

# HOSPITALITY: Unleashing the Church's Mission Potential

Transylvania Presbytery, April 2019

Phila Consulting:

Rev. Shannon Kiser, [shannon.kiser@freshexpressionsus.org](mailto:shannon.kiser@freshexpressionsus.org)

Rev. Brian Clark, [brian@riversidechurch.com](mailto:brian@riversidechurch.com)

*Right now...there is mission potential everywhere you look. And not just in densely populated urban areas. In mid-sized and small towns. In rural farming and mountain regions. In suburbs. But it's going to take some shifts to connect with these mission opportunities.*

*How can you be more intentional about practicing hospitality?*

*How can hospitality take your church into deeper life with God and with others?*

*How can hospitality expand your mission impact?*

*This training event kicks off a season of working with Transylvania Presbytery to foster some mission experimentation. We will continue to work with clusters who are committed to try something new, and we will do some ongoing training and coaching to support you in those endeavors. In addition, we will be working with a mission team to develop a mission plan for a new worshiping community initiative in the Presbytery of Transylvania. These are exciting times to take some risks and to live out hospitality, and discover together what God wants to unfold!*

## SCHEDULE

10:00 AM – SESSION ONE: Hospitality as Outreach—Shannon Kiser

10:50 AM—Break

11:00 AM—SESSION TWO: Practicing Hospitality—Brian Clark

12:00 PM—Lunch

12:45 PM—SESSION THREE: Reverse Hospitality—Shannon Kiser

1:35 PM—Break

1:45 PM—SESSION FOUR: Engaging in Hospitality—Brian Clark

3:00 PM--Conclude

**Let love be genuine, hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good, love one another with mutual affection; outdo one another in showing honor. Do not lag in zeal, be ardent in spirit, serve the Lord. Rejoice in hope, be patient in suffering, persevere in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints; extend hospitality to strangers.—Romans 12:9-13**

## SESSION ONE: Hospitality As Outreach

### Luke 14: 12-14

**12** He said also to the one who had invited him, "When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbors, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. **13** But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. **14** And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous." –NRSV

*Then He turned to the host. "The next time you put on a dinner, don't just invite your friends and family and rich neighbors, the kind of people who will return the favor. Invite some people who never get invited out, the misfits from the wrong side of the tracks. You'll be — and experience — a blessing. They won't be able to return the favor, but the favor will be returned — oh, how it will be returned! — at the resurrection of God's people." — The Message*

- What did you hear?
- What does this passage reveal about the nature of God and the character of Jesus?
- What do I like about this passage?
- What challenges me about this passage?
- How will I live differently in the next 7 days having encountered this Word from God?

### Hospitality = Philoxenia

#### The Changing Mission Field

Rapid change of culture  
Experience trumps information  
Longings of the human heart remain

"Life without God is starvation of the soul... My soul doesn't crave something from God; my soul craves God. And by the way, so does yours. That's why everything else will leave you unsatisfied in the end."—Erwin McManus, Soul Cravings

## **A Posture of With**

Moving from “to” or “for” and embracing “with”  
Points to the goodness of God

### **Questions for Discussion:**

1. How do you experience the changing mission field as a challenge? How do you experience it as an opportunity?
2. How are you beginning to understand hospitality as more than just having guests over?
3. What would it look like to begin taking on the postures of hospitality in your life? In your church?
4. What is one take away from this time?

### **Notes:**

## SESSION TWO: Practicing Hospitality

### **Matthew 15:32-39—What “jumps out” to you in this passage?**

Then Jesus called his disciples to him and said, “I have compassion for the crowd, because they have been with me now for three days and have nothing to eat; and I do not want to send them away hungry, for they might faint on the way.”<sup>33</sup> The disciples said to him, “Where are we to get enough bread in the desert to feed so great a crowd?”<sup>34</sup> Jesus asked them, “How many loaves have you?” They said, “Seven, and a few small fish.”<sup>35</sup> Then ordering the crowd to sit down on the ground,<sup>36</sup> he took the seven loaves and the fish; and after giving thanks he broke them and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds.<sup>37</sup> And all of them ate and were filled; and they took up the broken pieces left over, seven baskets full.<sup>38</sup> Those who had eaten were four thousand men, besides women and children.<sup>39</sup> After sending away the crowds, he got into the boat and went to the region of Magadan.

### **The Challenge of Creating Margins**

Margins: \_\_\_\_\_

Margins to notice others and what they need

Margins to assess what you have

Margins to remember who is Lord

### **Overcoming “Sales” and Moving to “Service” is compassion**

Compassion moves us from Numbers to Needs

Compassion moves us from Event to What’s Next for the Individual

Compassion moves us from “What We Do!” to “What Can We Do For You?”

Compassion takes us to our limits of faith, resources, and time

## **A Group of Disciples Practicing Hospitality takes a Conscious Effort**

Acknowledges in action the Lordship of Jesus

Responds to “The Other” not the Mirror

Relates to Strangers

Accepts the Cleanup

### **Questions for Smaller Group:**

1. What does your church, as a group of disciples, do well in practicing hospitality?
2. What aspects of hospitality, “margins”, “compassion”, or “effort” are the biggest challenge to your church fully practicing hospitality?
3. What practices do you personally engage in to create margins?
4. What practices does your church engage in to create margins?
5. What practices do you personally engage in to put hospitality into action?
6. What practices does your church engage in to put hospitality into action?
7. What is one take away from this time?

### **Notes:**

## SESSION THREE: Reverse Hospitality

### **Luke 19:1-10—What “jumps out at you” in this passage?**

*1 He entered Jericho and was passing through it. 2 A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was rich. 3 He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. 4 So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. 5 When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today.” 6 So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. 7 All who saw it began to grumble and said, “He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner.” 8 Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, “Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much.” 9 Then Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.*

### **Jesus Ate with the “Riff-Raff”**

Outside of the synagogue  
Took heat for it—expect pushback  
Some leaned in, some walked away

### **Living Out Reverse Hospitality**

May have to leave what is comfortable  
No longer control the agenda  
Eat what is placed before you  
Posture of curiosity

## **On Mission with God**

God is already at work— we don't bring the kingdom of God into the world, we choose to participate in what God is already doing.

We in the church often wrongly assume that the *primary* activity of God is in the church, rather than recognizing that God's primary activity is in the world, and the church is God's instrument *sent* into the world to participate in God's redemptive mission.

### **Questions for Discussion:**

1. Describe a time when you were welcomed as a stranger and given hospitality. How was that experience significant for you?
2. What are your challenges and fears around making more space in your life and your congregation for being on mission not just as a host, but as a guest?
3. Where and how is God already at work in your neighborhood?
4. How might God be calling you to dwell with people in "their world?" What would need to happen for you to have the margin in your life to do that?
5. What is one take away from this time?

### **Notes:**

## SESSION FOUR: Engaging in Hospitality

**What does “hospitality” look like today?**

**Acts2: 42-47—what “jumps out” to you in this passage?**

<sup>42</sup> They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. <sup>43</sup> Everyone was filled with awe at the many wonders and signs performed by the apostles. <sup>44</sup> All the believers were together and had everything in common. <sup>45</sup> They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need. <sup>46</sup> 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, <sup>47</sup> praising God and enjoying the favor of all the people. And the Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved.

### **Hospitality Creates Unnatural Leadership**

Equipping Others

Creating Space for Others to Lead

Teaching Disciples is Modeling and Molding, Living

### **Hospitality is Celebrating People over Doctrine, Practice, or Program**

Hospitality Crosses Boundaries

Hospitality Diffuses Conflict and Competition

### **And the Lord added to their number...**

The end of the passage

We are trained to teach, can we fellowship and break bread in our homes?

### **One Experiment in Hospitality**

Cohort: an ancient Roman military unit (a group of people banded together)

Ekklesia: ancient Greek volunteer army (the called out ones)

Brain Storming with a Cohort or Ekklesia:

*What are some ways we can extend hospitality to people in our community?*

*What are some ways we can practice reverse hospitality and invite ourselves to join something the community is doing?*

*What ideas did you hear that excited you?*

*What ideas could you easily do "alone"? What ideas could you easily do with others?*

**Action Plan:**

**\*\*\* If this topic and brainstorming has evoked energy and interest, we would love to connect you into one of the cohorts within Transylvania Presbytery. To be in a cohort means that you commit to trying at least one missional experiment over the next 4 months, you will meet with the cohort for coaching and support, and you will engage in the spiritual practices that keep you attentive to whom God is inviting you to invest time, energy, and relationship.**