

FELLOWSHIP & COMMUNITY

Staff Training Bible Study



God has eternally existed in the fellowship of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. As people made in his image, we're made for community—to be wrapped up into the divine fellowship and to experience love, help and camaraderie with one another. While sin has twisted our experience, we can't escape our Image!

Our work on campus reflects this reality—we do not live and labor alone. You, your staff friends, student laborers and volunteers form a team, which is joined to a larger community of Navigators and is connected to a worldwide movement of Christ followers. Striving to live in healthy community is essential to abiding in Christ and in fulfilling our calling.*

WHERE WE'RE GOING:

01	02	03	04	05	06	07
DEFINED	DESCRIBED	DISCUSSED	DISPLAYED	DEPLOYED	LABS	RESPOND
Perform a word study of the New Testament concept of koinonia	Meditate on a few Scriptural depictions of fellowship	Reflect on Jesus' discussion with the disciples in John 13-17	Look at three key factors to living in community from the example of the early church	Consider the role of community in advancing God's Kingdom	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hospitality Lab• Body of Christ Lab	Connect what you learned to your life and ministry.



WHERE YOU'VE BEEN:

How does your cultural or ethnic background influence your understanding and experience of community?

*Genesis 1:26-31, 2:18-25, Gen. 3:8-19, John 15:1, 1 John 1:3

CONTEXT

A Biblical view of fellowship is a broad topic. Its application could touch on many areas of your life—church, neighborhood, family, ministry, friends. However, this study will focus primarily on the areas which relate directly to your role as a Navigators staff.

Staff Team: The Nav staff on your campus: EDGE teammates, Campus Director, Trainer. It also includes those who labor alongside the team (alumni and volunteers) and your regional staff team.

Campus Ministry: We are trusting God to form diverse disciple making communities on our campuses. Students and student leaders need to experience fellowship with us and with one another so they can model it for a lifetime after graduation.

Among the Lost: Our calling includes living and discipling *among the lost*. As you complete the study, wrestle with how people may *belong* to your community before *believing*. How could your campus community model the love of Christ?

01 DEFINED

A. In your own words

1) Define the following terms. How are they similar? Dissimilar?

- Fellowship

- Community

- Team

- Unity

- The Church

- Interdependence



B. In your experience

- 1) What are some positive experiences you've had on teams? Why? How did you contribute to the experience?

- 2) What were some difficult experiences you've had on teams? Why? How did you contribute to the difficulty?

C. In the New Testament

The New Testament word frequently translated “fellowship” is the Greek word *koinonia*. Use a separate sheet of paper and a Bible Lexicon to track the usage of this word (~30x including its variants). Then answer the following:

- 1) What were the range of meanings you observed? The root meaning?

- 2) How does this word correlate to a relationship with God? Relationship with others?

- 3) How did the study expand your understanding of fellowship?

- 4) Based on what you studied, how would you define fellowship?



Optional Reflection: An interview on “True Community” with the late, great Navigator Jerry Bridges

02 DESCRIBED

In the Scriptures, God often provides pictures to help us understand life in His Kingdom (e.g. God as Shepherd, his word as food, parable of the sower, etc). These descriptions help us see biblical truths in practical, everyday ways.

1. Read the passages below and note the descriptions used.

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

1 Corinthians 12:4-31

Ephesians 2:11-22

1 Peter 2:9-12

2. What truths are being communicated through these descriptions?

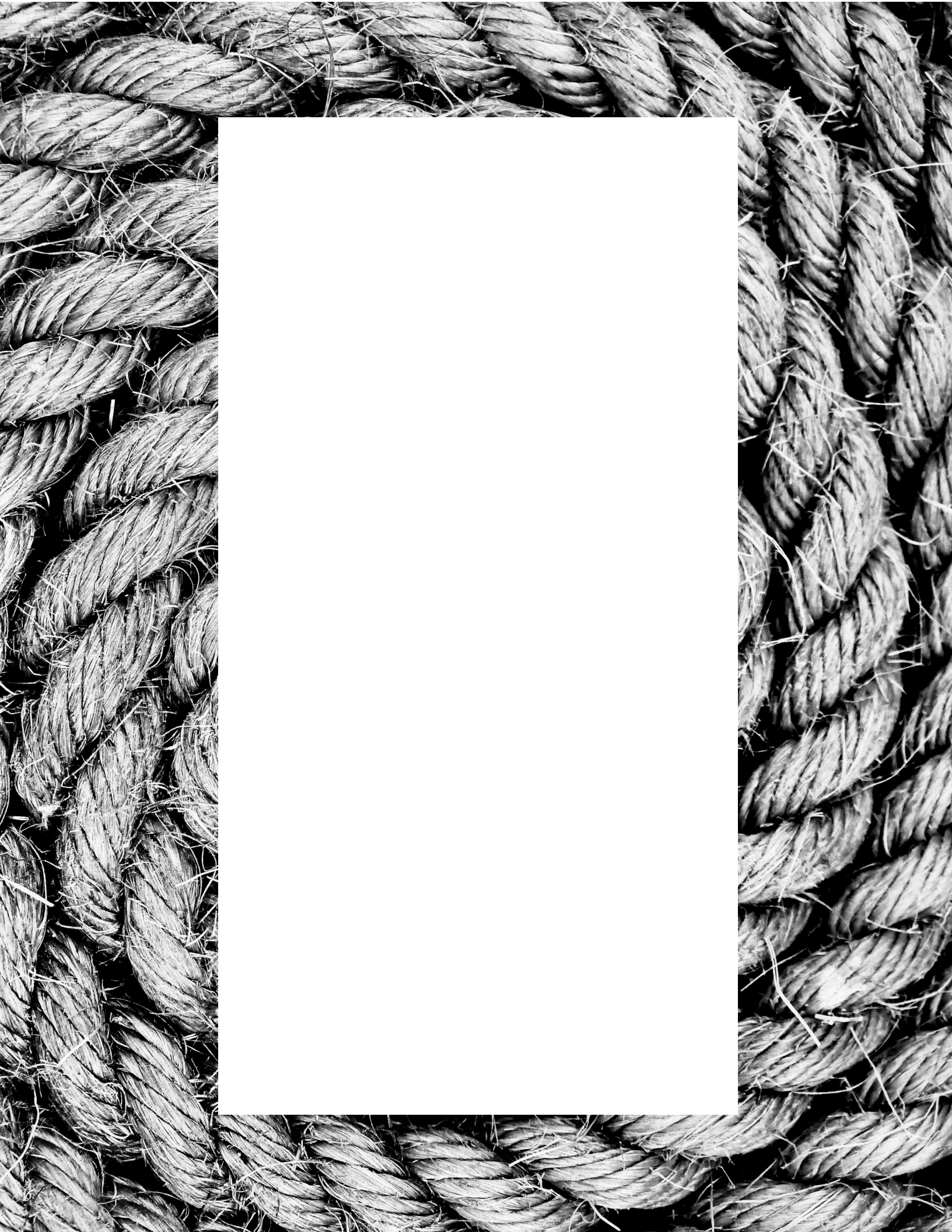
3. What threats to fellowship did you observe?

4. What role do you play as an individual within a community?



Take it to Campus

Take a few minutes and use the next page to create your own description of community. How could you paint a picture of fellowship and community to a student you're working with? Share it with them!



03 DISCUSSED

In John 13-17, Jesus is preparing the disciples for his departure and his conversation is woven around the realities of fellowship with God and others. Read through each chapter and make observations about these relationships.

Verse	Fellowship of Father/Son/Spirit	Fellowship of God & People	Fellowship Among People
JOHN 13			
JOHN 14			
JOHN 15			
JOHN 16			
JOHN 17			



1. What key words or phrases did you notice in John 13-17?
2. How would you summarize Jesus' discussion of fellowship in these chapters?

04 DISPLAYED

Fellowship isn't just a theoretical concept, but is something we live out in everyday life. The following are three keys to healthy community.

A. Interdependence

Use a concordance to find the New Testament passages with the phrase "one another." List some (8-10) of your favorites below.



Why pretend we are all the same when the reality is that we are not? As many have said, unity does not mean uniformity. We see difference as good and pay attention to those differences as a way of learning about God from one another."

Sandra Van Opstal

1. What do you observe about how we should relate with one another?
2. What is an area that you need to extend more “one-anothering”? What is an area you need to receive more “one-anothering”?
3. How could your team better display interdependence? Your ministry?

B. In the Light

Read the following passages and note what it means to “walk in the light”

John 3:16-21

1 John 1:5-10

1 John 2:7-11

1. What factors enable someone to walk in the light?
2. What is the role of leaders in creating an environment where this is happening?
3. What will it take for your ministry to be a place where students can be vulnerable and allow God to speak into their lives?



C. Impact

Read the following passages and answer the questions below about positive and negative impacts on fellowship.

Acts 4:32-5:11

Acts 6:1-7

Acts 15:1-29

1 Corinthians 1:10-17

1. What things were positively impacting fellowship in the early church?
2. What threats to fellowship did you observe? What impact did they have (or could they have had) on the growing community?
3. How did leaders respond to those threats?
4. What things are positively and negatively impacting your campus community?

D. For Team Discussion

Choose 2-3 of the following questions to discuss as an EDGE team

1. Is love (John 13:34,35) the hallmark of our team? Our ministry? Why or why not?
2. I feel loved and accepted by others when _____.
3. How is the gospel influencing the way you relate with others?
4. Is there hurt or sin we need to discuss and forgive?
5. How might God have us respond to threats to fellowship in our ministry?
6. What adjustments might we need to make to live full of both grace and truth?

05 DEPLOYED

The Navigators calling is *To advance the gospel of Jesus and His Kingdom into the nations through spiritual generations of laborers living and discipling among the lost.*

1. What would it look like to carry out that mission as individuals?
2. What could it look like to carry it out as a disciple making community?

Read the following verses and consider the connection between calling and community:

Matthew 28:18-20

Acts 1:6-15

Acts 2:42-47

Acts 13:1-3

Acts 18:1-11

3. What did you observe about the effect of community on the mission?
4. How does fellowship stimulate the mission on your campus?
5. What might it look like for students to be part of disciple making communities when they graduate?



06 LABS

Labs take learning and put it into practice. This lab seeks to take what you're learning and infuse it into the campus ministry setting in order to deepen your practical understanding of the course material.

A) Hospitality Lab

Hospitality plays a key role in fellowship and community. This lab helps you understand many of the aspects that are involved in creating an environment where fellowship and community can thrive. One passage that captures many practical aspects of hospitality is found in Song of Solomon 2:10-13. In the following passage, Solomon describes an outing that he's going to take his darling on.

See if you can identify how many of the five human senses Solomon takes into account.



10 "My beloved (Solomon) responded and said to me, 'Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, And come along.' 11 'For behold, the winter is past, The rain is over and gone. 12 'The flowers have already appeared in the land; The time has arrived for pruning the vines, And the voice of the turtledove has been heard in our land. 13 'The fig tree has ripened its figs, And the vines in blossom have given forth their fragrance. Arise, my darling, my beautiful one, And come along!'"

ASSIGNMENT

For this lab you're going to host some type of event for a gathering of three or more people. The event can be indoors or outdoors. It could be a dinner party, double date, dessert, sport activity, or whatever you desire. Please consider all the COVID policies that apply. Here's what to do:

1. **EVENT TYPE:** Prayerfully decide what type of event you would like to host. Keep in mind this lab is designed to help you show Christ-like hospitality to others. So consider an event that will allow you to show maximum hospitality.
2. **WRITTEN PLAN:** Develop a written plan for your event. Plan out your event by thinking through the experience from your guests' perspective. Put yourself in their shoes. Think through things like: parking, the timing of things, what activities you would like to include, what food or supplies are needed and keep some margin for the unexpected.
3. **CONSIDER ALL 5 SENSES:** Create at least five specific aspects of your event that intentionally appeal to each of your guests five senses. For example: A. Sight - decorate the hosting area; B. Sound - have nice music playing; C. Smell - have nice candles lit in the eating area and bathroom; D. Taste - provide a tasty meal; E. Touch - cool down the indoor hosting area to accommodate for all of the 98 degree heaters that are about to arrive.
4. **PTD:** Establish a Place, Time, and Day (PTD) for your event. Without a PTD events don't happen. Check with the others who live with you to confirm that your PTD works for them.
5. **INVITATIONS AND RSVP:** There are several ways to do this, online, handwritten, text, evite, or email. You'll need to allow adequate time for people to receive the invitation, check their schedule, then respond to your invitation. Casual events can have casual invitations, but more formal events need to have more formal invitations.

6. **RECRUIT HELP:** When hosting an event there are usually three main pieces of hosting: Location, Socializing, Providing Food. For very small events of 3-4 people it's possible to do all three; however, when you're hosting more people you'll need more help. You can't do all three well, so pick two and delegate the other. (I've burned dozens of burgers during an event because I was trying to cook, run a slip-n-slide and talk to guests all at the same time). Choose two and don't put the pressure on yourself to do it all.
 7. **HOST YOUR EVENT:** Put your prayer, planning and prep into action. Have fun and enjoy showing the love of Christ to people as you create an environment where fellowship and community can thrive.
 8. **WORD DOCUMENT:** Develop a Word Document that has all of the following:
 - Event Type
 - Event Plan
 - Five Senses
 - PTD
 - Invitation
 - Helper(s)
 - Lesson Learned: What is the big lesson you're taking away from this experience?
 - Evaluation: Describe how your event went.
 - How many people attended?
 - What did people appreciate?
 - Identify three rocks and a sock. In other words, what are three things that rocked and the one thing that could have gone better.
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B) Body of Christ Lab

Fellowship and community plays a key role in your growth as a believer. This lab helps you to understand how you have been impacted by the community in your life. God uses the body of Christ to challenge us, shape us and encourage us. There are many passages that focus on the role of the body of Christ. First Corinthians 12:12-27 gives us the value of different parts of the body and how they benefit each one of us. Notice the variety that God creates in the body and how critical it is.



¹² Just as a body, though one, has many parts, but all its many parts form one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For we were all baptized by one Spirit so as to form one body—whether Jews or Gentiles, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink. ¹⁴ Even so the body is not made up of one part but of many.

¹⁵ Now if the foot should say, “Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. ¹⁶ And if the ear should say, “Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body,” it would not for that reason stop being part of the body. ¹⁷ If the whole body were an eye, where would the sense of hearing be? If the whole body were an ear, where would the sense of smell be? ¹⁸ But in fact God has placed the parts in the body, every one of them, just as he wanted them to be. ¹⁹ If they were all one part, where would the body be? ²⁰ As it is, there are many parts, but one body.

²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, “I don’t need you!” And the head cannot say to the feet, “I don’t need you!” ²² On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, ²⁴ while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, ²⁵ so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. ²⁶ If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it.

²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

ASSIGNMENT

For this lab you are going to reflect on 5 people that God has placed in your life that reflect the body of Christ and how fellowship with them has impacted you. This is meant for you to take time to realize how fellowship with believers has shaped your life.

1. Write out 5 names of people that have impacted you (three peers and two mentors).
2. Under each name answer the following questions:
 - How have they shaped you to know God in a deeper way?
 - How have they encouraged you in your faith?
 - How has God used them to challenge you to go beyond the places you are willing to go?
 - What joy have they brought to your life through this relationship?
 - How would your life be different if you have never been willing to experience fellowship with them?
3. Spend some time praying and thanking God for the fellowship that He has given you through each of these people.



07 RESPOND

Take a few minutes to *review* your study and consider the highlights. Then *reflect* on the questions below. DON'T SKIP THIS...responding is a key part of being formed through this experience.

What were 1-2 key takeaways or discoveries from the study?

How did what you learned in this study shape your approach to Fellowship and Community?

What is one way you might need help in this area of ministry?

What questions arose that you are excited pursue and learn more?



To Complete Your Study:

Return to the online course, select Module 06 from the menu, and follow the instructions!