

## Conversation Starters

- What are some of your favorite family memories?
- What made those special?

## Discuss

**The Church is often spoken of in the Bible as a vibrant community of people knowing, loving, serving and celebrating each other while caught in the midst of Christ’s cause and mission on earth. Much of this vision for community in the church is often compared to the vision for family.**

*Love each other with genuine affection, and take delight in honoring each other... Live in harmony with each other... ([Romans 12:10, 16a NLT](#))*

*Finally, all of you should be of one mind. Sympathize with each other. Love each other as brothers and sisters. Be tenderhearted, and keep a humble attitude. ([1 Peter 3:8 NLT](#))*

- What parallels do you see in the family and church?
- How would the lack of certain aspects warp this vision?

**One of the ways the Church comes together as a family is by bringing forward father figures. Much of the language used for God and for leadership in the church is the word “father” and the qualifications for leadership include leading like a father leads his family.**

*He must manage his own family well, having children who respect and obey him. For if a man cannot manage his own household, how can he take care of God’s church? ([1 Timothy 3:4-5 NLT](#))*

- In what ways have church leaders served as a father figure to you?
- In what ways has the failure on the part of a father or church leader negatively changed your view of the church? How can you reconcile this?

**Part of the knowing, loving, serving, and celebrating dynamics of the church community can include the fathering of one another. For leaders (and particularly men), this would include stepping up to the challenge of being a father figure to someone who may not have one, and for those without a father figure to take the relational risk and open up to someone who could fill that father-shaped hole.**

*For even if you had ten thousand others to teach you about Christ, you have only one spiritual father. For I became your father in Christ Jesus when I preached the Good News to you. ([1 Corinthians 4:15 NLT](#))*

- Are you in a position to serve as a father figure to someone else in the church?
- Are you in need of opening up yourself relationally to father figures?
- How can you position yourself for either of these scenarios?

## Next Steps

The vision for the community and church as described in the Bible is breathtaking. When it is functioning right, it is one of the most loving and powerful forces on the entire planet. Deciding to commit to a local church and its community is one of the most important decisions you can make. That’s what membership is about at Meck – committing to a people and the mission Jesus passed on to us. Have you taken this step at Meck? Consider attending our [Team Life](#) class to explore it as a possibility.

Have you taken the step into membership, but not really positioned yourself to serve the people in it and the people exploring what Christ could mean for their life? Consider taking [your next step](#) this week.

## Further Reflection

Read [Romans 12](#); [Hebrews 10:24-25](#); [1 Corinthians 4:15](#); [1 Peter 3:8](#) NLT.

## Pray

God, thank you for the vision for the church and the community you desire and designed us to be in. Thank you for the leadership you provide in our life and the leaders that you have put before us to help us grow closer to you. Help us to overcome anything that is preventing us from being the community you desire for us to be, and to heal from any past hurts that keep us from opening up to others who can be father figures for us.