God is in favor of fun, fellowship, and celebration! Thus, a healthy community encourages and facilitates regular times to play, enjoy recreation, and celebrate together. Shared meals – including abundant feasts – are vital to developing deeper fellowship and a sense of family. Making room for fun and creative expression as we gather helps bring a sense of joyful celebration!

## 6.9 Kingdom Living In and Through the Home

Community life starts in and overflows from our homes, which are the centers where Kingdom living with our family and others is enjoyed and shared, and covenant relationships are pursued and deepened.

*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 those who were being saved. Acts 2:46:47*

*Is not the cup of thanksgiving for which we give thanks a participation in the blood of Christ? And is not the bread that we break a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one loaf, we, who are many, are one body, for we all share the one loaf. 2 Cor. 10:16-17*

*Deut. 6:4-9, John 15:12-13, Rom. 16:5a, 1 Cor. 11:23-29*

While the whole community gathers regularly for worship, teaching, prayer and celebrations, living out the Kingdom lifestyle together with others begins first in the home--within a family and then beyond, as others are invited in. The heart of community life happens as people gather in homes to eat together, enjoy one another, respond to Jesus together, and deepen their covenantal commitments to Jesus and one another through their fellowship and by regularly celebrating communion together. It is also in the home that the

foundational role of families and the involvement of all ages—including young children—is best lived out and enjoyed. As both whole community and home-based gatherings are carried out, there is a wonderful balance of living life in Jesus that can overflow in Kingdom-extending ways!

## 6.10 Marriage/Family/Singles

The community supports and nourishes marriages and families, while equally honoring, receiving from and sharing life with those who are single.

*“Haven’t you read,” he replied, “that at the beginning the Creator ‘made them male and female’, and said, ‘For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh’? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.” Matt. 19:4-6*

*Gen. 12:1-3, Gen. 18:17-19, Deut. 6:1-2, 6-7, Psalm 68:6a, Mal. 2:14-16, 1 Cor. 7:32-35, Heb. 13:4*

God intends individuals, married couples and families to have vital roles in living and sharing the Kingdom. Therefore, the community strengthens, protects and supports them at their different stages of development and promotes sharing life between them, as they bless each other with their unique gifts and anointings.

## 6.11 Member Responsibility

Members of the community take personal responsibility for their own lives and resources, recognizing that healthy personal lives promote and support healthy community life.

*For you yourselves know how you ought to follow our example. We were not idle when we were with you, nor did we eat anyone’s food without paying for it. On the contrary, we worked night and day, laboring and toiling so that we would not be a burden to any of you. We did this, not because we do not have the right to such help, but in order to offer ourselves as a model for you to imitate. For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: “The one who is unwilling to work shall not eat.” We hear that some among you are idle and disruptive. They are not busy; they are busybodies. Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the food they eat. 2 Thes. 3:7-12*

*You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions. In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ Acts 20:34-35*

*This principle refers to responsibility in all areas of life; thus, there are numerous verses.*

*Deut. 28:1-14, Prov. 6:6-11, Acts 18:1-4, Rom. 12:1, Rom. 14:10,12, 1 Cor. 3:8, 1 Cor 6:19-20, 2 Cor. 9:6, Gal. 6:5, Col. 3:23-24, 2 Thess. 3:7-12, 1 Tim. 5:8*

The community is only as strong as the commitment of each person to take responsibility for their own life, while also understanding their contribution and commitment to the community.

## 6.12 Generosity

Community members care for and bless one another through generosity—sharing time, talents, possessions and finances—so that all needs are met.

*All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. Acts 2:44-45*

*Command them to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. 1 Tim. 6:18*

*Deut. 15:7-11 Psalm 112:5, Prov. 11:24-25, 2 Cor. 9:6-15, 1 Tim. 5:16, 1 Peter 4:10*

Generosity flows from the heart of God and is an essential part of living and sharing the Kingdom. Community members not only provide for themselves, but are also attentive to the needs of others. We want to be generous in our time, finances and care, as we understand that we are blessed to be a blessing.

## **6.13 Learning and Training for Life**

The community understands the value that each person—including its children and young people, growing through all of their ages and stages of development—will learn and develop best in the context of committed, long-term relationships.

*Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. <sup>6</sup> These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. <sup>7</sup> Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Deut 6:5-7*

*Gen. 18:18-19, Psalm 78:2-8, Prov. 22:6*

The community can offer relationship-based discipleship and apprenticeship opportunities, as well as encourage children and young people to grow by embracing age-appropriate responsibilities. The whole community can help carry out the holistic formation and discipleship of its children, which will include the development of their spiritual lives, intellects, character, skills, emotions, bodies, social abilities and creativity.

## **6.14 Hospitality**

Offering hospitality to others, both within and beyond the community, is a high value of community life.

*Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality. Rom. 12:13*

*Lev. 19:33-34, Matt. 25:34-36, Luke 14:12-14, 1 Tim. 5:9-10, Titus, 1:7-8, Heb. 13:2, 1 Peter 4:9*

Hospitality is a high priority in living and sharing the Kingdom of God. Loving others the way He loves us is reflected in and through authentic hospitality. The presence of God comes as we open our hearts, lives and homes, making hospitality an important part of our testimony.

## **6.15 Stewardship and Sustainability**

The community responsibly cares for the environment, manages its resources well, and works towards becoming as practically self-sustaining as possible.

*The Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it. Gen. 2:15*

*Go to the ant, you sluggard; consider its ways and be wise! It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest. Prov. 6:6-8*

*You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions. In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus Himself said: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'* Acts 20:34-35

*Gen. 1:27-30, Prov. 6:6-11, Acts 4:32, 1 Peter 4:10*

In light of changing times and the increasing global challenges that are and will be affecting the availability of life-sustaining resources, the community should consider ways to work towards becoming self-sustaining. It should also, out of gratitude to God and a sense of God-honoring responsibility, be wise and diligent in managing and making good use of the resources that God has already blessed it with, including physical assets and people's giftings and talents. Finally, it should recognize that the environment is God's creation and is a gift from Him, and thus care for it thoughtfully and responsibly.

## **6.16 People with Additional Needs**

The community prayerfully and responsibly considers its capacity to welcome into its midst people with additional needs.

*Carry each other's burdens, and in this way you will fulfill the law of Christ. Gal. 6:2*

*Psalms 82:3, Prov. 31:8-9, Isa. 58:6-7, Titus 3:14*

The community carefully considers how it can respond compassionately and responsibly to those whose needs may require specialized care. It is important for the community to assess if it has practical resources and human capacity to meet those needs. If the community can't directly meet a person's needs, it should try to help them find care and resources elsewhere.

## **6.17 Reaching Out**

Our communities actively engage in reaching out to others, both locally and beyond.

*Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." Matt. 28:18-20*

*After they prayed, the place where they were meeting was shaken. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke the word of God boldly. Acts 4:31*

*He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8*

*Psalms 96:3, Isa. 52:7, Matt. 10:5-8, Matt. 25:34-40, Mark 16:15-18, Luke 4:18-19, Luke 9:1-6, John 5:19, John 20:21-22, Acts 1:8, Acts 13:47, Rom. 10:13-15*

We are motivated, as Jesus was, by our love for our Heavenly Father and those He lays on our hearts, and are totally dependent on Him as we reach out. In Him and with Him, we are enabled through the Holy Spirit to serve, reach and welcome into the Kingdom those He leads us to. This is the overflowing fruit of a missional community.

## 6.18 Multiplication

The community intentionally multiplies by preparing and sending out those who carry the DNA of the community, with the purpose of multiplying the Kingdom of God.

*After this the Lord appointed seventy-two others and sent them two by two ahead of Him to every town and place where He was about to go. He told them, "The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field. Go! I am sending you out like lambs among wolves." Luke 10:1-3*

*Now in the church at Antioch there were prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen (who had been brought up with Herod the tetrarch) and Saul. While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them." So after they had fasted and prayed, they placed their hands on them and sent them off. Acts 13:1-3*

*And this gospel of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come. Matt. 24:14*

*1 Chron. 16:24, Matt. 10:5-8, Matt. 28:18-20, Mark 6:7-12, Acts 1:8*

As community members develop in their relationships with God and one another, and in their capacity to consistently live and share the Kingdom values, they are then able to model and declare the Good News of God's Kingdom beyond their community. Prepared ministry teams that carry the DNA of the Jesus way of living are able to multiply various expressions of community life. They are sent out in the power of the Holy Spirit with confirming signs following.