**RESOURCES for Cell Groups/ Small Groups** 221221.DI

Here on the website are some resources you might find helpful for starting, developing, and multiplying Small Groups/ Cell Groups within a church planting ministry in Japan.

From Day 1 of Oyumino Christ Church in 1992, starting and multiplying healthy small groups/ cell groups (we used the words interchangeably) was a high priority. In our denominational circles, people often make worship the most important gathering, far more important than gathering in small groups for prayer and fellowship. Believe me, I believe with all my heart the in importance of corporate worship. But I often would point out that in Acts 2:42-47 we see the early church meeting in both larger groups (the temple) and in homes (smaller groups). We also see in this passage more about fellowship than we do about worship. I would often ask people, "which leg do you want, left or right? 'Both' should be your answer!" Same in a healthy church. We want both worship and fellowship, larger meetings and smaller meetings where there can be close fellowship.

Here on Oyumino Christ Church's "Alive International" website

<https://www.alive.international/church-planting-resources/>

we have put some resources we have found helpful for a healthy, multiplying cell group ministry in Japan. Hopefully they will all soon be on Oyumino Christ Church's Japanese language website also, at <https://www.oyuminochurch.org>

**1. Oyumino Christ Church (OCC) Cell Groups: Principles and Practice**

(Japanese language)

We wrote the first version of this simple, four-page paper in 1994. It was edited a bit over the years, but this version here is basically the same as it was at the beginning. It includes the Biblical basis for small groups/ cell groups, and also other principles for healthy cell groups. The latter part of the paper tells Oyumino Church practices regarding cell groups in the early years. We often used this for training cell group leaders when I was pastor. Number 2 below is an English summary of this Japanese paper.

**2. English Summary: Oyumino Christ Church (OCC) Cell Groups**

This is a three-page English summary of the Japanese paper described above.

**3. An Excel spreadsheet of 91 distinct Oyumino Church Groups meeting in 2008**

This spreadsheet (in Japanese) gives a concrete example of many OCC groups meeting at that time. It includes several worship groups that are larger also, but includes over 85 Oyumino Church small groups, and lists what day of the week they meet. It also breaks them into 6 kinds of groups, as to primary purpose (1-worship groups, 2-prayer groups, 3-normal cell /fellowship groups, 4-serving groups, 4-evangelism groups, 6-training groups). The principle here is to do almost everything in the church in small groups. Each of these 6 kinds of groups give people opportunities to be in relationships with others, and to encourage each other. The choir or elder board should not only be a "serving group", but also a place to encourage each other and build relationships. A prayer group might have the primary purpose of prayer, but a secondary goal of the group is also to fellowship with each other. Many people were (are) in 2 or 3 different groups.

**4. Bibliography on cell groups/ small groups**

I list some of the books, besides the Bible, that have been most helpful to me on this subject.

I hope and pray you find these resources helpful for your Japan ministry.

Your partner in the gospel,

Dan Iverson