

Proposal to All Interested

Project: HOME BASED DISCIPLESHIP COMMUNITIES

From: Nirmal Fernando – Ashram Community House Rock Street Sheffield

This is a project to try to follow the way of life of Jesus and his disciples who lived in community in each other's homes. It is not a project focussing on faith, belief, or conversion from one faith or belief, to another.¹ It is a project to cultivate a caring and sharing way of life in community with homes as bases, enabling the shift from the individual to the communal engaged in contemplation/prayer, work, study (reading, writing), creative arts, recreation, service, and action; giving as able and taking only as needed.² Also, to be examples to those outside.³

Proposed 'Start' Numbers:

Ideally a maximum of seven and a minimum of three (including the initiators)

Proposed Stages of Implementation

1. Discussion of this proposal – *Initiators*
2. Discussion with group with shared meal – *hosting and cooking by initiators at home* – Following Jesus the initiator hosting in his home⁴
3. Gatherings in each other's homes

First Gathering

- Hosting & Cooking – *At a participant's home*
- Contemplation/Prayer – *Selected and facilitated by a participant*
- Gospel Reading – *Selected and read by another Participant*
- Reflection and Discussion of reading – *All*
- Announcements and Future Gatherings
- Community Meal

4. Future Gatherings

- Hosted in each other's homes⁵ – ideally in rotation
- Agenda as at 3 above

5. Caring and sharing among participants
6. Caring and sharing in neighbourhood
7. Living Together in each other's homes from time to time
8. Being based at discipleship community homes
9. Promoting discipleship community homes outside the group as self-determining and self-sustaining independent projects

If necessary, ask for help and support to start this project

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Note: Also presented to ABBC and Ashram's joint effort 'Christian Communities alongside Church'; to be published in ACT Together May 2018; and presented at the Ashram Community Weekend May 2018.

¹ "The distinguishing marks of a Methodist are not his opinions of any sort. His assenting to this or that scheme of religion, his embracing any particular set of notions, his espousing the judgment of one man or of another, are all quite wide of the point. Whosoever, therefore, imagines that a Methodist is a man of such or such an opinion is grossly ignorant of the whole affair; he mistakes the truth totally". – John Wesley - The Character of a Methodist originally published in 1742 - *The Works of John Wesley*, Thomas Jackson edition, 1872.

² See Acts 4.32&34

³ See Matthew 5.13-16

⁴ See John 1.37-39; Mark 2.1-2

⁵ See Luke 5.27-29; 10.38-40